



Islamabad POST

Saturday, February 06, 2021

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PM Imran vows to raise Kashmir issue till end

Detailed News On Page-01

Pak to support the case of IIOJK at all Int'l forums

Detailed News On Page-07

Kashmir solution a must for lasting peace in region

Detailed News On Page-07



Briefs

'Kashmir is matter of principle'

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi on Friday said the resolution of the Kashmir dispute as per the pledges of the United Nations was the "only option" to ensure peace in South Asia and asked New Delhi to stop unabated acts of genocide and demographic changes in IIOJK. "Pakistan has a clear message for India; Our relations cannot be improved without the resolution of Kashmir issue in accordance with the resolutions of UNSC," the President said in his address at the special session of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Kashmir Solidarity Day.

'Time to end this human tragedy'

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Friday said that it is time to end the human tragedy in Kashmir as the nation observes Kashmir Solidarity Day on Friday. In a statement, Army Chief Gen Bajwa saluted the Kashmiris for their valiant struggle, braving grave atrocities, human rights violations and a lockdown under Indian occupation.

Kashmir a beating heart of Pakistan

DNA

NEW YORK: Re-affirming Pakistan's "unwavering" support to Kashmiris in their struggle for freedom from India, Ambassador Munir Akram says that a people determined to free themselves of foreign occupation are destined to succeed. "The day is not far when the people of Kashmir will be able to free themselves from the yoke of Indian occupation," the Pakistani envoy said.

PM vows to raise Kashmir issue till end

"Rest assured, I said I will be the ambassador of Kashmir, and I will raise my voice for you everywhere" PM said

BUREAU REPORT

KOTLI: PM Imran Khan has vowed to raise his voice for Kashmiris "until the day they get freedom". His remarks came during a public address in Kotli held to mark Kashmir Day. "However much I can, I am raising my voice on your behalf at every forum, and will continue to do so. Whether it is with the United Nations, world leaders, or European Union leaders. I asked the past president of the US three times as well to resolve this issue. "Rest assured, I said I will be the ambassador of Kashmir, and I will raise my voice for you everywhere until Kashmir gets freedom," PM Imran Khan said. "I wish to remind the United Nations that you have not fulfilled your duty, you did not live up to your promise," he said. He promised Kashmiris that Pakistan will grant them - both the people of Azad Kashmir and occupied Kashmir - the right to be a free state, if they so wish. Speaking of India's government, he said when the PTI came into power, "I tried my best that we give them a message of peace and explain to them that the Kashmir dispute will not be resolved with your cruelty." "No army can win against a united people. History tells us this. America, a superpower, could not win against Vietnam. They won their freedom.

Continued on Page 06

Pak to continue supporting Kashmiris

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz Friday said Pakistan would continue to stand with their Kashmiri brethren struggling against the Indian atrocities, military attacks, oppression and cruelty in the occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The minister, in his message on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day, said today the people of Pakistan expressed solidarity with their Kashmiri brothers, reiterating their pledge that Pakistan would continue to extend moral, political and diplomatic support for the Kashmiris right to self-determination. He said the Kashmir dispute was an unfinished agenda of the Sub-continent's partition, and the one-sided and illegal step of India on August 5, 2019 on Kashmir had further increased the importance of the day of February 5. The unarmed and oppressed Kashmiris, he said, had been the victims of inhuman treatment of India for the last seven decades.

Pak apprise UNSC of Indian atrocities in IIOJK

The foreign minister noted that the recent exposé of transcripts in the Indian media further established its orchestration of "false flag" operations

NAVEED MIRAJ

Ministers hold rally in Islamabad

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday called upon the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to exercise its legal and moral authority for implementation of its resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir dispute guaranteeing an inalienable right to self-determination. As the country observed annual Kashmir Solidarity Day, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi approached the UNSC President and the UN Secretary General to apprise them of India's continuing gross and systematic violations of human rights in the

Continued on Page 06

ISLAMABAD: A rally led by Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi was taken out in Islamabad on Friday to express solidarity with the oppressed people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). It began from the foreign office on the Constitution Avenue and culminated at D-Chowk. Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani, Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser, the ministers, parliamentarians and people belonging to different segments of the society attended the rally. The participants raised slogans in support of the Kashmiri people. They were carrying the Kashmiri flags and banners highlighting the Indian brutalities on the Kashmiri people. Talking to the media persons on the occasion, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said the Kashmiri people are not alone in their legitimate struggle for the right to self-determination. He said Pakistan stands shoulder to shoulder with them.



MUZAFFARABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi leading the Kashmir Solidarity walk. - DNA

PDM lashes out at govt over Kashmir policy

RAJA SHAHID

MUZAFFARABAD: Head of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and Leader Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Maulana Fazlur Rehman has said that the illegitimate and incompetent government of PTI has no right to decide the future of Kashmiris. Addressing Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) rally on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day in Muzaffarabad, Fazlur Rehman said that the day of solidarity with the people of Kashmir is being celebrated

in Pakistan and the PDM leadership was in Muzaffarabad to show it directly. He said that every Kashmiri is with Pakistan, his heart and feelings are connected with Pakistan and history will not forgive those trying to separate Kashmiris from Pakistan. He further said that Kashmiris decided to join Pakistan and still stand by it but as long as there was a democratic government in Pakistan, no 'Modi' could dare to end the special status of occupied Kashmir and make it a province of India. He said that today Imran Khan and his lobby are

thinking of Kashmir's partition. Narendra Modi took advantage of this and revoked the special status given to Kashmir at independence. Addressing the rally, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that a democratic Prime Minister must be elected to effectively answer Narendra Modi. The PPP chairman said that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had said Kashmir would gain independence even if a thousand years' war has to be fought. Indian Occupied Kashmir has been turned into a prison and the Kashmiris are facing genocide, he added.

Bilawal Bhutto said that while the Kashmiris were being subjected to genocide, all the puppet Prime Minister could say was 'what should I do'. A democratic Prime Minister must be elected to respond to India's Narendra Modi as the 'selected' Prime Minister is unable to do so. "Our prime minister is trying to fight the case for Kulbhushan Yadav," he said, adding that Imran Khan tried to give NRO to the Indian spy. An under-serving, incompetent and selected government has been imposed to rule over Pakistan, he added.

Quetta blast leaves two dead

DNA

QUETTA: A blast Friday evening at Quetta's Inscorb Road killed at least two people and left several injured. While there are no further details of the blast yet, police said several vehicles were damaged. Meanwhile, Civil Hospital Quetta Medical Superintendent Dr Rabb said two bodies from the site and four injured individuals were brought to the facility. CCTV footage of the blast showed pedestrians running for their lives after an explosion near a truck. Earlier, at least ten people sustained injuries when an explosive device attached to a motorcycle went off at Sibi's Loni Road area.

Navalny protests: Russia expels diplomats

MOSCOW: Russia has expelled three diplomats from Germany, Sweden and Poland for joining protests in support of opposition activist Alexei Navalny, who was jailed earlier this week. The Russian foreign ministry said the three took part in "illegal demonstrations" on 23 January. The diplomats' home countries have condemned the expulsions, as has the EU. France expressed solidarity. Mr Navalny is a vociferous critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The expulsions were announced just a few hours after EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell met Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Moscow. Hundreds of thousands of people took part in protests in support of Mr Navalny across Russia on 23 and 31 January. Thousands were arrested. Germany denounced the expulsion as being "in no way justified" and said it would not "go unanswered" if Russia did not reconsider. Sweden said the claim that its diplomat took part in the protest on 23 January was unfounded and said it reserved the right to an appropriate response. - DNA

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UNICEF hands over 220 oxygen concentrators to Pakistan

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) handed over 220 oxygen concentrators worth \$331,000 to the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination here on Friday. The oxygen concentrators have been procured through support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). An oxygen concentrator is a critical life-saving device used for treating patients suffering from coronavirus infection, birth asphyxia and complicated pneumonia. The oxygen concentrators received by the officials of the ministry were shipped to seven major cities, including Islamabad, for installation in public health facilities. "Our nationally coordinated efforts have indeed helped Pakistan to effectively tackle the pandemic so far. I am thankful to all stakeholders and partners, including the

ADB and UNICEF, who have joined hands since the pandemic landed in Pakistan," said Dr Rana Muhammad Safdar, Director General Ministry of National Health Services. "We are vigilantly monitoring the evolving disease patterns as well as our health systems capacity and have mechanisms in place to best use the available resources for the purpose. Oxygen concentrators will build the capacity of our health facilities to effectively manage moderately symptomatic patients close to their place



of residence and thus help in reducing load on major hospitals." In addition to the initial grant of \$500,000, which has been utilized for acquiring personal protective equipment (PPE) and oxygen concentrators, the ADB has also provided an additional \$20,000,000 to help Pakistan strengthen its efforts to combat COVID-19 pandemic. These funds will be used to acquire life-saving medical supplies, diagnostic and laboratory facilities, and other critical equipment for communities affected by the pandemic. "Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the ADB moved swiftly to support the people and the government of Pakistan in responding to the challenge," said ADB Country Director Xiaohong Yang. "We are proud of our partnership and feel glad that Pakistan's success in COVID response is widely acknowledged across the globe" she said. "The provision of oxygen concentrators to health centers across the country will help save lives and support the poor and vulnerable, who are particularly dependent on public sector health facilities. We will continue to work closely with UNICEF and other development partners to help Pakistan overcome the challenges." "Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Pakistan, funds from ADB have helped us provide the most needed assistance to the Government of Pakistan in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic," says Aida Girma, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan.

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. - Editor

Inside...

- Pak calls upon world for combating Islamophobia - Page 02
- ICCI reaffirms its full support to Kashmiri people - Page 03
- PNCA holds event to mark Kashmir Solidarity Day - Page 04
- What options does Biden have in Afghanistan? - Page 05
- Pak's MMA fighter Ahmed knocks out India's Rahul in 56 seconds - Page 06
- Kashmir solution a must for lasting peace in region, says Amb Sajjad - Page 07
- 'Aman-2021' will raise mechanism for threats - Page 08

Briefs

Raja Basharat expresses solidarity with Kashmiris

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Law and Chairman Kashmir Committee Punjab Raja Basharat in a special message on Kashmir Solidarity Day, said that the entire Pakistani nation was united and stood with the oppressed Kashmiris.

Raja Basharat said that along with Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief Minister Usman Buzdar, the Punjab people were shaking the international conscience on brutalities occurring in Kashmir for decades. He said, "we are sending a strong message to Modi that your defeat is not too far. We want to make it clear to India that we will not sit with rest until the Kashmiris get their due right." He reiterated that the long struggle of the Kashmiris would surely come to fruition and the day was not far when the sun of freedom would rise. Later, Raja Basharat along with Chief Minister Usman Buzdar attended the event at the Governor House Lahore and also took part in a rally to express solidarity with Kashmiris. — APP

'Solidarity Day renews pledge of support for Kashmiris'

ISLAMABAD: Solidarity Day was aimed at renewal of the pledge that the nation would continue support for their Kashmiri brethren against Indian atrocities, said Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sahibzada Noor-ul-Haq Qadri. In his Kashmir Solidarity Day message, the minister said India's stubbornness on Kashmir issue, violation of human rights has exposed the hollow claims of world's so called largest democracy to the whole world. He urged (UN) United Nations, (OIC) Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and other international bodies to play their role in resolving Kashmir issue. Anonymous graves of martyrs in Kashmir and black laws were a slap on the face of international human rights activists, he said. The fast emergence of strong Pakistan under Imran Khan's leadership was effectively advocating Kashmir issue. All minorities, including Muslims, were insecure in India, which claims to be the largest democracy, he said. The sacrifices of oppressed women, children and martyrs of Kashmir would not go waste, he concluded. — APP

Murad urges world to become voice of Kashmiris

KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah Friday said that the Indian authorities have imposed the longest curfew in the history of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) which was a naked violation of human rights and enough to incite the conscience of international community and human rights bodies.

This he said while talking to the media persons just after leading a rally to express solidarity with the people of Kashmir organized by Commissioner Karachi from Peoples Chowranghi to Mazare-Quid here.

The rally was attended by provincial ministers, Saeed Ghani, Murtaza Wahab, IG Sindh, provincial secretaries, civil society, human rights activists and other others in a large number.

Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the Indian government, in order to suppress people of IIOJK, has not only amended their constitution to deny the historical rights of people of the valley, but has turned the valley into a no-go-area where no person was allowed to enter to witness the plight of the people. "In the history the curfew imposed in Kashmir is the longest ever imposed anywhere in the world," he said. Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the conferences, walks and seminars to highlight the plight of people of Kashmir were good to further highlight the Kashmir issue. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser and Federal Minister for Railway Muhammad Azam Khan Swati leading a walk and rally to mark the Kashmir Solidarity Day in support of Kashmiris right of self-determination. — DNA

Pak calls upon world for combating Islamophobia

In this context, he highlighted the 2019 signing of the "Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and living Together" in Abu Dhabi between Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad al-Tayeb

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has reaffirmed its commitment to promoting religious tolerance, understanding and cooperation at home and abroad at a virtual event held to commemorate the first-ever International Day of Human Fraternity, observed on Thursday.

"A recent manifestation of this commitment is the opening of Kartarpur Corridor, the world's largest Gurdwara, allowing easy access to our Sikh brothers from the neighborhood and all across the world," Ambassador Muhammad Aamir Khan, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, said. "It is in our enlightened interest to respect each other's religions, avoid denigration of religious symbols and personalities, eliminate religious discrimination,

and combat incitement to violence, including its contemporary manifestation Islamophobia," he added. The designation of February 4 as the International Day of Human Fraternity is the result of a UN General Assembly resolution adopted in December, which was co-sponsored by Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In his remarks, Aamir Khan said while globalization had brought people closer and increased inter-dependence, it has also spawned divisions and frictions among and within societies.

"We are also witnessing global resurgence in intolerance, discrimination, racism, negative stereotyping, and violence against persons, on the basis of religion or belief," he said, pointing out that Islamophobia is particularly on the rise.

"In many places, including in our own region," the Pakistani representative said, "Covid-19 has aggravated the clash of cultures and religions, inciting new waves of violence." That problem, he said, continued to grow — partly by the rise in populism breaking down previous societal checks against hate speech, and partly by mainstreaming of hatred, contempt and hostility through unregulated social media.

In this context, he highlighted the 2019 signing of the "Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and living Together" in Abu Dhabi between Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad al-Tayeb. "We believe that the document provides us with a clear blueprint for promoting acceptance and respect of religious and cultural di-

versity through interreligious and intercultural dialogue," Aamir Khan said. "This is essential for creating an environment conducive to building peaceful, just and inclusive societies." "In a way," he added, "the values and principles espoused by the document on human fraternity are fully aligned with the goals and objectives of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)," a platform for improving cross-cultural relations. In a message to the commemorative event, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for more commitment towards promoting cultural and religious tolerance.

"Around the world, deep-seated discrimination, acts of intolerance and hate crimes persist against people simply because of their religion or

belief, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation", he said. Describing these "vile acts" as an affront to human rights and UN values, he underscored how cultural diversity and freedom of belief are part of the "rich tapestry" of humanity.

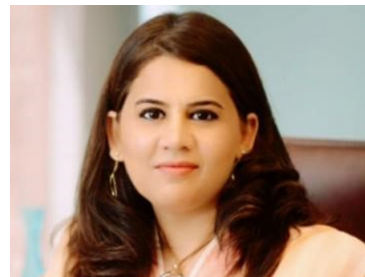
The High Representative for UNAOC, Miguel Angel Moratinos said, "Observing an international day of Human Fraternity is needed now more than ever before, considering the deplorable fragmentation of our world today. We are not only facing the ramifications of a pandemic, but also the contagious virus of hate, discrimination and racism".

"The antidote or best antibodies to hate is human fraternity, which embodies compassion, solidarity, unity and mutual respect." — APP

Comprehensive strategy formulated to modernize PR Dept: Saman Rai

DNA

GUJRANWALA: Director General Public Relations Punjab Saman Rai, after assuming his responsibilities, while addressing an introductory function, said that a comprehensive strategy has been formulated to modernize the public relations department. The role of the department is significant in publicizing government decisions, policies and various public welfare schemes. Training programs and refresher courses will be launched to enhance the capacity of the officers of the department, he said, adding that the public relations



department is the most important institution to fulfill its responsibilities at all times. Even in the most difficult of circumstances, the officers of the department have rendered excellent services. Timely delivery of information will

be ensured at all costs by adapting the public relations department to modern requirements. Director General Public Relations Saman Rai said the officers of the department have performed valuable duties in the most difficult of circumstances. Soon the department will be provided state-of-the-art facilities and timely access to information through media will be made possible. Director General Saman Rai said that training programs would be launched to enhance the capacity of the officers of the department to make the public aware of government decisions, policies and public welfare schemes in a timely manner so that they meet the requirements of modern times.

Bulgarian climber dies on K2 expedition



ISLAMABAD: A Bulgarian mountaineer fell to his death during an expedition on Pakistan's K2, his team said Friday, the second person to die on the world's second highest mountain in weeks. Seven Summit Treks — a trekking company leading the expedition — said Atanas Skatov, 42, fell as he was changing ropes during his descent to base camp. "[It] seems some errors occurred and he fell down. We had fixed the mountain with new ropes" which were not broken, Seven Summit Treks said in a statement. The Alpine Club of Pakistan also confirmed the incident, saying his body was later recovered and flown by a Pakistani military helicopter to the nearby city of Skardu.

Skatov is the second climber to die on K2's slopes this season after a Spanish mountaineer fell to his death last month. A third climber — Russian-American Alex Goldfarb — also died on a nearby mountain during an acclimatizing mission ahead of a bid to scale Broad Peak in January. Skatov's death comes just weeks after a team of Nepali climbers made history on K2 when they became the first to scale it in winter. K2 is known as the "Savage Mountain" because of its punishing conditions: winds can blow at more than 200 kilometres per hour (125 miles per hour), and temperatures can drop to minus 60 degrees Celsius (minus 76 Fahrenheit). With Pakistan's borders open and with few other places to go, this winter an unprecedented four teams totalling around 60 climbers have converged on the mountain, more than all previous expeditions put together. — APP



LAHORE: CM GB Muhammad Khalid Khursheed Khan in a meeting with CM Punjab Muhammad Usman Khan Buzdar in his office. — DNA

Pak moves closer to train 1M youth with digital skills

Enabling People to bring at least an additional \$1 billion each year into the Pakistani economy through E-Commerce skills by 2025

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan has a large labour force that stands among the top 10 largest labour forces in the world, and it's growing day by day. To create adequate employment opportunities for them is a huge challenge. On the other hand, employers frequently keep saying that they are unable to find workers with appropriate skills necessary for their businesses. This obviously shows that there is a mismatch between the demand and supply of skills. The International Labor Organization (ILO) has shown that skills development can play a major role in the alleviation of poverty, when carefully planned and implemented in the context of the available and emerging employment and income-generation opportunities.

This multiplies many folds when the skills are acquired in the digital spheres. It not only widens the work opportunities but also opens up avenues for entrepreneurial ventures as well.

Extreme Commerce, Pakistan's largest and renowned E-Commerce capacity building platform has excelled in its mission of making Pakistan a hub of entrepreneurial opportunities. Under the guidance of Sunny Ali, thousands of aspiring individuals from Pakistan have successfully initiated global e-commerce businesses. Extreme Commerce, Pakistan's largest e-commerce skill development and entrepreneurial platform has achieved yet another milestone with the expansion of 100+ skills training courses through the 'Video Boot Camp (VBC)'. The Video Boot Camp includes virtual sessions and videos

encompassing around 100 essential e-commerce and digital skills required to excel in the spheres of online businesses. The Video Boot Camp training program is specifically tailored to facilitate the budding entrepreneurs and businessmen and freelancers. According to Ali, "Ecommerce has skyrocketed after the pandemic and is estimated to grow to a whopping \$4.3 trillion within this year". He further adds, "There is a huge potential for growth in e-commerce both domestic and international, and that is why we at Extreme Commerce have pledged to enable people to bring at least an additional \$1 billion each year into the Pakistani economy through E-Commerce skills by 2025". The Video Boot Camp includes over a 100 plus income generating E-Commerce skills (income streams) which an entrepreneur

needs to skyrocket their businesses. Some skills offered through the VBC include: Selling through Fulfillment by Amazon (FBA) model, Virtual Assistant and FBA Freelancing, online store management of international and local E-Commerce marketplaces, book-keeping account management services, digital and social media marketing, content writing and graphic designing, 3D designing & modelling, data science and analytics, and more. This initiative of Extreme Commerce will be immensely fruitful in helping their trainees become leading entrepreneurs of the country. Ali, contented with his vision states, "At Extreme Commerce, we offer a multitude of digital skills that are categorized into 100+ courses/income streams under the umbrella of Video Boot Camp (VBC 2021). These skills

are pivotal to reducing unemployment and enhancing the capital of our country". Sharing his focus and goals, he adds, "Skills that actually help you succeed as an online freelancer and even in the real-life environment plus increase your income thereby, are our prime focus right now". Earlier, Extreme Commerce and Mishaal Pakistan, the Country Partner Institute of the World Economic Forum had signed a partnership to mainstream e-commerce in Pakistan, this includes capacity building initiatives for the media and industry players, including trainings, seminars and workshops. The government of Pakistan has estimated digital skills global industry, often referred to as online outsourcing, is expected to generate gross service revenue between \$15 billion and \$25 billion in 2021.

'Kashmiris to break Indian oppression soon'

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Barrister Dr. Muhammad Farogh Naseem on Friday expressed hope that due to their determination and sacrifices, our brothers and sisters in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) will break the shackles of tyranny and oppression soon. In his message on Kashmir Solidarity Day, the minister said, today, we observe Kashmir Solidarity Day to reiterate our support for our Kashmiri brothers and sisters who continue their struggle against state terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He said today is yet another opportunity to expose true face of Modi's Fascist India in front of the world. An India that has under the façade of democracy, incarcerated 8 million Kashmiris as prisoners in their own homes since August 2019 and an India that continues to make their lives miserable by employing terror tactics and worst human rights violations, he added. He said that the international community and the International Human Rights Organizations today are fully aware of the extent of atrocities of a massive 90,000 occupying force in IIOJK where detention and killing of civilians remains an unpunished crime. — APP

'Peaceful solution to Kashmir issue inevitable'

LAHORE: Senior Provincial Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said on Friday that it was necessary to find a peaceful solution to this long-standing issue of Kashmir in accordance with the aspirations of Kashmiris and now Indian oppression would not be able to stop the independence for a long time. On the occasion of Kashmir Day, he told media here that failure to find a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue could also destroy world peace so Modi should take the nails of conscience and must give Kashmiris their legitimate right of self-determination. Senior Minister Abdul Aleem Khan said that February 5 was a day to pay homage to the struggle and sacrifices of Kashmiris. He said that in his address at United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister Imran Khan had fully exposed Modi and Indian oppression before the international community, and raised his voice against the Indian atrocities being committed in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Aleem Khan said that all political parties should support the national position on the Kashmir issue beyond their differences. — APP

'Nation united against Indian tyranny'

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Science and Technology Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Friday said the whole nation and political parties were united over Indian tyranny and atrocities perpetrated against the oppressed Kashmiri people. All the political parties had comprehensively devised a policy on Kashmir cause besides highlighting the gruesome human rights violation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) at all forums, he said talking to a private news channel. Terming India a biggest enemy of the country, the minister said Pakistan was supporting the Kashmir issue by morally, diplomatically and politically. Commenting on Kashmir Solidarity Day, he said that India could not suppress the voice of innocent Kashmiri people through military might and they were struggling to get the right to self-determination. He urged the international community and other human rights organizations to take notice of Indian barbarism on Kashmiris. Replying to a question, he expressed hope that Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) would be failed to gather their supporters and workers for long march. Pakistani Democratic Movement (PDM) President Maulana Fazalur Rehman was inciting and dragging the seminaries students into politics, he lamented. — APP

Briefs

Capital records 79 corona new cases

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: COVID-19 cases were continuing to surge in the federal capital as 79 new Corona cases were reported from the city during the last 24 hours, National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) said on Friday. 94 cases were reported on Thursday while 68 cases were reported on Wednesday, NCOC reported. He said so far 41,734 cases were reported from the federal capital while 478 deaths were also reported, adding 39,987 patients had been recovered completely. Meanwhile, on the direction of Ministry of National Health Services, the district administration of Islamabad had continued smart lockdown in different streets of the capital to reduce transmission of the infection in the selected streets and other sectors. They also started taking actions on violation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) related with the corona while visiting marriage halls, markets and petrol pumps by its inspection teams. The administration also sealed schools, shops, workshop and restaurants on violation of SOPs.

'Pakistan stands with IIOJK people'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan stands with the Kashmiri people in their just struggle for securing their birth-right to self-determination guaranteed to them by the United Nations and against Indian tyranny. An analytical report released by Kashmir Media Service, Friday, said the people and government of Pakistan observe Kashmir Solidarity Day on February 5 every year to highlight the plight of the oppressed people of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir and reaffirm their support to them. It said, Kashmir Solidarity Day is observed to remind the world community of its obligations towards the resolution of the lingering Kashmir dispute. Pakistanis consider it their national duty to support the oppressed people of IIOJK, it said, adding that Pakistan's unshakable solidarity with the people of the occupied territory has remained morale-booster for the Kashmiris. The report said, Pakistan has been raising the voice for the struggling Kashmiris for the last over seven decades and will continue supporting the people of IIOJK till their achieved freedom from the Indian yoke. It said, Pakistanis and Kashmiris are inseparable and the hearts of Pakistanis and Kashmiris throb in unison.

IRSA releases 81,300 cusecs water

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 81,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 33,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1461.10 feet, which was 69.10 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 12,100 and 46,700 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1172.30 feet, which was 132.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 7,100 and 20,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 44,700, 44,500 and 6,600 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 7,500 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and zero cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.



ISLAMABAD: Children taking part in a skit to expose brutalities of the Indian occupied forces in Kashmir, at PNCA. – DNA

ICCI reaffirms its full support to Kashmiri people

Mishal Malik, Chairperson Peace and Cultural Organization highlighted the detail of atrocities being committed by India on Kashmiri people and thanked ICCI for organizing Kashmir Solidarity Day to express solidarity with the people of Kashmir

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Masood Khan, President of Azad Kashmir said that celebrating Kashmir solidarity day in Pakistan and Azad Kashmir was a morale booster for Kashmiri people. He said that 200 million people of Pakistan were standing with Kashmiri people and would make every sacrifice for their right of self-determination. He said that we will destroy Indian extremists and India would never be able to crush the spirit of Kashmiri people for freedom.

He said that the Pakistan has revived the Kashmir issue in UN and at other international forums, which showed that Pakistan

would never let down the Kashmiri people. He said that defensibly and economically a strong Pakistan was important for resolving the Kashmir issue. He said that Pakistani business community should boycott every Indian product.

He expressed these views while speaking as Chief Guest on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry to express solidarity with their Kashmiri people. Muhammad Azam Khan Swati, Federal Minister for Railways said that the resolution of Kashmir issue was essential for the establishment of durable peace and stability in the region and bring progress and prosperity to South Asia.

He said that the use of force against the unarmed Kashmiri people could neither crush their independence movement nor change the principled position of Pakistan on Kashmir. Senator Gen. (Retd) Abdul Qayyum said that the nation was today observing the Kashmir Solidarity Day to reaffirm its unflinching support for the just struggle of our Kashmiri brothers and sisters who have been subjected to inhuman atrocities.

He said that the unprecedented restrictions by India on Kashmiri people fully exposed its fiction of democracy and its scant regard for basic human rights. Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islama-

bad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that just settlement of Kashmir issue was vital to unleash the real economic potential of the region and uplift the living standard of people. He said that India touched a new low in August 2019 when it revoked the Article 370 of Indian Constitution to withdraw the special status of Occupied Kashmir and now India was working for demographic changes in Kashmir to reduce the majority of Muslims there. However, he vowed that Pakistani leadership and nation would never let India to succeed in such moves. He said that since August 2019, India has imposed curfew-like situations in Kashmir violating basic human rights

of Kashmiris, which was highly condemnable. He expressed concerns that businesses in Occupied Kashmir were suffering huge losses due to curfews while people were facing shortage of medicines and food, which could lead to catastrophic results for them. He urged that the world community should play a role for implementation of UN resolutions on Kashmir so that the Kashmiri people could decide their future according to their wishes. He urged that Indian barbarism should be stopped in Kashmir and warned that the silence of the international community on the Kashmir issue could be a prelude to a major war in the region. Zafar Bakhtawari, Conven-

er, ICCI Kashmir Committee said that the forcible occupation of Kashmir by India was against the moral values of modern society and the basic rights of the people. He said that thousands of Kashmiris have sacrificed their lives so far and their blood would never go waste. He said that India would never succeed in its nefarious designs in Held Kashmir as the spirit of independence and freedom was now on the rise in the Kashmiri youth and they could not be held occupied for long. He expressed hope that the sun of independence would soon rise in the occupied Kashmir and the people there would be able to live in a peaceful and free environment.

Gandapur urges UN to honour its pledge

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs Ali Amin Khan Gandapur on Friday vowed to continue supporting the Kashmiris in their just struggle for right to self-determination and urged the United Nations to honour its pledge to hold a free and impartial plebiscite in Kashmir.

The minister, in his message on the Kashmir Solidarity Day, reiterated that Pakistan would continue its moral, diplomatic and political support to the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) in their freedom struggle.

Kashmir, he said, was an integral part of Pakistan and the hearts of its people beat with their Kashmiri sisters and brothers. Gandapur said the extrajudicial killing of Kashmiri youth had become a routine in the IIOJK as India had let loose an unprecedented reign of oppression and state terrorism across the entire valley. He said the so-called secularism and democracy were buried in India, especially after unilateral and illegal action of August 05, 2019 when RSS led Modi regime had stripped the IIOJK of its special status with the aim to change its demographic apartheid.

IESCO notifies 2-day power schedule

ISLAMABAD: IESCO on Friday issued 2-day power suspension programme for Saturday and Sunday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Saturday from 09:00 AM to 2:00 PM, Melody, Coral, Azad Shaheed, Chara, Golra-2, Klingergarden, Bhara Kahu, Pindi Point, Beirut, Nimbala, TDPC, Shahdara, Commercial Center, New Millpur, Shaheed Muhammad Din, KRI, Farooq Azam, Dhok Khabba, Kahial, Gulshan Fatima, Qureshiabad, Cantt, Quaid-e-Azam Colony, Qasim Base Feeders. – APP

VC AIOU underlines need of faculty training

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Qayyum has stressed over the need for faculty training in educational institutions for important areas of online teaching in wake of COVID-19 pandemic. He was addressing as chief guest to the third weekly session "IBCC Live with Vice Chancellor" for counselling of Intermediate Students there the other day. The session was hosted by Muhammad Murtaza Noor, National Coordinator IUCPSS while CEO/Secretary IBCC Dr. Ghulam Ali Mallah also joined the program. The objectives of the session are the Career Counseling and Guidance

to the students, who are enrolled at the colleges and going to complete their intermediate level, Introduction of Universities and their Rankings, Disciplines offered by the Universities, Admission Criteria and Requirements, Scholarships and Opportunities, Hostels and other facilities, Career Counseling and Employability of University Graduates to be discussed during the session. During a session Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum briefed about the admission requirements, annual academic calendar and other facilities being offered to the students.

'Students are global citizens, they need to be equipped with necessary required skills and values of responsible citizenship, peace, tolerance,

co-existence and critical thinking', said Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum.

He apprised about various initiatives and reforms undertaken recently to transform AIOU's education through technology, innovation and establishing new regional centres especially in far flung areas of Baluchistan, Sindh and South Punjab. Currently AIOU have 54 regional centres working across Pakistan to facilitate students especially in far flung areas. AIOU also offered the facilities, expertise to other Pakistan higher education institutions, he added.

Being elected first President of Inter Islamic Network of Virtual Universities, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum termed it great honour for Pakistan and AIOU.

Police to take help from safe city cameras

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Inspector General of Police (Operations) Afzaal Ahmed Kausar has directed all police officials to curb car lifting incidents and take assistance from safe city cameras against this crime. Following directions of IGP Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman, he conducted a meeting to review the strategy to curb car lifting incidents and directed to launch crackdown against car thieves. The meeting was attended among others by DSP CIA and In-Charge Anti-Car Lifting Cell. DIG (Operations) directed for elaborate measures to ensure arrest of car thieves, curb auto-theft cases and monitor the activities of those previously remained in this crime.

Kashmir Cultural Festival kicks off at Lok Virsa

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Three-day Kashmir Cultural Festival has commenced here at the National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) to celebrate Kashmir Solidarity Day. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shibli Faraz inaugurated the Kashmir Cultural Festival. For the past two decades, Lok Virsa has been making special arrangements on February 5 to express solidarity with its Kashmiri brothers, sisters, children and elders who have

been subjected to torture by Indian security forces in occupied Kashmir.

The ceremony started with a melodious instrumental performance by local musicians who played the famous Kashmiri song 'Mere Wattan Teri Jannat Mein Ayein Gein', which was followed by Akbar Khan playing two tunes on his Alghoza and quarter finals of quarter finals of lute. Kashmiri singers presented a number of folk songs and local dances during the ceremony. The stage was beautifully decorated with posters of scenery from Kashmir, its buildings and handicrafts.

As per the old Kashmiri tradition, all the male guests were presented with turbans and the women with shawls. Senior official Ali Khan while talking to APP said that Lok Virsa on this occasion fully reflects Kashmiri culture to the world. He said that every year, Lok Virsa seeks to draw the world's attention to this human tragedy by highlighting the fundamental right of Kashmiris to self-determination in a cultural manner. The folk heritage solidarity festival with Kashmiris will continue for three days till Sunday. A visitor Arslan Qureshi

said that oppressed people of Occupied Kashmir are in fact fighting for the completion of Pakistan.

He said that we are with the oppressed Kashmiris adding that we will always raise our voice for the Kashmiri brothers at the moral, political and diplomatic levels. He added that Kashmiris are not only a peace-loving nation, but their arts are second to none in their sophistication and beauty. He said that at the same time, Kashmiri music has its own unique style adding that not only this, traditional Kashmiri food is also exemplary in its taste and sophistication.

INVITATION FOR BIDS

- The Capital Development Authority (CDA) invites sealed bids, under PPRA Rule 36(a), 2004, "Open competitive bidding single stage one envelope procedure" from eligible firms having licensed for the year 2020-2021 by the Pakistan Engineering Council in the C-3 or above category with project codes CE-01and CE 09, for the work "Development of Sector D-12, Islamabad (Left over work) Asphaltic Bitumen, Rehabilitation of Roads, Drainage, Foot Path & Cycle Track (Phase-I)" having N.I.T cost Rs. 390,811,491/-
- Bidders may obtain further information regarding site and acquire the Bidding Documents from the Office of the Deputy Director, Sector Development Division-II, Block No. 3, Plot No. 04, 2nd Floor, Room No. 16, Sitara Market, G-7 Markaz, Islamabad.
- A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by an interested bidder on submission of a written application to the above office and upon payment of a non-refundable bid documents cost of Rs. 10,000/- (Rupees Ten thousand only) in the shape of Cash during working hours up to 03-03-2021.
- The prospective bidders are required to submit bid security of Rs.11,724,000/- (Rupees Eleven Million, seven hundred & twenty four thousand only) in the form of Deposit at call generated only from firms account issued by the scheduled Bank located in Pakistan in favor of Deputy Director, Sector Development Division-II, CDA, Islamabad at the time of submission of bids as mentioned in the bidding documents.
- The bids shall be received in Sector Development Directorate located at office No. 55, Old Naval Head Quarter G-6 Markaz, Islamabad on 04-03-2021 up to 1400 Hrs. The Bids will be opened on same date at 1430 Hrs in the presence of bidders authorized representative who choose to attend.
- The bid security of all bidders would be deposited in the CDA Bank account and same will be returned after acceptance of the contract with the successful bidder as per approved SOP for bidding process in CDA.
- The eligibility criteria of the firms with the relevant experience i.e at least three number of work in the last two financial years will be observed/ fulfilled before issuance of tender documents.
- The firms providing unsubstantiated and/or incorrect information are liable to legal action and disqualification.
- The authority reserves the right to reject all the applications/proposals prior to acceptance as per PPRA Rules 2004.
- The advertisement is also available on CDA and PPRA's websites.
- The supporting documents to be submitted must be attested by any Government Gazetted Officer.

(Abid Farooq)
Deputy Director
Sector Dev.
Division-II
Tel: 051-2202107

Briefs

Ousmane to co-op with Paki exporters

ISLAMABAD: Director General of CIMEX logistics, consultancy and Import, Nigar, Ousmane Cisse on Friday said that he looked forward to cooperation with Pakistani trade institutions and exporters. During a meeting, Ousmane cisse briefed ambassador of Pakistan to Niamey Ahmed Ali Sirohey about the organisation of CIMEX logistics in trading and promoting imports into Niger, said a press release. He also presented his regards to the Embassy of Pakistan for doing public welfare activities across the country. He requested cooperation with Pakistani trade institutions and exporters. Ambassador showed pleasure on his visit and promised to disseminate the information among the concerned institutions of trade development and exporters. He also invited Ousmane Cisse for a business trip exploration to Pakistan.

'Every nation has right to freedom'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: MUSLIM Institute organizes 'Solidarity Walk' on Kashmir Solidarity Day on Friday from China Chowk Blue Area to Islamabad Press Club, Islamabad. A large number of people from different walks of life including members of civil society, political and social sector, students, lawyers and journalists participated. Participants of rally carried placards and banners displaying slogans about the condemnation of state terrorism by Indian, Kashmiris' right of self-determination, appreciation for their freedom struggle, expressing solidarity with them, forces and urging the international community to play its due role and fulfil its pledges made with Kashmiri people. Speakers urged the world forums, governments and rights bodies to play their role in stopping atrocities in the Indian-administered Kashmir. Amongst distinguished speakers were Mr Ahmed Quraishi Executive Director, YFK-International Kashmir Lobby Group, Mr Faiz Naqashbandi, Convenor APHC, Maj Gen Syed Khalid Amir Jaffery (Retd), President Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed Ali, Chairman MUSLIM Institute, Prof Dr Muhammad Khan, Former HOD, International Relations, National Defence University, Brig Asif Haroon Raja (Retd), Defence Analyst, Ms Farzana Yaqoob, Former Minister, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Mr Ghulam Muhammad Safi, Former Convenor APHC, Dr Nasrullah Mirza, Dept of Defence & Strategic Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University, Mr Muhammad Tahir Tabassum, President, Institute of Peace and Development (INSPAD), Ms Shameem Shaal, Women Rights Activist and Mr Abdul Hamid Lone, Human Rights Activist.

PC arranged road show for HEC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Privatisation Commission (PC) has arranged a Road Show at Lahore for potential investors interested in acquiring the Heavy Electrical Complex (HEC), an entity of the federal government located at Hatter Industrial Estate, Haripur KP, accessible through Hazara Motorway. The Federal Minister for Privatisation Mohammad Mian Soomro, Secretary Privatisation Commission Hassan Nasir Jami alongwith Transition Advisors attended the Road Show. Interested potential investors including M/s Jaffer Brothers, PEL, Waves /Singer, IMS/Powerworld, AVS/Tapal, Transopower, SAMIRA Textile, KE, ATL and Designs and Engineering Systems were briefed. They were informed that HEC is the only entity in Public Sector which has capacity to make 70 heavy Power Transformers every year for all the DISCOs in Pakistan. Ideally located and equipped with all the infrastructure including plant and machinery installed at 43 acres of land with 19 acres extra land available for expansion purposes.



MUZAFARABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi addressing the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, at Muzafarabad. – DNA

PNCA holds event to mark Kashmir Solidarity Day

In their speeches, the children expressed their support for the Kashmiri people and the children also protested against the silence of the international community over the ongoing Indian atrocities and genocide in the Kashmir Valley

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) Friday has organized a number of programs in its auditorium to celebrate Kashmir Solidarity Day in full swing. A children's cultural show was presented in which children presented tableau to highlight Indian atrocities on unarmed children, the el-

derly women and youth in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) and call on the United Nations to take steps to stop atrocities against Kashmiris. In the sketches, the children reflected the closure of schools in the valley, ban on education and confinement in their homes and children also sang Kashmiri songs and national anthems.

In their speeches, the children expressed their support for the Kashmiri people and the children also protested against the silence of the international community over the ongoing Indian atrocities and genocide in the Kashmir Valley. A stage Play "Zindan" was presented in which the artists performed in which the plight of the

Kashmiri people was highlighted. Well-known Kashmiri singers Bano Rehmat and Imran Khan paid homage to the martyrs of Kashmir through Kashmiri songs and saluted those who struggled. Artists from PNCA's National Performing Arts Group performed Kashmiri dances. An exhibition of photographs was also

displayed, based on the story of atrocities against Kashmiri Muslims at National Art Gallery. Director General PNCA Dr. Fauzia Saeed while praising the performance of the children said that today the whole nation has to show solidarity with the Kashmiri brothers. She said that Indian Army's have been exposed their inhumane treatment

to innocent Kashmiris. She said that Kashmiris have been oppressed for 73 years and for the last 18 months India has intensified its atrocities on Kashmir. She said that i hope that by uniting all voices we will bring the world its attention to Kashmir's issue. At the end of the program, Dr. Fauzia Saeed gave shields to the participants. – APP

NADRA's database is accessible to hackers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The data of Pakistani citizens, their personal information and fingerprints are insecure as hackers have gained access to National Database and Registration Authority's (NADRA) database. According to a private television channel report, a gang involved in stealing personal information and fingerprints from NADRA has been exposed. The fingerprints were used to make a rubber-made thumb for impression.

The personal information of the citizens and rubber-made thumbs were used for phone hacking, bank and ATM fraud, obtaining SIM cards, terrorism, Ehsaas Emergency Cash Program and other crimes. Acting on the information provided by the Team Sare Aam, police conducted raid at a house in Karachi's Gulshan-e-Maymar and apprehend the suspects. The police recovered Ehsaas Program's registers, hundreds of phone SIMs and a machine used in making rubber thumb from their possession.

Afridi seeks world pressure on Modi to lift curbs

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Shehryar Khan Afridi Friday called upon the world community, US President Joe Biden and the United Nations Secretary General to pressure India's Hindutva regime for releasing Kashmiri leaders detained post abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A on August 5, 2019. Speaking to the media with regard to the Kashmir Solidarity Day before flying for Kotli with Prime Minister Imran Khan, Shehryar Afridi said the incarcerated top Kashmiri leadership including Syed Ali Geelani, Masarat Alam Bhat, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Syed Shabbir Shah, Yasin Malik, Ashraf Sehrai, Asiya Andrahi, Naheeda Nasreen, Fehmida Sofi and others must be released forthwith.

He also called for immediate lifting of Internet and communications blockade enforced in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). "This communication blackout by the Hindutva regime aims at withholding information and to keep the Kashmiri people disconnected from the rest of the world. India's occupational regime wants to keep the Kashmiris caged in the world's biggest prison," the minister said. Afridi urged the Biden administration to immediately take cognizance of the human rights abuses and use of RDX by occupational forces to destroy houses and properties of the Kashmiris under the Hindutva plan of genocide of Kashmiri people.

He also urged the United States administration to ensure immediate lifting of Internet curbs and communications blackout, release of political leaders and bringing an end to India's illegal and unilateral actions in the IIOJK. Calling for a more proactive parliamentarians' role in highlighting the Kashmir cause to make India accountable for its crimes against humanity in the IIOJK, Shehryar Afridi said the implementation of UNSC resolutions on Kashmir was a collective responsibility of all the member states of the United Nations. Afridi said there was a growing momentum among the parliamentarians worldwide for working together to galvanize the world conscience to halt India's aggression and make it accountable for its atrocities against the Kashmiris. – APP

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Pakistan stands with Kashmiris: Mazari

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Human Rights Dr Shrieen M Mazari on Friday said entire Pakistani nation stood with Kashmiris with heart and soul till they got their right to self-determination according to the resolution of United Nations Security Council. The fascist Narendra Modi regime in a total contravention of the Geneva Convention had let loose a reign of terror and violence in the occupied Kashmir, she said while talking to APP. She said it was on record that the occupation forces were committing the worst human rights abuses in Poshpora and Kupwara districts of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), where the women had particularly gone through episodes of mass rapes. The silence of the international community on the Kashmir issue could be a prelude to a major war in the region, she feared. Mazari said Prime Minister Imran Khan had highlighted the Kashmir issue at international forums. He also sensitized the world, particularly the United States about its sensitivity. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Peace and Culture Organization Mashal Mullick signing at a wall in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day. – DNA

Businessmen express full solidarity with Kashmir

Traders' leader also expressed appreciation to all other Parliamentarians, Civil Society, Intelligentsia, Media, Human Rights organizations, all over the world, who support the just and heroic struggle of the oppressed people of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's ruling group has expressed full solidarity and support to the valiant struggle of the Kashmiri people, who have been resisting repression with their determination, warning the government against any kind of trade talks with India, which has crossed all limits to violate the human rights. To mark the Kashmir Solidarity Day on February 5 (Friday), the FPCCI ruling party of BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar expressed his full support to the just struggle of Kashmiri people for their right to self-determination under the UN resolutions. Mian Anjum Nisar, expressing complete solidarity with the

peaceful Kashmiris, said the entire business community was fully supporting them and their cause of independence. He suggested the government to think strategically, not emotionally on trade issues with India. He further said that the global economy is in recession and bilateral trade is diminishing, however, in Pakistan's case the scenario is worse as its imports are increasing more than exports. He urged the government and all stakeholders to formulate a coherent national strategy and national stamina to sustain that strategy. He said that civilian and military leaders are on the same page on Kashmir issue, people are protesting Indian move inside India, in the UK and other countries. He said India is facing unprecedented diplomatic humiliation

which is a victory for Pakistan. He noted that Modi's all nefarious moves have initiated the process of disintegration of a divided country while tensions with Pakistan will destroy its economy and credibility. He warned that depriving Pakistan of its share of water will be the last mistake of Hindu radicals who have changed secular India into an extremist state. Traders' leader also expressed appreciation to all other Parliamentarians, Civil Society, Intelligentsia, Media, Human Rights organizations, all over the world, who support the just and heroic struggle of the oppressed people of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The business community will continue to provide with every kind of support to the Kashmiri people and will not leave them alone in their struggle, he added. He said

that Pakistan will extend every kind of support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir at every forum, reiterating that the Kashmiris would continue their struggle till the achievement of the goal of freedom. Anjum Nisar condemned the illegal annexation of Occupied Kashmir by India, led by Narendra Modi and the RSS gang he represents, with the aim to change the demography of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir as part of their fascist and racist agenda. The FPCCI's Businessmen Panel (BMP) also passed a resolution saying: "This annexation is an attempt to undermine the United Nations Charter, International Law and relevant UN Security Council Resolutions which seek the inalienable right of self-determination for the people of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

In pursuance of his fascist and racist agenda which is inspired by Nazi Germany, since this fascist mindset and practices are similar, the regime of Narendra Modi is committing another grave crime against humanity by turning occupied Kashmir into the world's biggest and most brutal concentration camp, with imposing curfew and it's completed lock-down, closing of all communications, with thousands Kashmiris arrested, kidnapped, maimed or martyred or raped." Mian Anjum Nisar also welcomed the UN Security Council and the UN Secretary General of commitment to UNSC Resolutions on Kashmir. "We would also like to express appreciation of the positions taken by our friends like China, Turkey and Iran, whose governments have also announced their support of Kashmiri people," he said.

Dr. Shehzad appointed as Chairman IBCC

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Shafiqat Mehmood has approved the appointment of Dr. Shehzad Jeeva as Chairman, National Steering Committee (NSC) of IBCC for the Calendar year 2021. The appointment was made on the recommendation of Inter Board Committee of Chairmen (IBCC).

Dr. Shehzad had worked as former Chairman, IBCC Forum and Director Aga Khan University Board of Education. The Steering Committee of IBCC has the status of a recommendation body, which makes suggestions and recommendations in collaboration with all the boards in the country on Matriculation and Inter Examinations, Certification of Certificates, Equality, and other matters.

Dr. Jeeva has been the Chairman of the IBCC Forum for the last one year, whose term expires on December 31, 2020, and the steering committee is headed by the former Chairman of the IBCC Forum. Amid Covid-19 Dr. Shehzad Jeeva, former Chairman of IBCC Forum played a key role on formulating the promotion policy of matriculation and intermediate students. – APP

Kashmir Solidarity Day observed in Hazara

ISLAMABAD: Like other parts of the country to show solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK), protest rallies were being organized all over the Hazara division. Pakistanis showing solidarity with their Kashmiri brothers and sisters all across the country, a rally was organized in Dasu and Upper Kohistan to express solidarity with them. In Haripur, district administration and political parties organized separate solidarity rallies to support and unity with the people of IIOJK and to pay homage to Kashmiris who have lost their lives for their right to self-determination.

Assistant Commissioner led the solidarity rally where a large number of TMA Haripur employees, students and other people have participated. The rally started from TMA and culminated at Siddique Akbar Chowk. The other rally was organized by the joint opposition parties of Haripur which were led by the JUI-F leader where a large number of political workers from all other political parties were present. In Havelian Kashmir Committee organized a solidarity rally which was largely attended by the civil society members and students, while in Abbottabad Peoples Student Federation (PSF) also organized a solidarity rally. – APP

EU-PFF urges int'l media to expose India

ISLAMABAD: Chairman EU Pak Friendship Federation Europe, Chaudhry Pervez Iqbal Losar on Friday urged international media to expose Indian army's atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) to the world and help Kashmiris in their struggle for right to self-determination under the UN resolutions.

Chaudhry Pervez Iqbal Losar, who visited Shaheen Top, Line of Control (LOC) to observe Kashmir Solidarity Day on Friday, expressed these views while talking to a gathering at Shaheen Top. He said that Kashmiri brothers and sisters had sacrificed so much in their struggle of self-determination and supported Pakistan Army while standing with them shoulder to shoulder. Losar said that "terrorist & coward Indian Army" had shifted its own civilian population from LOC to other places but they attack on innocent civilian population across LOC.

He said that the "coward & terrorist Indian Army" was standing just 1700 meters away from Shaheen Top. He saluted the sacrifices of Kashmiris who were facing brutalities of terrorist Indian Army. Losar said that the "coward Indian Army & Government" had staged a conspiracy against its own soldiers at Pulwama. He said that Indian government's anti-Pakistan propaganda campaign had been exposed by the EU DisinfoLab recently in Europe. – APP

The Kashmir cause

AS Indian trolls and high-profile personalities make bold statements about “protecting India against propaganda”, there are a multitude of international celebrities and well-known individuals such as Greta Thunberg that have come out recently in support of the farmer’s protest. While India’s actions in Delhi against the farmers are condemnable, the injustices there pale in comparison to the other, silent abuse continuously taking place in Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir (IIOK). On Kashmir Day, it is important to reassert our national commitment to the cause of self-determination in the region under military siege. Indian forces continue to occupy the area in large numbers, the curfew has remained imposed without any respite since August 5, 2019 and Kashmiris remain voiceless as a result. We must strike now, while the iron is still hot. The world is waking up to the daily atrocities being committed by the Modi government, however, IIOK has not received its due share of attention. Speeches have been made in parliaments, such as in the UK, but there has been little tangible action. Where governments will not censure India, Pakistan must look to highlight the IIOK issue to galvanise the general public the world over. We have seen the positive effect this has had in the past. However, judging by how active the Indian troll factory and paid individuals have become in response to the high-profile condemnation of the Indian government, it is all the more important to take this strategy forward. Pakistan—at both the state and public levels—unflinching commitment to the Kashmir cause must consistently look to add support from all those willing to speak out about injustices. Those with a platform such as Thunberg and the celebrities that spoke against government action in Delhi—can use it to engage a larger section of the public and influence governments to act. As ever, today is a day for those that lost their lives or have been abused at the hands of the Indian state in Kashmir. With reflection of the injustices, practical action to save future generations must also be prioritised.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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ABC CERTIFIED

Vol: 01 Issue: 269

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Declining cotton yield

ACCORDING to the fortnightly report of Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA), cotton production fell by 34.35 percent to 5.571 million bales in the current fiscal year 2020-21. In the same period of last year, growers produced 8.487m bales. The shortfall of 2.9m bales portrays a grim situation for the textile industry, which is one of the leading export-oriented sectors and makes 60 percent of the total annual export earnings of Pakistan. Experts lament that the government’s negligence towards the major cash crop for several years is the most significant factor for recording the lowest cotton production in 30 years. As if that was not enough, climate change also affected growth significantly. Once, this crop was Pakistan’s strength; it was our textile industry’s backbone as well. However, due to the declining yield, the textile sector imports cotton worth billions of rupees. Even an ordinary person understands that the loss of this crop resultantly affects both the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. Unfortunately, Cotton Vision 2015—launched in 2011—under which the government was aiming to achieve a target of 20m bales by 2015, has failed miserably. Today, we produce less cotton than we did in 2011, 10.6m bales. The government’s vision and policies regarding enhancement of cotton production are not working. If the govt, which acts as the regulator, does not come into action, the situation can worsen further. The issue of decline in cotton growth due to seed-related issues, lack of proper pricing and soaring cost and use of pesticides is not going anywhere anytime soon. The current government has decided to give subsidised seed to the cotton growers. It also intends to do crop zoning to stop farmers from switching to other crops. But without offering hybrid high yield seeds, better pest control methods and support price to the farmers, the suggested incentives and policies will not prove enough to enhance our production.

What options does Biden have in Afghanistan?

Ibraheem Bahiss

A full US military withdrawal by May, however, leaves two major issues unaddressed. First, the presence of the US military in Afghanistan has ensured a military equilibrium between the two negotiating sides. Although the US has reduced its military engagement, its continued presence has prevented the Taliban from tilting the balance of power on the ground in its favour. In the case of a full withdrawal of foreign troops, unless the parties can make rapid progress in talks – which is unlikely – both sides would seek to exert pressure on each other in the military theatre. Any significant alteration in the battlefield could complicate the peace talks and make political compromise more difficult. Furthermore, the Taliban could abandon the peace process altogether

ON December 2, 2020, the Afghan government and the Taliban announced an agreement on the procedural framework document that will act as a code of conduct during their peace negotiations. Shortly afterwards, the teams exchanged their respective agenda lists and announced a weeks-long hiatus. Although the teams resumed their talks on January 6, the sides have made little progress and have only met a few times. It appears both the Afghan sides are waiting for clarity from the Biden administration on their approach to Afghanistan instead of focusing on progress in talks. The administration has thus far issued vague statements regarding a review of the agreement and assessing the Taliban’s progress in fulfilling their commitments. Despite its shortcomings, the US-Taliban agreement and consequent intra-Afghan negotiations provide a singular opportunity to bring peace to war-torn Afghanistan and end the United States’ longest war. With the peace talks progressing slowly and the May deadline for withdrawal fast approaching, the Biden administration will have to make some difficult decisions. There are no easy solutions regarding Afghanistan. If the US withdraws before significant progress has been made in intra-Afghan talks, there is a risk the entire process could collapse and result in renewed violence. If the US and NATO decide to keep their troops on the ground beyond the May deadline – as recent reports have indicated – it could result in an abandonment of the agreement and a renewed conflict with the Taliban. The Biden administration has several policy options to address the crisis. One policy option would be to abide by the withdrawal schedule set up by the Trump administration. President Joe Biden has shown unease with putting US troops in harm’s way in Afghanistan even before the US-Taliban agreement was concluded. A full US military withdrawal by May, however, leaves two major issues unaddressed. First, the presence of the US military in Afghanistan has ensured a military equilibrium between the two negotiating sides. Although the US has reduced its military engagement, its continued presence has prevented the Taliban from tilting the balance of power on the ground in its favour. In the case of a full withdrawal of foreign troops, unless the parties can make rapid progress in talks – which is unlikely – both sides would seek to exert pressure on each other in the military theatre. Any significant alteration in the battlefield could complicate the peace talks and make political compromise more difficult. Furthermore, the Taliban could abandon the peace process altogether, perceiving the other side as significantly weaker, and attempt to take power by force. Following the agreement largely unencumbered by US air raids, Taliban fighters have been shutting down main highways and pushing government security forces to the confines of urban centres or large military installations. Their success in storming previously impregnable areas has reinforced their perception that Afghan security forces could crumble in the face of a series of focused offensives. Second, unless a compromise between the two sides is reached, neither the Afghan government nor the Taliban will be in a position to prevent threat projection from smaller terror groups. Hardline armed groups will continue to exploit the security vacuum to operate in the country and possibly plan acts abroad. That is why it seems less likely the Biden administration will go for this option. Given the risks a complete withdrawal could bring, the

new administration could consider leaving behind a small US military force, focussed exclusively on counterterrorism. This force would also act as an equaliser in the military theatre and discourage outside interference. As the US-Taliban agreement stipulates that all non-diplomatic foreign military personnel must leave Afghanistan, the US cannot retain such a force unless they either renegotiate the US-Taliban agreement or completely ignore it. It is extremely unlikely the Taliban will agree to host a residual foreign force in the foreseeable future. The group has consistently stated that the presence of even a single foreign troop makes jihad an obligation on all Afghans. If international troops remain without some form of agreement, the Taliban leadership will be unable to enforce adherence to the current deal as Hanafi jurisprudence – which the group follows – stipulates that when a central clause of a treaty is abandoned or breached, then it amounts to the abrogation of the entire agreement. Its military successes in recent years and the political recognition it has received from most regional powers have convinced the armed group that if a political solution fails, it can continue to expand its military operations. This would likely mean the Taliban will renew attacks on foreign forces and urban centres and potentially provide sanctuary to foreign armed groups again. Even if US airpower is able to prevent a total collapse of the Afghan army, the fighters would continue with their current strategy of confining government presence to major urban centres and ramping up violence in government-controlled areas. To push back against such an escalation, the US would then need to bring its military presence back to the pre-agreement levels. In other words, a residual force, regardless of its size or scope, would most certainly result in prolonging the two-decade war. A third option for the US would be to seek a short-term extension of the withdrawal deadline to address key US policy concerns and accelerate progress in the peace talks. The Biden administration can seek this extension in two different ways: It can either claim that the Taliban has not fulfilled its obligations under the agreement, as some of its officials seem to be doing right now, or seek to renegotiate the agreement without pushing for a residual force. Suspending the withdrawal by claiming the Taliban have not fulfilled their obligations such as preventing armed groups from being based in areas under their control or failing to reduce violence would provide short-term respite but leave important issues, such as continued commitment to a political process or long-term prevention of “terrorism”, unaddressed. Based on past behaviour, the Taliban will adopt a literalist approach in fulfilling its obligations and seek to limit the scope of discussions to issues pertaining to non-performance. It is worth recalling that the group chose extremely precise wording pertaining to their obligations, omitting a clear commitment to publicly cut ties with armed groups. This will enable them to make a case that they have fulfilled their obligations or that they are only required to fully prevent foreign armed groups from operating from Afghanistan after all foreign troops withdraw from the country. Demands, such as publicly severing ties with al-Qaeda or actively fighting against foreign groups, will be viewed as deviations from the letter of the agreement. Insistence on such new obligations or wider negotiations in this context might be viewed as malignant and risk unravelling the entire agreement. Actions such as a unilateral extension of the with-

drawal deadline by the US will be risky and could provoke the Taliban into retaliatory measures. This could risk serious repercussions that would bring the entire agreement into question and potentially derail the peace process. A more prudent approach would be to seek a short-term extension through negotiations. The new US administration can signal that it seeks a revision of the agreement and clarifications. This would be possible given the many ambiguities in the agreement in how certain provisions are worded, including the requirement for reduction in violence by all sides, the areas which fall within the violence-de-escalation provision, the use of international forces to support the Afghan army, and the Taliban’s obligations vis-a-vis foreign groups. However, there is no guarantee the Taliban will consent to a short-term extension. There is growing resistance within the Taliban to the ongoing peace process. Other than the release of 5,000 prisoners, all other obligations towards the group remain unfulfilled. As mentioned above, unless progress is made in talks, or other provisions of the agreement are fulfilled, the Taliban might be tempted to step away from the political process and refocus on its military campaign. To maximise the chances of gaining the Taliban’s consent for an extension, the US should focus its efforts on fulfilling certain portions of the agreement and expediting the intra-Afghan peace process. For example, the new administration can begin delisting Taliban leaders from US sanctions lists and facilitating further prisoner exchanges. However, even if Washington manages to negotiate an extension, it would not be more than a few months long. While seeking to postpone full withdrawal, the US should also seek to accelerate the talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government. Otherwise, it risks facing the same dilemma when the new withdrawal deadline approaches. To avoid this scenario, the Biden administration needs to engage in more aggressive diplomacy and put more effort into building regional consensus to support the peace process. While the Trump administration made major strides on this front, its advances were hindered by some of its controversial policies, including the trade war with China and the maximum pressure campaign against Iran. India has also remained ambivalent while the EU has, at times, criticised the current approach. President Biden can seek to involve China and Russia more directly in the peace process in Afghanistan and reach out to Iran. Building regional support for the peace process is crucial because it would prevent both the Afghan government and the Taliban from playing regional powers against the US. This would allow the Biden administration to use its leverage over the two sides with greater efficiency. The Afghan government relies heavily on the US for financial assistance while the Taliban knows its political viability will depend on international recognition and assistance guaranteed by the US. Continued US engagement, including the recognition of any new government, financial assistance, and future investments, remains the Biden administration’s strongest leverage over both sides to the conflict. The success of this approach is far from guaranteed, but if the US cannot negotiate an extension, it will have to choose between a withdrawal in May and a resumption of the conflict. At this point diplomacy still appears to be more useful in resolving the Afghan conflict than the failed military approaches of the past two decades.

– Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Palestinian rights continue to be denied

Ray Hanania



The plight of Palestinians is no different to the plight of Africans in America or of Africans in South Africa under apartheid. In the latter case, the world used the power of boycott to force SA to dismantle its apartheid policies

THERE is a myth that removing Donald Trump from the White House has somehow magically changed the overwhelmingly anti-Palestinian nature of American politics. In fact, it has not changed in substance. It has changed in tenor. What I mean is that, while Trump screamed pro-Israel rhetoric and actions, the Democrats whisper it in a muddle of smoke and mirrors that balance sympathy for Palestinian suffering against the overwhelming political benefits of being pro-Israel. After the 1993 Oslo peace accord was signed by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat, then-US congressman Jim Moran told me bluntly, while at a pro-Arab conference in Washington, that among the biggest challenges he faced in fighting for Palestinian rights was the absence of consequential support from the Arab and Muslim communities. Their voices were loud, but the substance of their support was weak, especially in comparison to the pro-Israel movement. Moran, who represented Virginia’s 8th District from 1991 until 2015, faced an overwhelming onslaught from the pro-Israel lobby, activists and the media. He was viciously attacked every time he spoke up in defense of the Palestinians and frequently denounced as “anti-Semitic.” The only saving grace was that Moran was a phenomenal representative for his constituents and their unwavering support countered the harshness of the attacks from outside of the district. You see, in America, truth is meaningless when it is confronted by an overwhelmingly powerful force of lies. Moran was a Democrat and he got very little support from others in his party, except for those

few lonely souls in Congress who had the courage to speak out against the lies about Palestine that shielded Israel’s atrocities and human rights violations. It is amazing to me as a Christian, whose mother is from Bethlehem, that the majority of American Christians can’t seem to break through the pro-Israel propaganda to see how their own brethren in Palestine have been oppressed, violated and diminished by Israel’s policies. The only narrative Americans are allowed to hear is the big lie that Israel is right and the Palestinians are wrong. I was this week reminded of what Moran had told me while listening to the Senate hearing called to confirm former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield to the post of US ambassador to the UN, which is the one forum where Israel’s lies are often called out. You might think that, being African-American, Thomas-Greenfield might sympathize with the struggle Palestinians face. Using superior military force, Israel managed to take control of all of Palestine, even denying that Palestinians ever existed. If you don’t exist, how do you have any rights? But Thomas-Greenfield has no real sympathy for the Palestinians, a counterbalance to the seemingly supportive rhetoric of President Joe Biden. During her confirmation hearing, Thomas-Greenfield didn’t hesitate to strike at the heart of the Palestinian cause, attacking the Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (BDS) movement, saying that it “verges on anti-Semitism.” She vowed to prevent the voices of BDS from using the UN as a forum to challenge Israel’s human rights violations, saying: “I find the actions and the approach that BDS has taken toward Israel unacceptable. It verges on anti-Semitism, and it is important that they not be allowed to have a voice at the

United Nations. And I intend to work very strongly against that.” What is BDS? A movement to prevent Israel from profiting from land it has stolen in the Occupied Territories. Israel has created hundreds of settlements in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem and their residents harvest the lands that were forcibly taken from Christian and Muslim Palestinians like my own family. My family owns nearly 9 acres of land close to the illegal Israeli settlement of Gilo, adjacent to East Jerusalem, where my father’s family lived for centuries. But, according to America’s presumptive new UN ambassador, we don’t have any rights. Without rights to our land, which is occupied by Israel, we are denied our human rights. The plight of Palestinians is no different to the plight of Africans in America or of Africans in South Africa under apartheid. In the latter case, the world used the power of boycott to force South Africa to dismantle its apartheid policies – the very same goal sought by the majority of BDS activists. Sure, there are some extremists who expand BDS to include boycotting all of Israel, arguing that the state of Israel empowers the human rights abuses in the Occupied Territories. It is an internal debate that divides the Palestinian community. But for someone like Thomas-Greenfield to take the powerful American podium at the UN with such strong devotion to a one-sided narrative is discouraging. In a world where justice and truth trump politics and power, Israel should be forced to acknowledge the rights of the Palestinians who live under occupation. Thomas-Greenfield’s UN role leaves you wondering whether things really have changed in substance since Trump, or whether we are just seeing a different facade.

– Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

Pak apprise
UNSC of
Indian
atrocities

From Page 01

Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). As part of Pakistan's sustained diplomatic outreach, he also apprised them of India's unlawful campaign to colonize the occupied territory, and its belligerent and hostile actions against Pakistan, including persistent ceasefire violations, which posed a threat to peace and security.

The foreign minister, in his letter addressed to the UNSC President and the UN Secretary General, underscored that all unilateral and illegal measures taken by India in the occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir in violation of international law, including relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council and the 4th Geneva Convention, such as changes in the demographic structure, usurpation of land and farcical "elections", were null and void, according to a Foreign Office press release.

Drawing attention to India's perpetration of terrorism and subversion against Pakistan, Foreign Minister Qureshi recalled the detailed dossier presented to the United Nations containing irrefutable evidence of India's active planning, promoting, aiding, abetting, financing and execution of terrorist activities against Pakistan. India's smear campaign to malign Pakistan internationally revealed through the EU DisinfoLab report has also been brought to the attention of the Security Council, he added. The foreign minister noted that the recent exposé of transcripts in the Indian media further established its orchestration of "false flag" operations and belligerent actions for domestic political and electoral gains. He also apprised the Security Council of alarming incident in December 2020 of firing upon a clearly marked vehicle of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), threatening the safety and security of UN peacekeepers and impeding the fulfilment of their mandate.

The foreign minister called upon the Security Council to urge India to immediately lift the continuing military siege, and rescind the illegal and unilateral actions in the IIOJK, and remove the draconian laws enabling Indian occupation forces to continue human rights violations with impunity, including extrajudicial killings in fake encounters. Moreover, the foreign minister urged the UNSC to urge India to allow access to the occupied territory to the UN observers, international human rights and humanitarian organizations, observers and the international media.

The letter by the foreign minister is part of Pakistan's continuous efforts to keep the UN Security Council and the Secretary General fully apprised of the grave situation in the IIOJK and the threat it poses to peace and security in the region.

Root hits
century to
help England
dominate
Day one

CHENNAI: Skipper Joe Root struck a fluent century in his 100th Test to help England seize the advantage in the opening match against India on Friday.

England ended on 263 for three after Dom Sibley fell to paceman Jasprit Bumrah for 87 in the final over of day one and stumps were called in Chennai. England elected to bat after winning the toss in the first match of the four-Test series. Root, unbeaten on 128 and battling cramp in the final session, put on 200 runs with Sibley after England slipped to 63 for two in the first session. Root made his Test debut in India in 2012 and his century comes on the back of match-winning knocks of 228 and 186 in Sri Lanka. Friday's effort was his third successive and 20th Test ton.



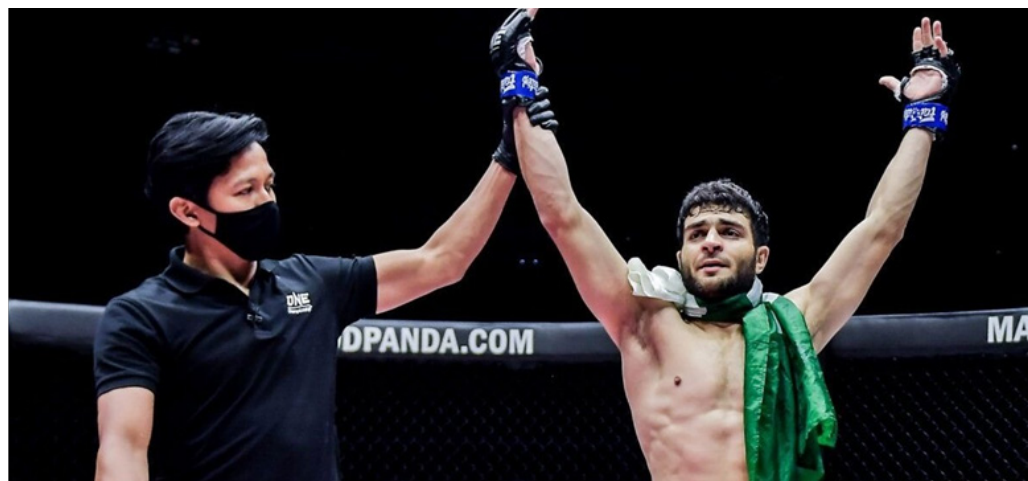
JAKARTA: Ambassador of Pakistan to Indonesia Muhammad Hassan meeting with Foreign Minister of Indonesia Retno Marsudi. – DNA

Pak's MMA fighter Ahmed knocks
out India's Rahul in 56 seconds

Mujtaba aka The Wolverine finished Raju inside the opening minute of their fight, ducking an overhand right and countering with a punch of his own

SPORTS DESK

SINGAPORE: Pakistan's MMA fighter Ahmed Mujtaba marked his return to the ring in style on Friday, knocking out his Indian opponent Rahul Raju in the opening round of their bout in Singapore. Mujtaba aka The Wolverine finished Raju inside the opening minute of their fight, ducking an overhand right and countering with a punch of his own. Raju immediately fell to the canvas and even though Mu-



jabta followed up with another strike, the ref intervened. It was Mujtaba's first fight in almost three years. He had lost to Jia Wen Ma in March 2018, following which he has several bouts scrapped, twice with Raju and once with Eduard Folyang. With the victory, Mujtaba improved his career record to 8-2, while Raju's deteriorated to 7-6. Mujtaba's claim to fame was the unbeaten 7-0 start to his career. He did not face a defeat for the first four years of his career

EU urges Armenian nuclear
plant's decommissioning

DNA

BRUSSELS: The European Commission has called on rapid measures to decommission the Metsamor nuclear power plant in Armenia. Trend reported on February 5. The Metsamor nuclear power plant requires an early closure and safe decommissioning, the European Commission's Partnership Implementation Report on Armenia was quoted as saying. The report said that these measures are needed as the nuclear power plant cannot be upgraded to fully meet the internationally accepted nuclear safety standards. "It is necessary to rapidly adopt a road map or action plan to address this, taking into consideration the need to ensure Armenia's energy security and conditions for sustain-

able development," the report said. In late January, Azerbaijan's Human Rights Commissioner Sabina Babayeva urged all relevant international agencies to take serious steps for the immediate closure of Armenia's nuclear power plant which is a potential threat to the entire region. The rights commissioner also expressed serious concern over the recent discussions in the Armenian parliament on the use of radioactive waste from the Metsamor NPP for military purposes. Armenia's three-decade occupation of Azerbaijani territories extensively damaged the ecosystem, wildlife and natural resources in and around the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region. Armenians also resorted to large-scale acts of ecological terror in regions they had to leave under the trilateral November peace deal that stipulated

the return of Azerbaijan's occupied territories. The clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan escalated for the second time in 2020 after Armenia's forces deployed in the occupied Azerbaijani lands targeted Azerbaijani civilian settlements and military positions, causing casualties among civilians and the military. In the early hours of September 27, Azerbaijan launched a counter-offensive operation which lasted six weeks. The operation resulted in the liberation of Azerbaijan's occupied lands. A Russia-brokered ceasefire deal that Azerbaijan and Armenia signed on November 10, 2020, brought an end to the 44-day war between the two countries. The Azerbaijani army declared a victory against the Armenian troops. The signed agreement obliged Armenia to withdraw its troops from the Azerbaijani lands that it had occupied.

SA lose four wickets
for 106 in reply
to Pakistan's 272

SPORTS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan took four South Africa wickets to take command of the second Test at Pindi Cricket Stadium after Faheem Ashraf and Anrich Nortje starred in the first innings. South Africa were in trouble at 106/4 but skipper Quinton de Kock took on the Pakistani bowlers and scored pacy 24 late in the day. Earlier, Faheem Ashraf rescued Pakistan with an unbeaten 78 after the home side lost captain Babar Azam and Fawad Alam early. Babar was sent back to pavilion on the second ball of the day by Nortje while Fawad put himself in trouble as he took a risky single. The 26-year-old Babar made 77 while Fawad scored 45. Vice-captain Mohammad Rizwan didn't look at his best as he had the slowest of the starts.

He started to build on partnership with Faheem but the second new-ball did the trick for the visitors. Rizwan (18 off 68) went to hook a short-pitched delivery by Nortje, going straight into the hands of Kagiso Rabada at fine-leg. The wickets at the other end didn't cause much trouble for Faheem as he continued to take on bowlers. He completed his fourth Test fifty soon after Hasan Ali's dismissal by smacking a straight drive off Rabada. After Lunch, Pakistan were wrapped up by the visitors, dismissing them for 272 with Nortje starring with 5/56. It was Nortje's third fiver in this format. Proteas openers started their innings with a good run-rate, however, pacer Hasan Ali at the stroke of tea, dismissed Dean Elgar (15) and Rassie van der Dussen (0) on the score of 26.

Bookie arrested
during second Test
in Rawalpindi

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A bookie has been arrested during Pakistan-South Africa's second Test at Pindi Cricket Stadium, media reported. According to sources, a bookie named Bilal was arrested from inside the Pindi

Stadium on Day one of the second Test. Bilal hails from United Arab Emirates (UAE) and came inside the Pindi stadium by using a 'DJ card'. The Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) administration handed Bilal to Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and is under further investigation.



RABAT: Kashmir Solidarity Day event hosted at the Pakistani mission in Rabat. Members of the diplomatic corps, media, international organisations and NGOs were invited. Number limited due to Covid restrictions. – DNA

Turkey reiterates its support for the Kashmiris

Parliamentarian Muhammet Balta, in his speech, said Pakistan and Turkey have unique friendship and brotherhood, and people of both countries share their joy and pain

DNA

ANKARA: Turkey's unwavering support for the Jammu & Kashmir dispute was reiterated at the Kashmir Solidarity Day event organized by the Embassy of Pakistan in Ankara on Friday. Chairman of the Environment Commission of the Turkish Grand National Assembly Mr. Muhammet Balta was the chief guest at the event.

Messages of the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan were read out by Deputy Head of Mission Mr. Arshad Jan Pathan. Pakistani leadership reiterated political, moral, and diplomatic support to the people of Kashmir until the resolution of the dispute according to the aspirations of the Kashmiris. Parliamentarian Muhammet Balta, in his speech, said Pakistan and Turkey have unique friendship and brotherhood, and people of both countries

share their joy and pain. "Like Pakistan, Kashmir and Kashmiris have the same place in the heart and mind of every Turk," said Mr. Balta. He underscored that President Recep

Tayyip Erdogan highlights the Kashmir issue at every international platform and this is the same for the entire Turkish nation. Muhammet Balta criticized the 5th August 2019 illegal meas-

ures by India to try and change the special status of Jammu & Kashmir which is a disputed territory as recognized by the United Nations. He reassured every possible assistance to the

oppressed people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK). He emphasized that Turkish support would continue until the Kashmir dispute is resolved peacefully under the United Nations Security Council Resolutions and as per the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Pakistan's Ambassador to Turkey Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi in his remarks said the commemoration of 5th February as Kashmir Solidarity Day is a stark reminder of the broken promises and unfulfilled commitments made to the Kashmiri people by India for holding a plebiscite, when it had taken the matter first time to the UN in January 1948 and accepted its prescription. Since then, Ambassador Qazi underscored, all manner of political, diplomatic, military, economic, parliamentary, constitutional, and demographic jugglery and coercion has been employed to deny this right to the Kashmiris in IIOJK.

PM vows
to raise
Kashmir
issue till end

From Page 01

Afghanistan's history tells us this too. So many super-powers came there but none won against the people," PM Imran Khan said. "Today their RSS agenda and ideology is plain for everyone to see."

He said they ended up damaging their own nation. "The country is divided. The RSS ideology has harmed their own selves the most and will continue to."

The prime minister, addressing the Pakistan Democratic Movement, an 11-party Opposition alliance that held a parallel gathering in Muzaffarabad, told them to go ahead with their "long march", a decision announced yesterday.

"Do a long march wherever you want. I will assist you. But even if you hang down upside in protest, I will never grant you [a concession under the National Reconciliation Ordinance]," said the prime minister, to a roaring crowd.

Faheem
wants to
be known
as 'bowling
allrounder'

RAWALPINDI: All-rounder Faheem Ashraf, who has been in sublime form with the bat, wants to be called as 'bowling allrounder'. Faheem today smashed an unbeaten 78 in the first innings of the second Rawalpindi Test against South Africa. It was his third fifty in the last six innings, however, he has only four wickets in as many innings. "When my career is over, I still want to be known as bowling-allrounder. Batting has been a plus point for me and the performances have been coming due to the hard work," Faheem said in a virtual presser after Day two's play. The 27-year-old doesn't think that the Pakistan team has talents as all the bowlers are capable of batting. "All of them (Hasan Ali, Yasir Shah, Nauman Ali) have scored runs and because of them, I am comfortable while batting," he added. Talking about decline in average pace today, Faheem said that it was due to the hit he received on his right arm during his batting. "I was struggling today after the ball hit me while batting. I was also not expecting to ball continuous overs but I did. There's no such thing that I am not focusing on bowling and the pace has dropped," he added. – APP

Barty time as
Serena sets
up showdown
with world
number one

MELBOURNE: Serena Williams beat Danielle Collins Friday to set up a semi-final showdown with world number one Ashleigh Barty, but Simona Halep and Sofia Kenin both crashed to defeat. Williams and Barty ground out tough wins at the Yarra Valley Classic, but a teary-eyed Australian Open champion Kenin lost a repeat of last year's final against Garbine Muguruza in straight sets. World number two Halep also slumped out after being thrashed by Ekaterina Alexandrova 6-2, 6-1 in the quarter-finals of the Gippsland Trophy, where she appeared hampered by a lower back injury. Williams, however, has been in ominous form but needed to overcome a mid-match wobble to oust fellow American Collins 6-2, 4-6, 10-6 in 96 minutes. "I have nothing to lose against her... it's going to be a good match," Williams said about Saturday's contest with Barty. The 23-time Grand Slam champion broke three times in a dominant first set and appeared to be cruising until unexpectedly dropping her serve in the seventh game, as Collins forced a super tie-breaker. Williams, aiming for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title at the Australian Open, regrouped and finished the match by hitting her 24th winner. Six build-up tournaments for next week's Australian Open returned to action Friday after a coronavirus case at a designated tournament hotel halted play Thursday and forced hundreds of players and officials into isolation. Intermittent rain increased the backlog, but to ease the congestion WTA clashes were reduced to two sets and a 10-point super tiebreaker instead of the traditional three sets. World number 15 Muguruza has been in aggressive form in Melbourne, dropping just four games in two matches prior, and impressively hit the lines to run Kenin ragged 6-2, 6-2. – APP

Briefs

Azerbaijan, Turkey mull co-op on edu

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov met Turkish Education Foundation Chairman Birol Akgun the Foreign Ministry has reported on its website.

At the meeting, Minister Jeyhun Bayramov noted with satisfaction the rich, wide, and close friendly relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey.

Speaking about the former Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the biggest and most painful problem faced by the country since the first days of independence, the minister said that brotherly Turkey has always supported Azerbaijan's just position based on international law, and stressed that Azerbaijan highly appreciates the solidarity and moral support shown by Turkey at all levels, including by the people of Turkey, especially during the 44-day Patriotic War. He said that during this period of historical significance for Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijan-Turkey brotherhood and unity once again clearly demonstrated that "one nation, two states" is not in words but in deeds. As noted by the Azerbaijani president, it was stressed that the right policy is behind these close relations between the sides.

Birol Akgun noted that the liberation of the territories of Azerbaijan from the occupation of Armenia excited all the people of Turkey, stressed that the news of the victory was greeted with great joy. He noted that the friendly relations between the leaders of the two countries made a significant contribution to the development of bilateral relations. He referred to the post-war period of construction and development, emphasizing the importance of education in this regard. He expressed readiness to provide relevant assistance to Azerbaijan in the future development of education in the liberated territories. The sides noted the importance of further developing the existing cooperation between the two countries in all areas.

Indian Muslim comic gets bail

FOREIGN DESK

NEW DELHI: India's top court has granted interim bail to a Muslim stand-up comedian who was jailed for more than a month over jokes he did not tell, but was "going to".

The comedian, 30-year-old Munawar Faruqi, was arrested on January 1 following a complaint by the son of a politician from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The complainant alleged Faruqi had made objectionable remarks about Hindu deities and the powerful home minister, Amit Shah, during a show at a cafe in Indore, a city in Madhya Pradesh state governed by Modi's party. Stand-up comedy has become hugely popular in recent years in India, where intentionally hurting religious sentiments is a criminal offence.

But Faruqi was arrested preemptively before his performance even began. "Before he could even make the joke, before he could even really start the show, police came and dragged him away," said Anshuman Shrivastava, Faruqi's lawyer.

In his plea, Faruqi said police did not conduct investigations or collect any evidence before arresting him.

China conducts missile interception

WEB DESK

ANKARA: China has conducted tests on missile interception equipment, the country's Defense Ministry said in a statement. The statement said Chinese forces conducted a "land-based mid-course missile interception test within its territory" on Thursday.

"[It] achieved the desired test objective," the statement said, without further details. "The test is defensive in nature and not targeted against any country," the ministry added. The anti-missile tests come amid renewed tensions with India since last May along the Line of Actual Control, the de facto border, in the Ladakh region of the disputed Jammu and Kashmir.

Also, on Thursday, a US warship traversed the Taiwan Strait amid heightened tensions with Chinese jets flying above the waterway triggered by increased engagements between Washington and Taipei which China considers its "breakaway province."

Kashmir solution a must for lasting peace in region, says Amb Sajjad

Addressing the participants, Ambassador Sajjad Haider Khan reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support for the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) in their just and legitimate struggle for the inalienable right of self-determination



DNA

MINSK: A solemn ceremony was held at the Embassy of Pakistan, Minsk to commemorate the Kashmir Solidarity Day, which was attended by Pakistani diaspora, students and Belarusians from different walks of life. Addressing the participants, Amb-

sador Sajjad Haider Khan reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support for the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) in their just and legitimate struggle for the inalienable right of self-determination. While underscoring Pakistan's commitment to seeking a peaceful resolution of the dispute in keeping with the aspirations



of the people of Jammu & Kashmir and UNSC resolutions, he maintained that the resolution of this issue is the sole guarantor of lasting peace and stability in South Asia. On the occasion, the Ambassador also brought to attention the recent spike in violence by the Indian Armed Forces in IIOJK and brutal human rights violations being carried out with absolute im-

punity. He further highlighted the systemic socioeconomic injustice against the valley's Muslims and termed the ongoing Indian state sanctioned policy of ethnic cleansing as genocide in its worst manifestation. On the occasion, documentaries depicting the woeful state of human rights in Kashmir, both in Urdu and Russian were also played.

India equates Red Fort chaos with Capitol riots

FOREIGN DESK

NEW DELHI: India's foreign ministry has compared the storming of the historic Red Fort complex by protesting farmers in New Delhi on January 26 to the violence at the United States' Capitol Hill earlier this year by the supporters of former US President Donald Trump. Tens of thousands of protesting farmers broke police barricades to storm the Mughal-era fort, with many climbing onto its ramparts to wave farm union and religious flags in the location where prime ministers annually hoist the national flag to mark the country's independence. Thousands more farmers marched on foot or rode on horseback while shouting slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Foreign ministry spokesman Anurag Srivastava said the protests had "evoked similar sentiments and re-

actions" as the storming of the Capitol building in Washington, DC, which took place during a deadly demonstration by Trump's supporters on January 6. Five people, including a police officer, were killed in the Capitol violence after Trump urged his supporters "to fight" as the US Congress met to certify Joe Biden's victory in the presidential election.

An explosion caused by a police munition is seen while Trump's supporters gather in front of the Capitol Building in Washington, DC [File: Leah Millis/Reuters]. "The incidents of violence and vandalism at the historic Red Fort on the 26th of January have evoked similar sentiments and reactions in India, as did the incidents on the Capitol Hill on the 6th of January and are being addressed as per respective local laws," said India's foreign ministry spokesman Srivastava.

Palestinian shot dead by Israeli settlers in West Bank

FOREIGN DESK

RAMALLAH: An unarmed Palestinian man has been shot and killed by Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank, according to the Israeli military and Palestinian media. Israeli settlers opened fire and killed Khaled Nofal, 34, on Friday near the Palestinian village of Ras Karkar, northwest of the West Bank city of Ramallah, the official Palestinian news agency Wafa reported. The Israeli military referred to the incident as a "terror attack", but a spokesman was unable to explain how it came to that conclusion, given no weapons were found on the suspect or in his car.

The military said the suspect fought with a guard, who was also unarmed, before being shot and killed

by another guard and a third individual. It said the incident took place in Sde Efraim farm, which does not appear on maps and is likely one of several small illegal outposts set up by Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank. When Israeli officials use the term "terror attack" they are nearly always referring to attacks carried out by Palestinians against Jews. Radi Abu Fkheideh, the head of the local council in Ras Karkar, identified the deceased as Nofal, the married father of a four-year-old boy. He said the army stormed Nofal's home in the village early on Friday and arrested his father. He had no information about the circumstances of Nofal's death. Many Palestinians took to social media to condemn Nofal's killing, blaming the incident on an Israeli settler.

Jakarta webinar to observe the "Kashmir Solidarity Day"

DNA

JAKARTA: As part of series of events being held in commemoration of the "Kashmir Solidarity Day" (observed on 05 February every year), the Embassy of Pakistan held a Webinar today on the topic "Peace, Development & Security in South Asia-Kashmir a Case Study". The webinar was organized in collaboration with the reputed universities, organizations and think tanks from various parts of Indonesia. The Speakers included: 1- H.E Ambassador Muhammad Hassan, Ambassador of Pakistan to Indonesia, ASEAN & Timor Leste. 2 -Dr.Ali Maksum, PHD, Leading Academic/Professor at Muhammadiyah University. 3 -Drs. Nur Munir, Head of Islamic

and Middle Eastern Research Centre, University of Indonesia.

4-Dr. Zahir Khan, former Indonesian Diplomat and Chairman Kashmir Solidarity Forum.

5- Ms. Khairunnisa Simbolon, Leading Scholar and academic, associated with the University of Gadjah Madah, Jogjakarta.

H.E Ambassador Muhammad Hassan delivered a detailed speech highlighting the importance and history of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute and significance of the Kashmir Solidarity Day. He described in detail, the ongoing wave of intolerance and state sponsored repression against minorities (especially Muslims) in India with special reference to the plight of the Muslims of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK). Quoting the recent illegal attempts

aimed towards changing the demography of IIOJK by the Indian Government, The Ambassador conveyed Pakistan's strong rejection to these illegal acts, and expressed resolve of the Government of Pakistan to support the case of Jammu & Kashmir at all forums. He also spoke about the targeted hatred and discrimination against Muslims in India by the Modi Government such as the Babri Mosque verdict, the discriminatory Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), the controversial National Register of Citizens (NRC), and lynching of Muslims by the cow vigilantes. He also talked about India's hegemonic posture in the South Asian region with special reference to the recent problems created by India with its neighbours, including Pakistan, China, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Ambassador Hassan's speech also covered various other aspects of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute including gross Human Rights Violations, Sexual abuse and violence against women and Children, Hindutva ideology of the RSS inspired Modi Government, the non-implementation of the UNSC resolutions by India, and Pakistan's desire to resolve all issues with India, including the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, through dialogue, in accordance with the UNSC resolutions. Later on, Dr Nur Munir, Dr. Ali Maksum, Dr. Zahir Khan, and Ms. Khairunnisa Simbolon also presented their views on the topic.



ISTANBUL: Consulate general of Pakistan Istanbul arranged a protest demonstration activity against the Indian atrocities in the Illegally Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir to mark Kashmir Solidarity Day. - DNA

Myanmar teachers join protest against Army

Wearing red ribbons and holding up protest signs, hundreds of teachers and students gathered in front of campus buildings at the Yangon University of Education on Friday

DNA

RANGOON: People across Myanmar, including teachers and students, have staged protests as shows of anger gathers pace against the military coup and the subsequent detention of senior democratic leaders, including de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Earlier on Friday, Win Htein, considered a right-hand man of the overthrown leader, was arrested and at least 30 other people detained in the second city of Mandalay over pot-banging protests on Thursday. Wearing red ribbons and holding up protest signs, hundreds of teachers and students gathered in front of campus buildings at the Yangon University of Education on Friday. "We don't want this military coup which unlawfully seized power from our elected government," said lecturer Nwe Thazin Hlaing. "We are no longer going to

work with them. We want the military coup to fail," she added, surrounded by other staff members who held up three-finger salutes,

now used by many protesters in Myanmar. The salute - three fingers pointing up with palm away from the body - stems from the

Hunger Games movies, but in recent years, it has been adopted by protesters against authoritarian rule in Asia. One member of staff

estimated 200 of the 246 staff at the university joined the protest. "We aim to halt the administration system. We are now holding a peaceful strike," said another lecturer, Honey Lwin.

There were also reports of a similar protest at Dagon University in Yangon. The opposition among professional groups like doctors and teachers comes as there have been other, less formal protests including by people banging cans and saucepans and honking car horns to signal their opposition to the coup. There has been no outpouring of people onto the streets in a country with a bloody history of crackdowns on protests, but there were signs of coup opponents growing bolder - with dozens of youths parading in the southeastern city of Dawei on Friday. "We declare that we start our fight for democracy today in Dawei. We urge the people to join and stand with us," said one protester.



Pfizer withdraws emergency use bid of its vaccine

FOREIGN DESK

BERLIN: Pfizer Inc has withdrawn an application for emergency-use authorisation of its COVID-19 vaccine in India that it has developed with Germany's BioNTech, the company told the Reuters news agency on Friday.

The United States company, which was the first drugmaker to apply for emergency use authorisation of its COVID-19 vaccine in India, had a meeting with the country's drugs regulator on Wednesday and the decision was made after that, the company said.

"Based on the deliberations at the meeting and our understanding of additional information that the regulator may need, the company has decided to withdraw its application at this time," it said in a statement to Reuters.

"Pfizer will continue to engage with the authority and re-submit its approval request with additional information as it becomes available in the near future." Pfizer had sought authorisation for its vaccine in India late last year, but the government in January approved two much cheaper shots - one from Oxford University-AstraZeneca and another developed at home by Bharat Biotech with the Indian Council of Medical Research. Both companies had applied for approval of their vaccines after Pfizer.

India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation had declined to accept Pfizer's request for approval without a small local trial on the vaccine's safety and immunogenicity for Indians, Reuters has reported.

'Libya coastguard intercepts 800 refugees'

WEB DESK

TRIPOLI: Hundreds of Europe-bound refugees were intercepted in the Mediterranean Sea off Libya's coast and taken into detention over the last 24 hours, according to a United Nations agency.

The International Organization for Migration's Libya branch tweeted on Friday that more than 1,000 refugees have recently departed from Libya's shores, escaping "dire humanitarian conditions". More than 800 of them were stopped by the Libyan coastguard and sent to the North African country's notorious detention centres, the IOM said.

In the years since the 2011 NATO-backed uprising that removed and killed longtime leader Muammar Gaddafi, war-torn Libya has emerged as the dominant transit point for refugees and migrants fleeing war and poverty in Africa and the Middle East.

Smugglers often pack desperate families into ill-equipped rubber boats that stall and founder along the perilous Central Mediterranean route. The IOM posted photographs of mostly African refugee men waiting at disembarkation points in Libya and speaking to IOM staff.

Saudi Arabia frees two jailed Saudi Americans

FOREIGN DESK

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia has temporarily released two Saudi Americans who were jailed on alleged "terrorism-related" charges after more than 300 days of detention amid a stark change in US policy towards the kingdom.

Salah al-Haider, the son of a leading women's rights activist and Bader al-Brahim, a writer and doctor, were set free on Thursday pending trial, according to campaigner groups. "This is welcomed progress, even though it is long overdue," Freedom Initiative's Bethany al-Haidari said in a statement.

"Bader al-Brahim and Salah al-Haider should have never been jailed in the first place and their release should certainly not be on a 'temporary' basis." The two dual nationals were arrested in April 2019 and charged with "terrorism" related charges. Their next court case is set for March 8 this year in Saudi Arabia's Specialized Criminal Court (SCC). "They have been detained, separated from loved ones, and tried as terrorists for simply expressing their views. Peaceful dissent is not terrorism," al-Haidari added. The news of their release was confirmed by Prisoners of Conscience human rights group as well.

Briefs

Pak envoy urges EU to support Kashmiris

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's envoy to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg Ambassador Zaheer A Janjua on Friday urged the international community, especially the European Union, to play its role in ensuring fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Kashmiri people. Ambassador Janjua, in his video message on the occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day, reaffirmed Pakistan's unflinching support to the brave and resilient Kashmiri people in their struggle for freedom from illegal Indian occupation. He said the Kashmiri people had rendered unmatched sacrifices for their legitimate right to self-determination over the course of more than seven decades, a press release issued by Pakistan Embassy in Brussels said. Referring to the India's illegal and unilateral actions of August 5, 2019, Ambassador Janjua said India had changed the special status of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and introduced a series of new domicile regulations to perpetuate its illegal occupation and to change its demographic structure in contravention of the United Nations resolutions.

Pfizer, AstraZeneca vaccines for elderly

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan plans to administer the Pfizer-BioNTech and AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccines to its elderly population, a health official said. The Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) has till now granted emergency validation to the Chinese-made Sinopharm vaccine and the AstraZeneca vaccine developed by Oxford University. Pfizer, too, will now be filing for emergency use authorization in Pakistan later this month, a senior health official told GeoTV, on the condition of anonymity as he was not authorised to speak to the press. "Pfizer has not applied as yet [for approval]," he explained, "They [the company] has conveyed that they are preparing a dossier for submission by the end of February." Once the pharmaceutical company submits its proposal, the drug regulatory authority will then decide if it is safe to roll out the jab. On February 2, Pakistan officially kicked off its coronavirus inoculation campaign nationwide, after China gifted the country 500,000 doses of the Sinopharm vaccine. The tranche will be used to vaccinate the 500,000 healthcare workers in the country who are directly in contact with the Covid-19 infected.

Pak-origin Hina Chaudhry among top US cardiologists

DNA

NEW YORK: Renowned Pakistan origin cardiologist known as a "Cardiac Magician," Dr. Hina Chaudhry, who researches cardiac regeneration in which dead heart cells after a heart can be regenerated, has been named amongst the top science fellows by National Institute of Health in the US. Her research revolves around the process of new heart muscle growth after a patient suffers a heart attack. She's been named one of the top fellows by the NIH for the National Research Service Award and is an Irving Scholar. Dr. Hina Chaudhry has more feathers to her cap as she has featured amongst the top-20 most influential women in science in the entire Islamic world. She is a cardiologist, scientist, and entrepreneur, who won a research grant of \$2.9 million a few months back from NIH to further her study into cardiac cell rejuvenation.

'Aman-2021' will raise mechanism for threats

Dr Azhar was of the view that although the menace of piracy in the Indian Ocean region has faded away, it is pertinent to enhance the role and capacity of maritime security agencies and coast guards along with improving ship-tracking mechanisms



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Hosting of the multinational maritime exercise 'Aman-2021' reflects Pakistan's intentions for building collaborative maritime security mechanisms to counter all sorts of non-traditional security threats in the Indian Ocean region, including, but not limited to, growing sea piracy, environmental, cyber and satellite communication sabotage, and maritime policing issues such as illegal fishing, smuggling, drugs and human trafficking, etc. This was stressed by maritime experts and security analysts at a webinar titled 'Security Cooperation in the Western Indian Ocean Region and Significance of AMAN

2021', which was hosted by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS). The session was chaired by Vice Admiral (r) Iftikhar Ahmed Rao, former deputy chief of naval staff, and co-chaired by Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS. Dr Maliha Zeba Khan, IPS' Research Fellow, moderated the seminar which included as speakers and discussants, Dr Shabana Fayyaz, in-charge, defence & strategic studies department, Quaid-i-Azam University, Dr Azhar Ahmad, naval expert and associate professor, Bahria University, Dr. Khurram Iqbal, head of IR department, National Defence University, Vice Admiral (r) Asaf Humayun, Rear Admiral (r) Saleem Akhtar, Mirza Hamid Hassan and Aneela Shahzad while a number of researchers and analysts from

National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA), Maritime Study Forum (MSF) and other relevant institutions and organizations from across Pakistan participated actively in the online event. V/Admiral (ret) Rao said, Pakistan's peace initiative in the IOR in the shape of Aman exercises has created a conducive environment for regional and extra-regional players. He warned that India, with its hegemonic designs in the Indian ocean, is trying to pose itself as a maritime regional power and is interested in holding sway over the choke points in the IOR. However, this is not possible owing to the magnitude of China's military and economic prowess, he added. Commenting on participation of

Russian navy ships in the Aman exercise for the first time, he said, this holds immense political significance and augurs well for bilateral relations between Pakistan and Russia. Dr Khurram apprised the forum that increasing competition between China and the US, which earlier was limited to the Pacific, has now shifted to the Indian Ocean, changing power dynamics of the region. He further said that India, the most important pawn of American grand chess in Asia, wants to dominate the Indo-Pacific theater. These hegemonic designs are a matter of concern for Pakistan, which is playing its part in fostering peace and stability in the region. Instead of taking sides,

Pakistan is acting as a bridge to defuse tensions in the exceedingly polarized Indian Ocean. Dr Azhar was of the view that although the menace of piracy in the Indian Ocean region has faded away, it is pertinent to enhance the role and capacity of maritime security agencies and coast guards along with improving ship-tracking mechanisms. Highlighting the role of Pakistan Navy in this regard, he said Pakistan is currently commanding Combined Task Force 151 - a multinational naval task force created to respond to piracy attacks - many times. In his opinion, the answer to piracy lies in geo-political stability in the disturbed countries in the region like Somalia.

APHC, others express gratitude to Pakistan

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the APHC and other Hurriyat leaders and organizations have expressed gratitude to the people, government and leadership of Pakistan for their unflinching support to the Kashmir cause. The APHC General Secretary, Movi Bashir Ahmad in a statement issued in Srinagar said, Pakistan has been continuously supporting at every level the Kashmiris' struggle for securing their right to self-determination and raising the Kashmir dispute in the international forums. He praised the government and people of Pakistani for raising their voice in favor of the oppressed Kashmiri people and observing the Kashmir Solidarity Day to draw the attention of the world community towards the atrocities being perpetrated by Indian troops on the innocent people of IIOJK. Pakistan is a key party to the Kashmir dispute and a final solution to this dispute is not possible without involvement of Pakistan, he maintained. Senior Hurriyat leader, Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori in his statement in Srinagar said, Pakistan has been supporting the oppressed people of IIOJK politically, diplomatically and morally since day one of India's illegal of Jammu and Kashmir. He said Pakistan is the only country which is continuing its unwavering support for Kashmiris' right to self-determination. - DNA

Pak Navy plays imp role in maritime security: CNS

WEB DESK

BEIJING: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral M. Amjad Khan Niazi has said in cognizance of Pakistan's geo-strategic location in Indian Ocean at the doorstep of the Arabian Gulf, the Pakistan Navy was playing an important role to promote regional maritime security and good order at sea. "With the changing geostrategic realities in the region and operationalization of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the role and responsibilities of the PN

are growing exponentially. The Pakistan Navy's (PN) is steadily undertaking capability enhancement and capacity development to optimally deal with added responsibilities and evolving challenges," he said in an exclusive interview with Global Times, an English-language Chinese newspaper. During the interview, navy chief shared his visions on Pakistan Navy's (PN) role in promoting regional maritime security, naval cooperation between the PN and People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy China, and the upcoming multinational exercise.

Pakistan, he said, was blessed with an important geo-strategic location on the northern shores of the Indian Ocean and at the confluence of three regions namely the Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia. "This gives us proximity to the Gulf of Oman which is an important global energy highway as nearly 33% of the world's oil shipments pass through this area." Pakistan's 90 percent trade is sea borne and most of our energy requirements are also met through the sea. Pakistan's maritime advantage stems from our over 1,000

kilometres long coastline and the potential offered by our exclusive economic zone of 240,000 square kilometres and continental shelf of 50,000 square kilometres, which is increasingly adding to the national economy. "In my assessment, the global geopolitical environment is undergoing an unprecedented transition, remaining highly volatile and is characterized by new alignments of interests and partnerships. Pakistan finds itself in the midst of a complex geopolitical and geo-economic competition prevailing in the region.



ISLAMABAD: People from different walks of life participating in a rally to mark the Kashmir Solidarity Day at Karachi Company. APP

'Kashmir an integral part of Pakistan'

LAHORE: Special Assistant to Chief Minister on Information Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan on Friday said that the IIOJK was an integral part of Pakistan and it would soon be included in the map of the country. It was need of the hour to shake the global conscience on serious human rights' abuses in IIOJK, she added. She expressed these views while addressing a seminar in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day at Lahore Press Club here. Dr Firdous said the world community should save humanity from the fascist Modi-led regime which had turned Kashmir into the world's largest prison. She called upon the United Nations and the world human rights organizations to raise voice on behalf of widows, victims of rape, families of those who had been disappeared. - DNA

'Kashmiris to get rid of Indian atrocities'

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on Friday said the people of IIOJK would get rid of Indian atrocities soon and decide their fate by themselves. The minister, in his message on the Kashmir Solidarity day, said the Kashmiri people, particularly the were rendering sacrifices for freedom and the time would come when they would get their right to self-determination. He said entire Pakistani nation was expressing solidarity with the innocent Kashmiris and united on the issue. Pakistan had always highlighted the Kashmir issue at every forum and exposed Indian atrocities in the region. For the last seven decades, Sheikh Rasheed said, Kashmiris were struggling against the illegal Indian occupation on their region and were awakening the world's conscience. There would be instability in the region if the fascist India was not stopped from committing atrocities against Kashmiris and other minorities. India could not curb the voices of innocent Kashmiris through violence there, the minister said, adding that the day was not far when the freedom movement of Kashmiris would succeed.

'Pak-China cultural corridor to strengthen ties'

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan, like China, has long history of civilization and with the continuous progress of the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the two countries could link their people more closely by developing a cultural corridor. "Pakistan, like China, has a long history of civilization. With the continuous progress of the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, if we simultaneously develop an eternal Pak-China cultural corridor and learn from each other's cultural traditions, we can link the people of the two nations more closely, thus building a community of common destiny between China and Pakistan." These views were expressed by Cheng Xizhong, Visiting Professor at Southwest University of Political Science and Law and senior Fellow of the Charhar Institute in an article published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Friday. "As a famous city with

thousands of years of history, Lahore has its own proud capital. It used to be the capital of the Mughal Dynasty. With hundreds of years of vicissitudes, it has accumulated a bright and profound cultural heritage, known as the "soul of Pakistan". A large number of elaborate architectures left by the Mughal Dynasty still show the splendid civilization of the past and fascinate visitors. The Badshahi Mosque is magnificent. Whenever anyone visit, it has a variety of majestic features, rendering the style of Islamic architecture incisively and vividly, the scholar said. When people walked beside the majestic and magnificent Lahore Fort, they would feel that the ancient city wall stretches out, and every red brick and stone seems to be describing the history of time, he said. On the moonlit night, when people sat by the fountain of the Shalimar Garden and look at the pavilions deliberately built with marble, they would see the scene of the multi-column fountains spewing green and white

gemstones, and they would also sincerely sigh for the industrious wisdom and ingenuity of the ancient Pakistani working people. Many celebrities who visited Lahore like to gather in tea-houses. They enjoyed chat, wrote and exchanged ideas there. Sometimes, a pot of tea could trigger a debate and enlighten a collision of thinking, he remarked. When they were tired of walking in the street, they sat down in a tea-house, look at the pictures of cultural celebrities drinking tea on the walls of the tea-house, listen to the pleasant chat of the guests around them, and deeply feel the cultural influences of "tea and politics" with the elegant fragrance of tea. Sometimes, a casual chat with a stranger can lead to an unknown past in Pakistan, or a touching story, which also adds a lot of color to life, he said. To bid farewell to the elegant tea-house, people may turn their eyes to a bazaar, which offered a rich supply of different commodities. All kinds of clothing, jewelry and handicrafts are permeated

with local ethnic customs, which can be enjoyed by outsiders for a long time. Of course, there are also busy shopping malls in Lahore, but the good taste of life is often hidden in small shops in bazaars. Only after careful exploration, can find something satisfying. Walking in a bazaar, people keep quiet in the noise, and have a dialogue with your heart in the process of repeated selection and appreciation. As night falls, the streets of Lahore are still full of traffic. The neon of the city is reflected in the moat of Lahore, and the ancient charm and modern flavor are suddenly integrated. The moat is like the Milky Way. The cultural image of Lahore turns into a little halo, just like a star, dotted with different artistic conceptions. When they gaze at it, you can see the figure of the Mughal Dynasty, and the millennium time reappears vaguely, which makes people feel more and more the charm of Lahore and the mystery hidden in the history. Unconsciously, you are deeply intoxicated in the night.