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Briefs

China will continue to support Pakistan

DNA

BEIJING: As this year marks the 70th anniversary of establishment of China-Pakistan diplomatic relations, China will continue to offer support and assistance for Pakistan's anti-epidemic efforts, economic recovery and social development in accordance with its needs, Chinese Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Tuesday. In accordance with the diplomatic ties, China will continue to offer support and assistance for Pakistan's anti epidemic efforts, economic recovery and social development in accordance with its needs, he said.

Ahsan Iqbal slams govt

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Ahsan Iqbal has said that a 'friend' of Prime Minister Imran Khan will be disqualified very soon. Talking to media men in Lahore on Tuesday, Ahsan Iqbal said that Imran Khan is pursuing 'open voting' in Senate elections in order to crush a revolt in the ruling party. "We will go to the court as the PTI government is spreading constitutional anarchy in the country," he added. Meanwhile, former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that today the doors of the courts in the country have been shut.

PDM has not dragged army

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb on Tuesday has clarified that opposition parties have not dragged any national institution into politics. Talking to media, the PML-N leader said that the Constitution of Pakistan has not allowed any national institution to interfere in the politics. The economy of the country has been contaminated, she said. Marriyum Aurangzeb said that the jobs are available to only 'friends of Bani Gala'.

Govt to ensure transparency in Senate polls

It is no secret that buying and selling of votes have been a tradition in Senate elections, said the Minister

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Asad Umar on Tuesday said that the PTI government's decision to issue an ordinance regarding the Senate elections was within the limits of the Constitution, adding that the government will take all possible measures to ensure transparency in the polls. He was addressing a press conference in Islamabad alongside Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shibli Faraz about decisions taken by the federal cabinet under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday. Regarding the stance of the Opposition towards the introduction of open-ballot voting in the Senate, he said that those who have been buying and selling votes in the past are the ones objecting to the move. "It is no secret that buying and selling of votes have

SC's guidance will be respected, says Qureshi

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Tuesday termed Supreme Court the most appropriate forum for interpretation of Constitution said the government would respect its guidance on the matter of open ballot in Senate election. The Foreign Minister said the government had only two options, either to approach court for a constitutional interpretation or to amend the Constitution, for which it lacked the two-third majority. Commenting on the current political situation in the country, Qureshi said

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Iranian envoy says ties with Pakistan excellent

Issues message on the occasion of anniversary of Iran Revolution; says the Iranian people are firmly and zealously following the Islamic Revolution ideals

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini Ambassador of Islamic republic of Iran to Pakistan has said he was honored to congratulate forty-second anniversary of the auspicious victory of the "Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution" to all of its lovers from Pakistan and around the world. He said, after the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the value and importance of the friendly and brotherly neighboring



country of Pakistan increased more than ever, and the promotion of relations becomes one of the priorities in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In a message on the occasion, the Iranian ambassador recognized endeavors of the valiant and resilient people of Iran. He added the tree of revolution is today more robust than any time before and the Islamic Iran is witnessing exemplary self-reliant growth and

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Return of int'l cricket a result of sacrifices: COAS

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: "Dividends of improved security situation including return of international cricket in the country is a result of numerous sacrifices rendered and challenges overcome to eliminate extremism and terrorism from Pakistan. We will stay the course



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ISLAMABAD: Indonesian Ambassador Adam Tugio in a group photo with the Director General Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), Major General Muhammad Arif Malik and other senior officials. - DNA

Pak-Turk joint exercise starts

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan-Turkey joint military exercise ATATURK-XI has started. The opening ceremony was held at the Special Service Headquarters, Tarbela. Turkish Special Forces and Pakistan Army's Special Service Group troops are participating in three weeks long exercise. It includes counter terrorism, close quarter battle, cordon and search, Fire and Move Techniques, helicopter rappelling, compound clearance, and Rescue and Free Fall operations. According to the ISPR, the military exercise will further strengthen the bond of two brotherly nations and will help in adapting the emerging trend in military modernization and cooperation.

Pak reports 1,008 new corona cases

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reported 40 deaths in the last 24 hours by novel coronavirus as the number of positive cases has surged to 556,519. The nationwide tally of fatalities has jumped to 12,066 on Tuesday. According to the latest figures by the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) 1,008 persons tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 24 hours. Sindh remains the worst-hit province by the pandemic in terms of cases followed by Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad.

Pak, Indonesia vow to fight drug abuse

Indonesian ambassador Adam Tugio visits the Anti Narcotics Force Headquarters

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Indonesian Ambassador Adam Tugio held a meeting with the Director General Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), Major General Muhammad Arif Malik on Tuesday.

In the meeting, both officials explored concrete collaboration at bilateral level in addressing trans-

national crimes of illicit drug trafficking. They also exchanged views on the challenge posed by the two countries from synthetic drugs or New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) and smuggling of NPS beyond national borders which requires enhanced cooperation at global level. Earlier on Monday, Indonesian Ambassador Adam M. Tugio had tak-

en charge of the ASEAN Islamabad Committee Chairmanship from the High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam Dato Mahmud Saidin in a special ceremony held at the Indonesian Embassy. The meeting was attended by High Commissioner of Malaysia, Ambassadors of the Philippines and Myanmar and Charge d'Affaires of Thailand and Vietnam.

PDM vows to topple govt

NAZIR SIYAL

HYDERABAD: Pakistan Democratic Movement President Maulana Fazlur Rehman has said that he will not rest until the incompetent rulers are removed from the power. Addressing the PDM rally in Hyderabad on Tuesday, the JUI-F chief welcomed the DG ISPR statement that army had nothing to do with the politics. He said, "We have been in politics for the last forty years. If you (Imran Khan) want to learn politics, you have to follow us. You will not learn the art of politics without us. We know how to fight crisis. We are fighting for the people's right to vote." "Like the general elections, rigging is being planned again for the Senate polls. We are fighting for the survival of Pakistan," said Fazl.

The PDM president said that the current rulers did not come to the power with the votes of the people. He said that they ruined the entire country. He said that government made a plan to rig the Senate elections. He requested the Supreme Court to leave the matter of open ballot to the parliament. Fazl said that the National Accountability Bureau was established only to trap politicians. "Listen Imran Khan, you can't hold us accountable. Right now, you will face the accountability," he added. He said that PDM would achieve its goals. Movements run with enthusiasm and commitment, he added. Addressing Tuesday's PDM rally in Hyderabad, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that in the month of March, PDM will

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Cabinet okays increase in salaries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet has approved an increase in the salaries of 370,000 government employees, from grades one to 16, while provincial officers will not benefit from the move, sources informed media. The decision came during a federal cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday, where views were exchanged on the country's economic and political situation. According to sources, Federal Minister for Defence Perviz Khattak briefed the federal cabinet about salaries of government employees. Moreover, a report on organisations' CEOs and heads was also presented during the meeting. As many as 80 top positions are vacant in several ministries, divisions, and departments, to which PM Imran Khan, taking stern notice, reprimanded the concerned secretaries.

Trump's 2nd impeachment trial begins

DNA

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump's unprecedented second impeachment trial begins on Tuesday 9 February in the Senate. He is the first US president to be impeached twice, and it is the first time an impeachment trial has been held against a former president. The trial will hear allegations that he committed "high crimes and misdemeanors" before leaving office. On 13 January, the US House of Representatives voted by 232 to 197 to impeach Trump over "incitement of insurrection" after his supporters stormed the Capitol in an attempt to overturn November's election result. 10 Republican representatives voted to impeach him, making it the most bipartisan presidential impeachment in US history.

Japan confers imperial decoration upon a Pakistani

I.P. REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has conferred the 2020 Autumn Imperial Decorations, "The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays" upon Mr. Zafar Mahmood, visiting Professor at the Department of Japanese Language, National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad, in recognition of his sig-

nificant contribution towards the promotion of Japanese language in Pakistan and strengthening friendly relations between Japan and Pakistan. MATSUDA Kuninori, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, on behalf of the Government of Japan, on February 9, conferred the imperial decoration "The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays" upon Mr. Zafar Mahmood. The conferral ceremony was held

at his official residence with limited participants of family and close friends of the decoration recipient, while taking infection prevention measures against COVID-19. Zafar Mahmood's ties with Japan began when he started his studies in the Nagoya University through a scholarship program offered by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan in 1979. After graduation, he extended his

stay for over 10 years working for NEC. In 2000, he joined the MEXT Alumni Association of Pakistan (MAAP) and has been working to promote educational exchanges between Japan and Pakistan. He also assisted the Embassy of Japan select talented Pakistani youth for future MEXT scholarship students and provided pre-departure sessions for the selected students. He also contributed greatly to the promotion of the Japanese

language in Pakistan. As a visiting professor, he taught in the Japanese Language Department of the National University of Modern Languages. His venture has now taken more popularity as he has begun conducting the Japanese Language Capability Test (JLCT) exam in different cities of Pakistan after becoming Pakistan's only official agent in 2018.

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England thrash India by 227 runs in Chennai Test - Page 06

Aliyev hails ties with UK, pledges for more co-op - Page 07

'Pakistan establishes border markets to promote SMEs' - Page 08

Briefs

LHC extends interim bail of Rana Sanaulah in assets case

DNA

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) has extended the interim bail of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader Rana Sanaulah in assets beyond income case. A two-member bench of LHC headed by Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar heard the bail petition of Rana Sanaulah in assets beyond income case today. During the hearing, the petitioner's lawyer argued that on one side, the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) was claimed that Sanaulah made the assets through drug trafficking, whereas, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) made claims for developing the assets through corruption. The court later summoned lawyers to continue arguments for ascertaining the legality of assets in the case. The hearing was adjourned till March 10 after an extension in interim bail granted to Rana Sanaulah by LHC. Earlier on January 28, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had moved to the Lahore High Court (LHC) to take up Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader Rana Sanaulah's bail petition in assets beyond income case.

People of Sindh will make history: Nasir Shah

DNA

KARACHI: Sindh Information Minister Nasir Hussain Shah on Tuesday said that people of Sindh will make history in Tuesday's Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) rally in Hyderabad. Nasir Shah, in a statement, said that PDM's public meeting in Hyderabad's referendum against the puppet government and today masses will express their hatred towards the incumbent rulers. The provincial minister further said that Centre has always ignored Sindh. The federal government refuses to pay Sindh's share and also tries to take control of islands through Presidential ordinances, he said.

Services trade deficit shrinks 42.41% in H1 of Fiscal year

ISLAMABAD: The country's services trade deficit contracted by 42.41 percent during the first half (H1) of the current financial year (2020-21) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The services trade deficit during July-December (2020-21) was recorded at \$977.24 million against the deficit of \$1696.80 million in July-December (2019-20), according to the latest data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The services exports during the six months under review grew by 0.31 percent and were recorded at \$2844.12 million against the exports of \$2835.36 million last year. On the other hand, the imports into the country shrunk by 15.68 percent by falling from \$4532.16 million to \$3821.36 million, the PBS data revealed. — DNA

Sadpara, A 'gem' gone missing in K2

ISLAMABAD: The search operation for missing Pakistani mountaineer Ali Sadpara and his team members Jon Snorri of Iceland and Juan Pablo Mohr of Chile could not be resumed on Tuesday as the nation prayed for the safe return of climbers. The messages of hopes and prayers continue to pour in on social media platforms with hopes of a miracle for the survival of mountain heroes. Sadpara and other team members went missing on February 5 during their K2 expedition — the toughest and most difficult mountain to climb during winters. Home Secretary Gilgit Baltistan Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Tuesday said search and rescue operation could not resume due to cloudy weather, snowfall and strong wind. He said a request for FLIR (forward-looking infrared Cameras) with latest avionics package has been sent to Pakistan Air Force. The golden words of Ali Sadpara keep the hopes of nation intact, who had once said, "My spirit soars where the air goes thin, if I ever got stuck

on top of a mountain, I will dig an undermine and live there". Sadpara has record of climbing eight highest peaks of the world and hoisting the Pakistan flag. Pakistan is home to five 8,000m peaks including K2, Nanga Parbat, Broad Peak, Gasherbrum I and II. The remaining are in Nepal and China. Ali Sadpara celebrated his 45th birthday at K2 Base Camp on February 2 before he started the summit bid. In his Jan 31 tweet, the tough yet full of life Sadpara expressed joy over working with adventurer and filmmaker Eli Saikaly — for "filming him in exchange for dance lessons". According to statistics of 8000ers.com, the achievements of Ali Sadpara are as follows: Gasherbrum II in 2006 Nanga Parbat FOUR TIMES (2008, 2009, 2016 — FIRST WINTER ASCENT and 2017) G1 in 2010. Broad Peak summit in 2012 Broad Peak in 2017 K2 in 2018 • Lhotse Makalu and Manaslu in 2019. Ali's son, Sajid says he and his father were climbing without supplemental oxygen but had a bottle in their pack for

emergencies. Also, when he left the three missing climbers, they had no radio or satellite phone. He believes they summited and had an accident on the descent in the Bottleneck, but he cannot be sure. Photo of ice serac and Bottleneck high on K2, taken from a Pakistani military helicopter on February 7, 2021, during an unsuccessful search for missing climbers. Photo Chhang Dawa Sherpa. The Everest Today shared a video by climber and skier Dave Watson where Sadpara's son Sajid last saw his father and team at around 10 am PKT, 05 February. In a world long dominated by western climbers, Sadpara, like the Nepalese climber Nirmal "Nimsdai" Purja, who was among the Sherpa team to make the first successful winter ascent of K2 only weeks ago, stands out for his achievements. As well as Nanga Parbat in winter, he had climbed eight of the world's 14 mountains over 8,000m and secured sponsorship from the Pakistani government to climb the rest, the Guardian reported. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs a meeting on price control of essential items held. — DNA

Commotion in NA no service to democracy, says Asad Qaiser

The Speaker said that it was joint responsibility of government and opposition to conduct the proceedings of the house in a smooth manner and ensure a conducive atmosphere in the house

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Babar Awan called on Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser on Tuesday to discuss matters pertaining to legislation and issues of national importance. It was decided to convene session of National Assembly on requisition of the opposition. It was also agreed that proceedings of the house would be conducted accord-

ing to rules of procedure and conduct of business in the National Assembly. The Speaker said that it was joint responsibility of government and opposition to conduct the proceedings of the house in a smooth manner and ensure a conducive atmosphere in the house. He said that commotion in the House was neither a service to democracy nor to the people.

He further said that issues of national importance and legislation would be discussed in the forthcoming session. He said that by conducting the proceedings of the House in a cordial atmosphere, matters of public importance and legislation could be enacted in a better manner. He said that the aspirations of people were linked with the elected representatives, therefore in

order to come up to their expectations, the elected representatives would have to discuss their problems through Parliament. Adviser to the Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs, Dr. Babar Awan, while praising role of Speaker in conducting the proceedings of the House effectively, said that the ruling party and the opposition have always been given equal opportunity in the proceed-

ings of the House. He hoped that members of National Assembly would follow rules and regulations in the upcoming sessions and would play their positive role in conducting proceedings of the house in a conducive atmosphere. He said that issues of public importance should be discussed so that confidence of the people and their elected representatives could be increased. — APP

CDA generates record revenue of over 32mn

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) generated the revenue of Rs 32.27 million during the month of January through the completion certificates of commercial and residential buildings, building plans, and NOCs. According to detail, due to the remarkable policies of the administration of CDA

the department of Building Control collected the revenue of more than Rs 32 million during the last month. The BCS department of CDA received total 09 cases of the completion certificates of residential buildings during the month of January. All the cases have been issued the completion certificates through which CDA collected the revenues of Rs 493, 985. No application received for

the completion certificates of commercial buildings. However, the department received cases of 04 commercial buildings regarding the approval of plans through which the authority collected the revenue of Rs 14,516,994. Total 11 cases of residential building plans were received which generated the revenue of Rs 349,800. Similarly, 44 cases of approval of the NOC for the construction additional

story in commercial buildings were received through which revenue of Rs 14,196,240 was generated. Total 61 cases of approval of the NOC for the construction of an additional story in residential buildings were received through which the revenue of Rs 1,462,996 was generated. The authority generated revenue of Rs 1,251,000 through two cases NCU fine of residential buildings.

Looters' politics has come to an end: CM

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar has said politics of the looters has come to an end for good and those spreading confusion through their negative politics have no future. In a statement, the CM said frustration was visible on the faces of those promoting anarchistic politics, but no conspiracy against the development journey would ever succeed. On the other hand, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has selflessly served masses and there was no corruption scandal against the incumbent government, he said adding that no hin-



drance would be allowed in the public service despite difficulties as people wanted development and prosperity. The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) should read the writing on the wall because anarchistic designs had never worked, he added. — APP

'Poverty alleviation project changing lives in Southern Punjab'

DNA

LAHORE: The International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) says that its poverty alleviation project in southern Punjab has started changing the lives of extremely poor households through a package of support such as secure housing unit, vocational and entrepreneurial training, food banks and access to financial services. An assessment of the project carried out by an IFAD team, led by Country Director for Pakistan Hubert Boirard, shows that 1.5 million rural people living in seven districts of southern Punjab have to date benefited from the Southern Punjab Poverty Alleviation Project (SPPAP).

The project costing \$195.12 million is nearing completion in 2022. The interventions under the UN agency-assisted project are focused on increased agricultural productivity and raise rural incomes, thus contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals of no poverty, zero hunger, decent work and economic growth. Leading an annual supervision mission of the project, Hubert, who extensively visited Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Dera Ghazi Khan, Layyah, Muzaffargarh, Rahim Yar Khan and Rajanpur, appreciated the outstanding performance of the project for achieving milestones and targets despite the challenging situation due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

PDM' lacks capacity: Firdous

LAHORE: Special Assistant to Chief Minister (SACM) Punjab on Information Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan has said the long march idea would prove a nightmare for the Pakistan Democratic Movement

(PDM), as the opposition parties were directionless and they lack the capacity to hold any march. In a statement issued here on Tuesday, the SACM said the long march would prove a failure like their

resignation threat. March 26 was far away and the corrupt cabal was striving to save its looted money only, she added. In fact, the PDM was a gang of corrupt politicians who have no future. — APP



Government of Pakistan
Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives
(Development Communication Project)

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Development Communication Project, invites Expression of Interest from technically qualified and financially sound digital media / media firms for developing digital / social media content for this Ministry.

The bidding documents have been prepared in accordance with PPR Rules 2004 (36-d) for procuring services. Detailed RFP can be downloaded from the websites: www.pc.gov.pk and www.ppra.org.pk. Hardcopies of (filled-in) forms along with proposals must reach at address given below. The deadline for submission of complete bidding document is 15 days from the date of publication of this advertisement. This Ministry reserves the right to reject any application prior to the acceptance on the basis of criteria prescribed by this Ministry.

Program Officer (Coordination)
Development Communication Project
Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives
Room No.515, 5th Floor, "P" Block, Pak. Secretariat,
Islamabad

PID (I) No. 4243/20

ATC remands 5 terrorists in CTD custody

DNA

KARACHI: An anti-terrorism court on Tuesday handed over five arrested terrorists to the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on physical remand until Feb 20. CTD officials produced the suspects before the court amid tight security and requested that they be handed over to them on a 14-day physical remand for interrogation. The court, however, remanded the terror suspects in CTD custody until Feb 20 and directed the police to produce them on completion of the remand along with a progress report.

The suspected terrorists have been booked in eight cases pertaining to a shoot-out with law enforcement agencies, attempted murder, possession of illicit arms and explosives. Investigators revealed that the terrorists were planning to attack the Sindh Assembly and receiving directions from their handlers in Kandahar, a city in Afghanistan. "Three of the arrested terrorists hailed from Kandahar while another one belonged to Nangarhar," they said. "The terrorists planned to attack Sindh Assembly, however, failed in their bid after the assembly was not in the session."

Daraz launches dFresh in Faisalabad

Faisalabad: After a successful response in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad Daraz takes dFresh to Faisalabad. The leading online shopping platform has created an opportunity for Faisalabad's consumers to conduct their grocery shopping online on the platform with a wide variety of fresh produce available on Daraz. During the pandemic, sustainable growth of 300% in this category shows the adaptability to e-commerce in the country. The category has increased the variety of the products sold catering to the demands of the consumers around who use dFresh on a weekly basis to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. The channel includes fresh produce which is delivered to your doorsteps straight from the farmers market where by orders placed through the Daraz APP are freshly bought off and packaged to deliver the next day. Ahsan Kidwai, Category Director, FMCG said, "dFresh has come a long way since inception and I would say this is just the beginning! The implementation of a strict lockdown in March-April last year was a true testament of our sourcing, packaging and last-mile capabilities. Operating under extremely challenging conditions, we are happy to come out as winners by delivering essentials to our customers' doorsteps" Currently, dFresh in Faisalabad offers over 60+ varieties of fruits and vegetables with bakery goods and dairy items to be added in the assortment portfolio soon. The category offering depends upon the season availability of fruits and vegetables.

Briefs

AIU provides course books at website

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), in order to facilitate its students, has ensured provision of electronic copies of the course books on its website. According to the AIU, the students have been asked to download their respective course books from the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk). The initiative has been taken in a bid to provide standard educational facilities to students at their doorsteps by incorporating the use of latest information and communication technology. Prof Dr Zia Ul-Qayyum is specifically focusing on transforming university's academic and administrative operations from manual to automation to provide efficient and quality educational services to the students of this prestigious national institution across the country. Moreover, university has released assignments submission schedule of programs offered in autumn 2020 semester. According to the schedule, the deadlines for the submission of 1st and 2nd assignments of B Ed, BS and post graduate diploma programs is February 21 and April 18 respectively. The students of MA/ MSc can submit their 1st and 2nd assignments till February 28 and April 25 respectively.

IGP orders crackdown against drug peddlers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman has directed all police officials to launch massive crackdown against drug pushers, wine sellers and those involved in immoral activities. He directed DIG (Operations) Afzal Ahmed Kausar to monitor overall performance of police officials in this regard and curb anti-social activities with massive action against the outlaws. The IGP said that strict action should be taken against those involved in drug peddling activities and directed for launching crackdown against drug pushers and register cases against those involved in such heinous crime. The IGP said that no influence can be tolerated in massive crackdown against criminals as action would speak louder and no discrimination to be made. Meanwhile, IGP was told that special teams of Islamabad police nabbed 75 drug pushers during the last two weeks and registered 73 cases against them. A total of 25.117 kilogram hashish, 6.200 kilogram heroin, 229 gram ice, 300 gram opium, 316 wine bottles and cache of liquor were recovered from them.

Cyber Patrolling Unit to be made functional

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) is establishing Cyber Patrolling Unit to look into the offences mainly related to social media and recommend action against the perpetrators of such violations. According to the sources of Ministry of Interior, Cybercrime Wing-FIA is in the process of establishing Cyber Patrolling Unit and its main purpose would be monitoring of social media/cyber space and pointing out social media trend covering different subjects of interest like, harassment of women journalists etc. Budget for CPU has been allocated and it will start functioning within two to three months positively. Cybercrime Wing-FIA has complaint based system and the threat, defamation through social media are dealt with under section 20, 24 of PECA Act 2016, which is non-cognizable.

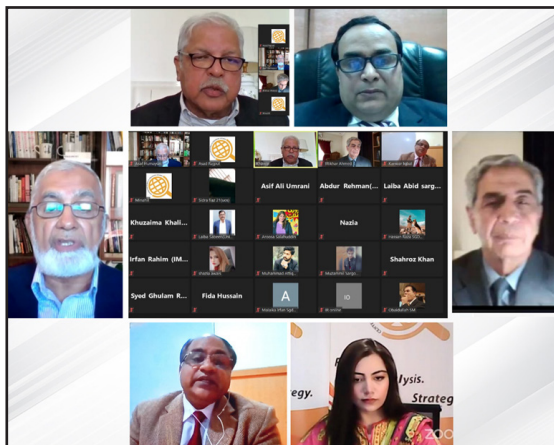
Importance of maritime security highlighted

The conference commenced with the opening remarks of Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, Regional Geopolitical Analyst & Member Board of Experts, Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad organized an Online Conference on 'Evolving Strategic Environment in the Indian Ocean Region and Significance of AMAN Exercise 2021'. This conference was held at an important time when the seventh edition of the multinational maritime exercise Aman-2021 will be held in Pakistan from 11th to 16th February 2021. The Conference highlighted the potential and importance of the AMAN exercise by the Pakistan Navy as well as the significance of the current geopolitical & geostrategic environment in the Indian Ocean Region. The conference commenced with the opening remarks of Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, Regional Geopolitical Analyst & Member Board of Experts, Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad.

He welcomed the esteemed panelists and the participants. He stated that the diversity of panelists having rich experience showcase the positive and productive role of CGSS in highlighting Pakistan's maritime potential at the global level. Vice Admiral Asaf Humayun, HI(M), (Retd), the former Vice Chief of Naval Staff presented the keynote speech and highlighted the significance of AMAN exercise for regional peace and security. He stated that the complex nature of maritime security requires collaborative efforts by the regional and extra-regional powers. He said that Pakistan is playing a key role in enhancing maritime security cooperation. He also elaborated comprehensively on the recent major developments in the international geopolitical landscape. He concluded by appreciating the efforts of the Pakistan Navy in organizing and conducting the AMAN exercise and stated that in this changing scenario of cooperation, coalition, containment, and confrontation, Pakistan has been holding AMAN series of joint maritime exercise with its focus on eliminating maritime terrorism, piracy, drug trafficking, arms smuggling besides natural calamities. AMAN brings the navies of diverse nations together in its spirit of maritime cooperation. He stated that this



effort would boost maritime cooperation at the international level. Vice Admiral Iftikhar Ahmed Rao, HI(M), (Retd), the former deputy chief of naval staff discussed the geostrategic significance of the western Indian Ocean region and important aspects of the ocean including the Gulf sea lanes, Suez connecting the Atlantic and Indian ocean through the Mediterranean, the choke

points, cape routes, and ocean economic resources. Admiral Iftikhar elaborated the important Gulf oil trade routes i.e. Strait of Malacca, Strait of Hormuz, and Babul-Mandab strait as the key chokepoints. He also highlighted the importance of the AMAN exercise by stating that it is directed towards addressing common maritime challenges in the region. Moreover, it is an inclusive platform that is open for all countries. The focus of this series is on maritime diplomacy and peace. AMAN plays a prominent role in creating positive image of Pakistan, especially in the maritime realm. Vice Admiral Syed Khawar Ali Shah HI(M), (Retd), Former Ambassador of Pakistan to Maldives and Former Director General National Institute of Maritime Affairs, profoundly discussed the evolving strategic environment in the Indian Ocean Region and the significance

HEC invites proposals for CPEC Research Grant

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission on Tuesday invited proposals for the China Pakistan Economic Corridor-Collaborative Research Grant (CPEC-CRG). The project is one of the key components of the recently launched HEC initiative "Academic Collaboration under CPEC Consortium of Universities", a statement posted on HEC's website said. "The objective of the project is to understand and respond to the historic global geo-strategic and geo-economic transition, and its impact on the region, in general and Pakistan in particular," it said. The CPEC-CRG is expected to support promising research partnerships between Pakistan and China, aiming at finding solutions to CPEC-related problems through joint research by the universities of Pakistan and China, HEC said. "CPEC-CRG research projects must be collaborative in scope, with teams composed of academic researchers from Pakistan and China with the appropriate expertise to address the research challenge, as well as industrial and sectoral collaborators within Pakistan and/or China," read the statement. Principal investigators should be faculty members at higher education institutions in Pakistan, it added. "To take full advantage of the national research capacity, proposals are encouraged from teams including junior and senior academic staff, as well as both male and female researchers," said HEC. - DNA

DC satisfied over anti-typhoid drive

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner Capt @ Anwar Ul Haq on Tuesday expressed satisfaction over the ongoing anti-typhoid campaign launched in urban areas of the district on February 1. Chairing a meeting to review the arrangements made for the drive, he directed the officials to ensure that every child must be vaccinated and to devise strategy to cover 100% of the set target. He asked the health department to cover vaccination of non-attended cases by convincing parents in order to make Rawalpindi a typhoid free city. "The government departments should convince parents on vaccination of their kids," he said.

ICT police revamp patrolling to curb crimes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have revamped its patrolling plan to curb street crime and deployed 15 Falcons and 16 pairs of Eagle motorcycle along with six Commandos vehicles for effective action against those involved in this crime. The Station House Officers (SHOs) of all Police Stations within Islamabad have been strictly directed to utilize their mobiles as well as staff from Rescue-15 to curb this menace, the police source said adding that Falcon and Eagles Squads as well police Commandos vehicles will work in three shifts for surveillance and to control street crimes.

The Federal Capital, he said, has been divided into 44 beats and experienced officers have been deputed in each beat to watch the activities of suspects. One Falcon (Vehicle) is patrolling each beat. Moreover to make Islamabad Capital, a crime free city, the Islamabad Police have taken preventive measures to curb crime generally and street crime specially which included Crime cluster Analysis, intelligence based policing, joint Patrolling with Pak Rangers, random checking of guest houses and hotels, surveillance of suspected elements and data proofing of released prisoners. The personnel of Islamabad Police are performing its duties round the clock to nab

the criminals and create a sense of security among the citizens of Islamabad. The source said that special emphasis is being put to foot patrol in commercial and residential beats for effective engagement of community for prevention of street crimes. In order to improve the security within federal capital and for the prevention and detection of crimes, the government established a "Safe City Project" covering almost all the roads through IP Cameras and Islamabad Traffic Police is also integrated with this project. This project is under the direct supervision of District Administration Islamabad and 1800 CCTV cameras have been installed at the conspicuous entry and exit points.

DNA

ATTOCK: District and Session Judge Attock Syed Naveed Raza Bokhari said that ensuring justice to the litigants across the board must be the first priority of the judiciary. "Judges must be God fearing while using their powers as all are answerable to almighty Allah" Bokhari said while addressing a function held in the honor of newly appointed judges. On the occasion Additional Sessions Judges Ali Raza, Irfan Ahmad Sheikh, Javed Iqbal Bosal, Senior Civil Judges Shafiqat Shahbaz Raja, Umer Rashid, Babar Hussain, Civil Judges Taimoor Afzal, Waqas Murtaza Janjua, Kamran Zaheer Abbasi, Yasir Tanveer, Aleena Ghafar, Sumaira Alamgir, Irum Nazir and large number of lawyers were also present.

'Attack to get football ground of Int'l level'

DNA

ATTOCK: Punjab Minister for Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Mal Syed Yawar Abbas Bukhari on Monday said that PTI central and Punjab governments are paying special attention to the development of sports. Attock District would be provided a football ground of International level. Yawar Bukhari said that being a sportsman, Prime Minister Imran Khan was trying to promote sports in Pakistan. He said that sports played an important role in polishing the public and youth representatives of the area were taking all possible steps for its promotion. The minister expressed these views while addressing the Inter Club Challenge Cup Football Tournament at District Council Stadium, Tehsil Attock as the Chief Guest. District Sports Officer Waheed Babar, Sheikh Nayyar of Tournament Committee, FIFA President Col. Mujahid-ullah Tareen, PA to Minister Syed Imran Bukhari, Dr Irfan Qadri Chairman Naat Council and others were present on the occasion.

'Ensuring justice to the litigants top priority'

DNA

ATTOCK: District and Session Judge Attock Syed Naveed Raza Bokhari said that ensuring justice to the litigants across the board must be the first priority of the judiciary. "Judges must be God fearing while using their powers as all are answerable to almighty Allah" Bokhari said while addressing a function held in the honor of newly appointed judges. On the occasion Additional Sessions Judges Ali Raza, Irfan Ahmad Sheikh, Javed Iqbal Bosal, Senior Civil Judges Shafiqat Shahbaz Raja, Umer Rashid, Babar Hussain, Civil Judges Taimoor Afzal, Waqas Murtaza Janjua, Kamran Zaheer Abbasi, Yasir Tanveer, Aleena Ghafar, Sumaira Alamgir, Irum Nazir and large number of lawyers were also present.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister For Planning, Development, Reforms And Special Initiatives, Asad Umar along with Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Senator Shibli Faraz addressing press conference. - APP

Pakistan wants to open all universities to Afghans

This resolve was expressed by Fawad Chaudhary, Federal Minister for Science and Technology, at the Second Youth Entrepreneurs Conference

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan wants to establish a campus of the COMSATS (the top technological university in Pakistan) in the Qandahar province of Afghanistan, said Fawad Chaudhary, Federal Minister for Science and Technology, at the Second Youth Entrepreneurs Conference on February 9, 2021, arranged by CRSS to provide young entrepreneurs from both countries an opportunity to share ide-

as and experiences. The Minister also assured Pakistan's readiness to open almost all its universities to Afghan students who aspire to get their higher education in Pakistan along with establishment of scientific and incubation centers across Afghanistan, as only quality education and enlightenment can ensure a bright and secure future. He expressed the view that there is a huge onus on the youth of both countries to forget the bitter experiences of past and work to-

gether for a better future, which can only be achieved through innovation and learning from the past. Security and prosperity of Afghanistan and Pakistan are highly interconnected, so both countries should work together for their mutual benefits, stated H.E. Ambassador Najibullah Alikhil. He further added that some remarkable progress has been made through Pak-Afghan partnerships particularly through people-to-people interactions.

He expressed hope that joint ventures of public and private sector will help in enhancing relations between the two countries. He also highlighted that importance of such meeting and youth's voices in enhancing the bilateral trade ties between the two neighbors. He further added that lasting and durable peace is the fundamental demand and desire of all Afghans and is possible only by reducing violence and a comprehensive ceasefire.

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE (EAST)

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are hereby invited on percentage basis from firms registered with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in relevant category on following date and time for the work mentioned below:-

S #	Name of work	Estimate Cost	Earnest Money	Cost of Tender Form	Date & Time of Receiving of Tender	Date & Time of opening Tender
1	Beautification/Uplifting of Shakarparian Parade Ground for Pak Day JS Parade 23 rd March, 2021 In Islamabad	Rs. 21961000	Rs. 539220/-	Rs. 5000/-	26-02-2021 Up to 11:30 A.M	26-02-2021 at 12:00 Noon

Conditions:

- Tender documents can be obtained from the office of Deputy Director Park Division Environment Directorate CDA, situated in F-9 Park opposite to F-8 Exchange Islamabad on any working day before the date of opening of tender on cash payment of Rs.5000/- (Non-refundable / Non-transferable). No tender will be issued / sold on the date of opening of tender.
- Tenders will be received and opened in the office of Director Environment (East) in F-9 Park, Islamabad in the presence of contractors and their representatives at fixed date and time given above.
- Earnest money in shape of deposit at call in favor of DDO-I (East) must be accompanied with the tender. No tender will be issued without call deposit. Earnest money/Call should be generated only from firm's accounts
- The competent authority reserves the right to reject any or all tenders as per PPRa rules.
- No application will be entertained for issuing of tender documents on the last date (25.02.2021) of issuing of tender after 12:30 P.M.
- Tender will be issued only to those firms bearing renewal copy of license from PEC in relevant category.
- In case, the total bid amount is less than 10% below the NIT amount, the bidder shall submit additional call deposit as performance security equal to the difference between NIT amount and total quoted amount less 10% of NIT amount. This additional performance guarantee (call deposit) shall be submitted along with bid in closed envelop. Bids having rates below 10% of NIT without additional call deposit will be rejected. The performance security of the successful bidder shall be released after completion of project.
- Application for issuing of tender documents submitted on printed pad bearing name/address/signature of contractor along-with power of attorney, partnership deed, proprietorship deed, professional Tax Certificate 2020-21, renewed PEC license, attested copy of NTN certificate and attested copy of CNIC.
- This advertisement can also be seen on CDA as well as PPRa website.
- The Bid security of all bidders would be deposited in the CDA Bank account and same may be returned after the acceptance of the contract with the successful bidder
- The eligibility criteria of the firms with the relevant experience i.e. at least three number of work in last two financial years may be observed/fulfilled before issuance of tender documents

Deputy Director Park Division
Environment CDA

Briefs

SMEDA
initiates
One Window
service

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) has initiated SMEDA One Window (SOW) services to ensure smooth registration of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

"The SOW would provide one window solution to start-ups and SMEs," official sources said adding the programme was being funded by National Business Development Program (NBDDP). SOW Program would be implemented in all seven regions of the country including four provinces, Islamabad, Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K). The sources said SOW Program covers all sectors of economy, except on-farm agriculture sector and unlawful businesses while the business sectors that would be covered under the programme include manufacturing, trading, service and mining enterprises.

SOW would focus on registration of sole proprietorship with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), registration of partnership with registrar of firms, limited liability partnership registered with Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), private limited company including single member company registered with SECP.

RDA
Chairman
visits various
development
projects

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) Chairman Tariq Mehmoody along with Chief Engineer Aamir Rasheed and other officers Tuesday visited various development projects here.

The RDA chairman checked Dualization of Dr Qadeer Khan Road from Islamabad Highway to Falcon Complex Rawalpindi, Construction / Widening and Improvement of Dry Port Road from Rahimabad Flyover at Airport Road to Welfare Complex via Chaklala Railway Station Shell Depot Rawalpindi and building three pedestrian bridges on Airport Road. He appreciated construction work on Dr Qadeer Khan Road as 2.25 km road work has been completed. He directed that construction work on Dr Qadeer Khan Road, Dry Port Road and three pedestrian bridges on Airport road should be completed as soon as possible, so that the sufferings of people could be lessened. The RDA chairman said the bridges were being built to prevent the road accidents which occurred due to pedestrians. - APP

Rs566.223
mln released
for 15 Aviation
sector

ISLAMABAD: The government has released funds amounting to Rs566.223 million during the last seven months to execute 15 aviation sector projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2020-21 against the total allocation of Rs1, 320.879 million. According to the official data, the government has authorized/distributed an amount of Rs 566.223 as of February 4.

As per the PSDP details, an amount of Rs61.923 million had been earmarked for construction of double storey ladies hostel/barrack with provision of third storey along with mess, recreation hall and allied facilities at Allama Iqbal International Airport Lahore. Similarly, Rs90 million were meant for construction of double storey barrack with provision of third storey for corporal to inspectors and assistant director along with separate mess, and allied facilities recreation hall at Quetta airport. Funds amounting to Rs50 million and Rs69.756 million had been reserved for construction of Airport Security Force (ASF) Camp at Islamabad International Airport and building barrack accommodation for ASF personnel along with mess and allied facilities respectively. - APP



TAXILA: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) along with delegation in a group photo with Maj. Gen Syed Aamer Raza, HI(M), Chairman, Heavy Industries Taxila during their visit to HIT. Other officials of ICCI are also present at the occasion. - DNA

ICCI delegation visits HIT to
explore private sector co-op

Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry appreciated the contribution of HIT towards strengthening the country's defence by manufacturing various defence related products

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) leading a large delegation visited the Heavy Industries Taxila (HIT) to explore collaboration of the private sector with HIT's commercial ventures. Fatma Azim Senior Vice President, Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Usman Khalid, Omais Khattak, Javed Iqbal, Shakeel Munir, Mehboob Ahmed Khan, Ali Akram Khan, Ch. Ashraf Farzand, Malik Mohsin Khalid, Ch. Irfan, Babar Chaudhry, Nisar Langa, Khalid Chaudhry and others were in the delegation. Maj. Gen Syed Aamer Raza,

HI(M), Chairman, Heavy Industries Taxila along with his team warmly welcomed the ICCI delegation and thanked them for visiting their facility. He briefed the ICCI delegation about the HIT's manufacturing capabilities. He said that HIT was part of Pakistan's premier defence industry which was established in early 70s with an objective of rebuilding the existing tanks. He said that over the last many decades, HIT has evolved into a large military industrial base and currently was involved in manufacturing, rebuilding, upgrading & developing hi-tech equipment like tanks, tank guns, armoured personnel carriers and other related equipment. He said that HIT comprised six pro-

duction units, an in-house development and component manufacturing facility and a leading research and development centre. He said that Tank AK-Khalid, the pride of Pakistan was its flagship product, which was recognized worldwide and formed the backbone of Pakistan Army's mechanised force. He said that HIT was manufacturing many commercial products including armoured security vehicles like land rovers, land cruisers, portable shelters, steel structures, armoured guard posts, bullet proof rostrums, screens and others and it wanted to utilize surplus capacity of its factories to meet the requirements of civil sector and friendly countries. He said that HIT was also interested to

undertake JVs and commercial activities with friendly countries and encourage technology transfer, therefore, the private sector has good potential to join hands with HIT for producing various commercial products to meet the local needs and promote exports. The ICCI delegation was taken to various manufacturing facilities of HIT including manufacturing factories, rebuild factories and support facilities and was shown its various products being manufactured in its facilities. Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry appreciated the contribution of HIT towards strengthening the country's defence by manufacturing

various defence related products. He thanked Maj. Gen Syed Aamer Raza, Chairman HIT and his team for showing various manufacturing facilities to ICCI delegation and hoped that their visit would lead to setting up some JVs of private sector with HIT. He said that the combination of the state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities of HIT and business acumen of the private sector would be instrumental in producing high quality and value added products and accelerate the pace of industrialization in the region. Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan proposed that ICCI was ready to organize a national level exhibition in collaboration with HIT to show the export potential of its defence

products to foreign missions of various countries that would help in improving defence exports. He said that HIT was on the road to modernization and cooperation of the private sector with it would promote indigenous industry and import substitutions. He said that CPEC has provided a good opportunity to spur industrial growth in Pakistan and close collaboration between HIT and the ICCI would contribute towards better growth of industrialization in the region. Fatma Azim Senior Vice President, Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President and other members of delegation also spoke at the occasion and discussed options for close collaboration between the private sector and HIT.

UCL: Paki student
scores highest marks

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Fatima Jalil Malik, a Pakistani student in BS Degree and Diploma in Economics, Management, Finance and Social Sciences (EMFSS) from

the University of London, scored the highest marks out of a total of 185000 students. Therefore, all tuition fees were reimbursed by the university for securing the first position in the first semester. Fatima Jalil Malik is a student at The Millennium University Russell College. Fatima's father, Malik Jalil Ahmad Awan, is the CEO of Mustehkam ittefaq Group of Industries. He said that he is very happy with the honor of his daughter, this honor is not only for the daughter and parents but also for the whole country.

46 police officials
honored for their
excellence

RAWALPINDI: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Rawalpindi Imran Ahmer on behalf of Inspector General of Police Punjab Inam Ghani, here on Tuesday distributed cash prizes and commendation certificates among 46 police officials posted four districts of the region for their outstanding performance and professional excellence during last year. The officials were awarded with special prizes and certificates at Police Regional office. Those who were awarded included Inspectors Javed Iqbal, Muhammad Afzal, Allah

Yar, Muhammad Naem, Shujaat Ali, Sub Inspectors Muhammad Rafiq, Shafiq Ali, Asif Sajjad, Tahir Ahmed Rehan, Muhammad Riaz, Ezaz Azeem, Waqas Safer, Kashif Iqbal, Aroosh, Usama saifullah, ASIs Hasnain Haider, Abdul Mansoor, Head Constable Yasir Noman, Constables Muhammad faisal, Ejaz Ali, Jabbar Husain, Ghafoor, Mubashir Amanullah, Fargham, Muhammad kalim, Mazar Abbas, Hassan Akram, Sarmad Abbasi, Shehzad, Haider Raza, Afrasyab, Muhammad Muddasar, Adnan Shehzad, Hammad. - APP

Commission suggests effective
legislation for minorities

ISLAMABAD: The One-man Commission on implementation of Minorities Rights, constituted by the Supreme Court, has compiled its seventh report, suggesting corrective measures including effective legislation to avoid Karak-Temple like tragedies in future and aimed at ensuring peaceful co-existence in the country. "The Supreme Court may direct the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony (MORA) to process the draft bill on National Council for Minorities and get it enacted as Law in the Parliament at the earliest," the Commission Chairman Dr Shoaib Suddle said in an eight page report, which was available with APP. Dr Suddle added that the Federal Ministry of Education and Professional Training should address the concerns

of minority communities in the context of Single National Curriculum in close cooperation with the One-Man Commission. The Chairman highlighted that there were complaints received from the minorities regarding presence of substantial religious content in subjects like English, Social Studies and General Science, which content the students of minority religious communities were not obliged to study under Article 22 of the Constitution of Pakistan. He told that the One-Man Commission took up the matter of under-preparation Single National Curriculum with the Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Shafiq Mahmood. There had also been meetings with Secretary Education Farah Hamid Khan and Joint Educational Advisor Muham-

mad Rafiq Tahir who assured the Commission that Single National Curriculum would be consensus-based, and all stakeholders, including representatives of religious minorities, would be consulted before finalizing the curriculum. "The Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB)", the Chairman of the Commission said "should provide necessary information on format (A to F), Annex-D, to the One-Man Commission at the earliest so that comments or recommendations sought for by the Supreme Court were submitted in time. He explained that the ETPB in its letter dated 25.01.2021 submitted to the Commission willfully ignored the Commission's format comprising six (A-F) tables (Annex-D), thus evading the details sought therein. - APP

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Rawalpindi: SAPM Dr. Sania Nishtar visits Ehsaas Kafaalat beneficiary household in outskirts of Rawalpindi. - DNA

'Modi wants to repeat Kashmir episode in India'

In his keynote address, the AJK president said that not medium or long term but a short-term strategy is needed to save Kashmir because any medium-term policy is meant for five to six years while Modi wants to resolve the Kashmir issue before next elections in India and for this purpose, he is taking rapid actions with lightning speed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Sardar Masood Khan has said that occupied Jammu and Kashmir is our home and it is on fire, and when a house catches fire, the first and the foremost priority is to do everything in your power to save it from reducing to ashes. He made these remarks while addressing a webinar on "Assessing Pakistan's Kashmir policy: A Medium to Long-Term Strategy" organized by the Strategic Vision Institute here on Tuesday.

The webinar was also addressed by former Defense Minister Lt Gen (ret) Naem Khalid Lodhi, former Pakistan High Commissioner to India, Ashraf Jahangir Qazi, former Corps Commander, Lt Gen (ret) Masood Aslam, Research Associate Haris Bilal Malik and others. In his keynote address, the AJK president said that not medium or long term but a short-term strategy is needed to save Kashmir because any medium-term policy is meant for five to six years while Modi wants to resolve the Kashmir issue before next elections in India and for this purpose, he is taking rapid actions with lightning speed.

Talking about the Indian actions in occupied Kashmir, the state President said that the most dangerous action Modi has taken after the siege, bifurcation and turning the occupied territory into an Indian union territory is to change the demography of the state. He warned that if the international community continues to shut eyes towards the situation in occupied Kashmir, Pakistan and India may head towards another war on the Kashmir issue, and if this war broke out, its impacts would be felt in London, Brussels, New York and Tokyo also thereby affecting the entire world. Touch-

ing upon the Indian war crimes in occupied Kashmir, Sardar Masood Khan said that the Prosecutor of International Criminal Court Ms Fatou Bensouda has indicated to conduct an investigation into war crimes in Palestinian territories, but even more serious crimes are being committed by Indian in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, and the mastermind of these crimes in Delhi, is constantly engaged in planning elimination of the Kashmiri people, and the international community has shut its eyes towards his crimes. He maintained that what is happening in occupied Jammu and Kashmir is in the

knowledge of the international community and all the influential countries, but they are tight-lipped against India because of their economic and strategic interests. "Some Western countries want to use India as a pawn against China, and India itself is ready to play this role," he added. Responding to different questions from the participants of the webinar, the AJK president said that if the international community allowed the hooliganism to go on because of its petty political interests, peace and stability of the world would be destroyed as had happened after the World War-II.

1.3 kg drugs
recovered

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested a drug pusher and recovered 1.3 kg of drugs from his possession, informed police spokesman here on Tuesday. During course of action, RA Bazaar police team arrested drug pusher Ilyas Khan and recovered 1.3kg drugs from his possession. Police have registered a case against him and started investigation. Deputy Inspector General of Police Muhammad Ahsan Younas has appreciated the performance of police team, adding that drugs business must be discouraged. The CPO made it clear that the strict action would be taken against those who were found in this illegal activity and playing with the lives of youngsters.

ECP notifies
ROs, Pos
for Senate
election

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan has notified appointment of Returning Officers and Polling Officers for the Senate election. The electoral body has issued a notification for appointment of the electoral staff for the upcoming election of the upper house. The election commission has appointed special secretary Zafar Iqbal as returning officer and Shamshad Khan, Shahid Iqbal, Asif Ali Yaseen, Waqas Ahmed, Atif Rahim, Kashif Abbas and Tabasum Javed as polling officers for Islamabad. The election commission has also named provincial election commissioner Ijaz Anwar Chauhan as returning officer for Senate election in Sindh. The ECP has also nominated provincial election commissioner Ghulam Israr Khan as returning officer for Senate election in Punjab. The electoral body has notified provincial election commissioner Sharifullah as returning officer for Senate election in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. While, provincial election commissioner Balochistan Muhammad Raziq has been named returning officer for Senate election in Balochistan.

The National Assembly and four provincial assemblies will be electoral colleges for election of the upper house of the parliament. It is to be mentioned here that the ECP will announce the schedule of the Senate election on February 11. The Senate of Pakistan gives equal representation to all the federating units in order to promote national harmony by counterbalancing the numerical disparity among provinces in the National Assembly. The term of the Senate members is six years, however, one half of its members retire after every three years.

Farrukh asks
PML-N to
submit foreign
funding details
to ECP

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Railways Farrukh Habib Tuesday asked the opposition parties leaderships to submit all details and sources of their foreign funding to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

Talking to media persons outside the ECP, he said now they had no further time to hide such illegal sources. He said Pakistan Muslim League (N) leadership should submit details of party funds to the ECP to clear his position.

"Income of the PML-N is less than that its overall expenses. PML-N leadership has to answer how this party has managed the increased expenditures and party should submit all receipts and other related details to the ECP," he added. He asked Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Vice President Maryam Nawaz to submit sources of her party funding to the ECP rather staging protest in front of the ECP. Criticizing the PML-N, Farrukh said instead of blackmailing state institutions, the opposition parties should focus on submitting records of their funding to the ECP. "Nation is fed up with false narrative of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). They are misleading the masses and leveling false allegations," he said adding the scrutiny committee had been working as per directions of the ECP. He said all the opposition parties should be made accountable for source of their funds and expenses. - APP

Watercourse improvement

THE project of improving watercourses in Punjab is progressing efficiently. The initiative was direly needed to improve water productivity—to produce more crops per drop in Punjab. The project will greatly reduce water losses due to inadequate irrigation channels all over the province. According to official data, around 40 percent of irrigation water is lost due to the outdated watercourses across Punjab. Furthermore, the project will increase the conveyance efficiency by reducing seepage, evaporation and operational losses. This is perhaps one of the few projects supported by development partners where significant progress has been achieved, as the World Bank (WB) report indicates; 13,637 watercourses have been improved, surpassing the initial goal of 11,550 watercourses.

It is reassuring that the project has achieved more than the actual goal. The pace with which the work is carrying on shows the commitment of the WB and the provincial government to improve the growers' lives. The initiative is also creating employment opportunities for daily wage earners from rural areas of Punjab—many who lost their jobs due to Covid-19. While employment opportunities are a by-product of any development project, the actual beneficiaries will be Punjab's farmers, especially those holding small and medium agricultural tracts. Before anything else, it will save farmers a lot of time to irrigate their farms. Similarly, the project will reduce the labour required to irrigate the fields. Removing trees, shrubs and silt deposits from watercourses to ensure better water supply consumes precious time. Better watercourses will increase the cropping intensity for the farmers. A more efficient irrigation system with more water will change the cropping pattern, as the farmers will start harvesting high-value crops—for instance, rice and sugarcane. All these benefits linked with improvement of the water channel will not only increase the annual yield of crops, they will also enhance farmers' financial standing.

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Vaccination drive

THE government's success in the procurement of the Covid-19 vaccine, along with its promise of a healthier future, has been marred by the pitiable turnout for the first day of the vaccination drive. Not only is the fact that only 34 vaccines were disbursed worrying, but also that irregularities over who is receiving them are being reported in Sindh. Understanding just how vital this drive is for the survival of the country, the government must act to resolve this problem immediately.

The first round of doses that were received by the government were promised to healthcare workers and members of the medical staff. In fact, even the doses donated to our army by the Chinese military, have been promised to the recipients of the national drive. As such, to have only 34 doses being given out seems like a disgrace to the hopes of normalcy returning to Pakistan. It is imperative that all authorities, whether state or non-state organisations, emphasise the need for all members of the public to get vaccinated eventually. The healthcare workers must be convinced to set a positive example for the general public.

But perhaps what is most troubling is that there have been reports that the vaccine is allegedly being given out to VIP members in Sindh—all of whom were not part of the medical fraternity. Such practices corrupt the entire process, risking the lives of millions across the country. Prejudice should not be tolerated by neither the government authorities nor the people. Immediate action is needed in the form of a comprehensive and transparent plan that discourages such behaviour and endorses legal ramifications in the event that they are repeated once again. The national vaccination drive was intended to bring Pakistan back on its feet by promising the citizens improved immunity and amplifying the possibility of moving past the complexities brought upon by the pandemic. Any and all misuse of the drive or the vaccine cannot be tolerated and this is a message that governments, both on the federal and provincial levels, need to clarify.

ICC takes key step towards justice for the Palestine

Chris Doyle



The broader issue is that the ICC might, for the first time, tackle the thorny issue of Israel-Palestine and dare to hold accountable a major power in Israel. In its earliest years, the ICC seemingly focused solely on African states. Taking on non-African leaders is vital for its credibility. This is why an investigation into the actions of US personnel in Afghanistan should go forward. The ICC route is a long journey.

Justice, if it arrives, will not come quickly

THE Palestinian herders of Khirbet Humsah in the Jordan Valley should have a quiet life. Unfortunately, they find themselves living under Israeli occupation and in an Israeli firing zone. They are meant to just leave. In November last year, Israeli forces demolished their homes, making 74 people, including 41 children, homeless. The Israeli bulldozers repeated the dose last week, leading the EU mission in the country to speak of a threat of "forcible transfer" — a war crime.

Other Palestinians also face forced removal and the destruction of their properties. They attempt to fight this, at great cost, through an Israeli court system that is stacked against them. They have little to no hope of getting any redress via this route, but have no other choice.

However, a small chink of light has opened up. Just one day after Khirbet Humsah's latest round of demolitions, the Pre-Trial Chamber of the International Criminal Court (ICC) determined that the court has jurisdiction over the territories Israel occupied in 1967 after a request for a ruling from the Office of the Prosecutor. The issue of territorial jurisdiction is not over, as it can be raised later on in the court's proceedings, but this is an important step. The prosecutor can now open a formal investigation. This means that the ICC could take forward a case against any party deemed to have potentially committed war crimes in Palestine. It is a criminal court so its investigations are not against states, but against individuals suspected of criminal behavior. Importantly, sovereign immunity does not apply in ICC cases, so heads of state and government are vulnerable.

The Israeli propaganda machine was in full flow in response, arguing that the ICC should not be investigating Israel. It is not. It has just established it has jurisdiction in the Occupied Territories. The leaders of Palestinian groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad could also be investigated. The prosecutor has determined there is a reasonable case to answer about the involvement of these two groups in war crimes, given that they have targeted Israeli civilians with rockets and mortars. However, as both groups are designated as terrorist organizations by many countries,

it is hard to imagine that their leaders will view the ICC as a greater threat than Israeli bombs and assassination squads. Nevertheless, it might shrink the available space where their external leaderships might feel safe. Host countries may not be so welcoming.

The next lame argument deployed by those who want immunity for Israel was asking why the court is not investigating countries such as China. The answer is obvious: The ICC should and probably would if it could but, as China is not a state party to the Rome Statute, the UN Security Council has to refer it, which is unlikely given that Beijing has a veto. Just because the court cannot take forward a case against one party, does not mean that all others accused of war crimes should be allowed to walk away.

The Israeli position is all over the place. On the question of coronavirus disease vaccines, it treats the Palestinian Authority as if it is a state and is solely responsible; but on the question of jurisdiction for the ICC, Israel argues Palestine has none. Netanyahu theatrically, as is his wont, claimed the ICC's decision was "pure anti-Semitism," itself a classic example of conflating Israeli crimes with all Jews. This can hardly be taken seriously coming from a man who courts leaders such as Viktor Orban, whose anti-Semitism never seems to be a concern. Netanyahu does not care that it insults and degrades the memory of all those who have died in anti-Semitic atrocities, from pogroms to the Holocaust. Accountability for war crimes is in the finest traditions of those who never want to see man's inhumanity to man replicated ever again.

Israeli leaders may be investigated for a multitude of violations. These include actions in the 2014 war against Gaza, when more than 2,000 Palestinians were killed and 10,000 wounded. This might be trickier than other potential breaches, given the fog of war and establishing command responsibility. Less complicated will be the illegal settlements. Israel does not dispute the existence of settlements, which are a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and a war crime under the Rome Statute as a matter of fact. More than 250 settlements and

almost 700,000 settlers prove the point. The forcible transfer of communities should also be investigated, as well as the transfer of Palestinian prisoners out of occupied territory.

Will it restrain Israel at all? Israeli leaders are already concerned about travel overseas as a result of cases invoking universal jurisdiction. The ICC, however, pursues those at the top — the people responsible for the policies. In theory, warrants could be issued for the prime ministers, defense ministers and senior military commanders who gave the orders for settlement building, for example. The attitude of the Biden administration will be telling. The US has refused to sign up to the Rome Statute. Infamously, President Donald Trump decided to impose sanctions on ICC officials last year. As yet, Joe Biden has not reversed these decisions, although he has them under review. No doubt the US position toward the court will be partly determined by whether or not it pursues the actions of the US military and CIA in Afghanistan. The broader issue is that the ICC might, for the first time, tackle the thorny issue of Israel-Palestine and dare to hold accountable a major power in Israel. In its earliest years, the ICC seemingly focused solely on African states. Taking on non-African leaders is vital for its credibility. This is why an investigation into the actions of US personnel in Afghanistan should go forward. The ICC route is a long journey. Justice, if it arrives, will not come quickly. One issue in particular could cause delays — resources. The prosecutor may lack the resources to go forward, as has been the case with Nigeria and Ukraine.

Though this decision may not delight the big powers, it will certainly infuse the court with greater legitimacy and credibility, as it starts to tackle those who have, for so long, considered themselves above the law. It is a small victory for the people who have nothing, whose homes and lives can get ruined by those who have nothing to fear, for whom the ICC is a court of last resort. Who knows, when these Bedouin tents and shacks are put back up, the Israeli soldiers may not be quite so keen to act next time.

— Courtesy: Arab News

The US-Taliban accords: One year later

Sajjad Ashraf

Amid this uncertainty Pakistan has called for "commitment and responsibility", suggesting that the country is not in favour of review of US-Taliban deal. Pakistan, which has invested a considerable goodwill in getting the Taliban on the negotiating table, will be affected by the breakdown of talks. Any review, Pakistani officials believe, will complicate the struggling peace process. The Taliban have not budged from basic positions, like withdrawal of foreign forces

RECENT statements from the incoming Biden administration and from the Taliban indicate that the progress on the steps envisaged in US – Taliban agreement in February 2020 has halted. Some wait for the new American administration — before any serious negotiations could begin — is understandable but the two sides have hardly met after they broke off in December.

While the US and Kabul have accused the Taliban of stepping up violence, the Taliban has accused the Americans of bombing civilians, which they claim is not only in violation of agreements but also a violation of human rights. The Biden administration announced that the February accords are under "review" even before substantive negotiations have begun. The sputtering process is in trouble.

The Kabul government was never comfortable with the US negotiating with the Taliban directly but had no choice. And following the agreement they did everything to scuttle the settlement process. Ashraf Ghani took six months to release 5,000 Taliban what the US had agreed to do in ten days and that too under American pressure. His posturing contributed to the six-month delay in start of intra-Afghan dialogue. Members of the Kabul delegation to Doha have also reportedly complained that the US team under Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, whom the Biden administration has decided to retain as the Special Representative on Afghanistan, has conceded too much to the Taliban.

While the negotiators plodded in Doha, state functionaries and symbols increasingly came under attack from the militants for, which the US and Kabul blame the Taliban. Taliban have stubbornly maintained that militancy will continue till a formal deal is agreed upon and a

ceasefire will not be precondition for the beginning of substantive negotiations.

Reduction of violence, the Taliban say, is incumbent on further release of prisoners, which was to be completed within three months of the release of the first 5,000.

Kabul has dragged its feet demonstrating its unhappiness with the Accords. The administrative review of sanctions against the Taliban leadership, which was due to start simultaneously with the launch of intra-Afghan dialogue with the lifting of all sanctions by August 27, 2020 is yet to be initiated. With deadlines missed, the resurgence of violence from either side leading to US led air strikes has contributed to build-up of mistrust on both sides. December was a particular bad month. Hopes of relative peace are fading. Kabul's top officials privately warn of a civil war if the Taliban get a major share of power in a peace deal.

In addition to Kabul's faltering grip on security, lessening international financial support, there is a building dissent from the opposition politicians and the warlords who also seem to be sourcing funds and equipment in order to be ready to preserve their area in the likely breakdown of civil order. The incoming Biden administration has talked of the "review" of the February 2020 agreements that has been welcomed by Kabul and opposed by the Taliban. The immediate question which the Biden team faces is how to reconcile various demands or hiccups with the May 2021 deadline for total US military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Since deadlines on the February agreements — like release of prisoners, lifting of sanctions — have passed, and violence has increased, there are reports that some in the US military and Congress are opposed to full withdrawal by the

agreed timelines. Given the Taliban stubborn insistence on withdrawal of foreign forces as the basis of any peace deal, it is hard to expect that they will acquiesce to the idea without an adequate quid pro quo and that too for a short time. They will not accept any renegotiation of the deal.

Some reports suggest that the new administration may ask for stationing counter-terrorism forces in Afghanistan, which is President Biden's preferred option. Such a suggestion, if made, is a likely deal breaker and may compel the Taliban to return to military struggle with all its attendant implications. This would mean that America is changing goalposts and is not serious in vacating Afghanistan. That will also result in adverse reactions from the neighbouring states and will further erode American credibility.

Amid this uncertainty Pakistan has called for "commitment and responsibility", suggesting that the country is not in favour of review of US-Taliban deal. Pakistan, which has invested a considerable goodwill in getting the Taliban on the negotiating table, will be affected by the breakdown of talks. Any review, Pakistani officials believe, will complicate the struggling peace process. The Taliban have not budged from basic positions, like withdrawal of foreign forces. Before the breakthrough talks, one Taliban leader told the press "my father was a fighter, I fought against the Soviets and then the US occupation.

If the occupiers fail to see that they must leave, my children will fight them as well." And one of them said years back, referring to the Americans, on the nature of this forever war — they have the watches and we have the time.

— Courtesy: Gulf News

Briefs

Iranian envoy says ties with Pakistan excellent

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development; A development, that is based on the might of its women and men in all the fields from science to technology. Ambassador Hosseini further said, the Iranian people are firmly and zealously following the Islamic Revolution ideals, founded by its main theorist Imam Khomeini, and every year delightedly celebrate the anniversary of their country's liberation from tyranny. Obviously, such revolution, with its just and right-seeking approach, wasn't cherished by supremacist and oppressive powers, so they exploited any opportunity to blemish this revolution and afflict intellectual and political currents that are interested in it. Imposition of harsh sanctions and maximum pressure against our Islamic Republic, especially in its high-point level of Covid-19 crisis; Unilateral pressure on neighboring countries to divert relations from its normal course; Withdrawing or not fulfilling provisions of JCPOA, which symbolizes the belief and will of the Islamic Republic of Iran to resolve international challenges with peaceful manners; And assassination of Iranian intellectuals, are just some examples of these hostile approaches to the Islamic Revolution and sample of their attempts to undermine it, he added.

"Today, four decades after the Islamic Revolution, we are witnessing that the people of Iran, especially Iranian youth, with a serious determination to progress and firm believe to the values of Islamic principles, strive for the betterment and prosperity of their country and stand against unilateralism and external pressure as well as corruption, and injustice. This determination, have created a bright and hopeful horizon for our dear Iran". At the end, he emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran has extended the hand of peace and friendship to all free and right-seeking nations in the region and beyond, and calls for the realization of true human dignity related values. The Islamic Republic of Iran is encouraging materialization of this ideal and pursuing common interests in the region and the world.

Japan confers imperial decoration

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His relentless determination has already begun to bear fruits as the number of Japanese language learners in Pakistan is increasing with the passage of time. Ambassador MATSUDA, while speaking on the occasion, congratulated Mr. Zafar on receiving this prestigious imperial decoration by the Government of Japan. He said language plays an important role in bridging the gap among the nations and the people while fostering mutual understanding of each other's culture, values and traditions. "It is heartening to say that the Japanese language is becoming increasingly popular in Pakistan like Urdu is in Japan. Surely this would pave the way for further consolidating people-to-people interactions." While appreciating the dedicated efforts by Mr. Zafar, the Ambassador said that he has been doing a great job over the years by teaching Japanese language to Pakistani people as a visiting professor at the Japanese language department of NUML. He expressed his sincere hope that this contribution will further promote and strengthen the cultural relations as well as people to people contacts between the two friendly nations. While expressing his gratitude upon receiving Japanese Imperial decoration, Mr. Zafar Mahmood said "I pay my sincere gratitude to His Majesty the Emperor and the Government of Japan for honoring me with this prestigious award. I have a passion for teaching and transferring Japanese language skills to our younger generation". Maj. Gen (Retd) Muhammad Jaffar, Rector NUML, while appreciating the services of Mr. Zafar, congratulated him for receiving this award in recognition of his efforts for promoting the Japanese language in Pakistan from the platform of NUML.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister For Railways, Muhammad Azam Khan Swati in a meeting with Ambassador Of Republic Of China To Pakistan, Mr. Nong Rong. – DNA

England thrash India by 227 runs in Chennai Test

India were never in the chase after Leach struck early with the wicket of overnight batsman Cheteshwar Pujara for 15 and Anderson also used his reverse swing on the wearing pitch

DNA

CHENNAI: Joe Root led England to an emphatic 227-run win over India in the opening Test on Tuesday, boosting their hopes of securing a rare series win against the hosts on their own patch. The victory has also propelled England to the top of the ICC World Test Championship standings chart with 442 points. Spinner Jack Leach claimed four

wickets and paceman James Anderson three as India were dismissed for 192 on the final day while chasing a record 420 to win. Victory was all the more impressive for England as it came just a month after India's upset series triumph in Australia, where they handed the hosts their first defeat at Brisbane's Gabba ground since 1988. England captain Root outfoxed India, on a high after that win, with his bat and tactics. He became the first batsman to

score a double century in his 100th Test as his 218 guided England to 578 in the first innings. He was also the top scorer with 40 in the second innings of 178. India were never in the chase after Leach struck early with the wicket of overnight batsman Cheteshwar Pujara for 15 and Anderson also used his reverse swing on the wearing pitch. Shubman Gill completed his third Test fifty in just his fourth game before Anderson took away his

off-stump. Three balls later he cleaned up Ajinkya Rahane for nought. Anderson got India's first innings hero Pant for 11 and spinner Dom Bess chipped in with the wicket of Washington Sundar for nought as India slipped to 117-6. India captain Virat Kohli fought a lone battle, reaching his 24th Test fifty before being bowled by Ben Stokes on a delivery that stayed low. Leach and fast bowler Jofra Archer combined to run through the tail. Root came into the Test

on the back of match-winning scores of 228 and 186 against Sri Lanka last month. India, who were bowled out for 337 in their first innings, faltered in the record chase after Leach sent back Rohit Sharma for 12 at the end of day four. The second Test begins on Saturday with spectators allowed at Chennai's M.A. Chidambaram Stadium – a first for Indian cricket since the coronavirus pandemic outbreak.

Afghan police officers among 8 killed in ambush

FOREIGN DESK

KABUL: A string of attacks in Afghanistan has killed four government employees and four policemen, officials said. In the capital, Kabul, gunmen on Tuesday opened fire in the Baghe-Daud neighbourhood and killed four employees of the ministry for rural development, according to Ferdaws Faramarz, spokesman for the city's police chief. Elsewhere in Kabul, a sticky bomb attached to a car exploded, wounding another government employee, he added. Also on Tuesday, four police officers were killed and a fifth wounded when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb in western Herat province's Zenda Jan district, provincial governor Wahid Qatali said. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attacks. Afghan and US officials have blamed the Taliban

for the wave of violence, although the group has rejected the charges. Violence in Afghanistan has been relentless while peace talks between the Taliban and government representatives that started in September in Qatar have now stalled. Meanwhile, there has been a nationwide spike in bombings, targeted killings and violence. The capital Kabul has seen near-daily attacks during the busy morning commute, targeting prominent Afghans including politicians, journalists, activists, judges, and religious scholars. Tuesday's attacks came a day after three bomb blasts rattled the capital, killing at least one person. Last week, Judge Hafizullah was attacked in an ambush in the eastern city of Jalalabad as he headed to work. He was the third court official to be killed in less than a month. On January 17, two female judges were

killed by unknown gunmen in Kabul. In a report published on January 30, the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) said the Taliban and the ISIL (ISIS) armed group have increased targeted killings of government officials, civil society leaders and journalists. Resolute Support, the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan, reported 2,586 civilian casualties from October 1 to December 31 last year, including 810 killed and 1,776 wounded, according to the SIGAR report. The rise in violence has led US President Joe Biden's administration to launch a review of a deal signed between Washington and the Taliban last year that agreed the withdrawal of all American troops. The deal also paved the way for intra-Afghan talks between Taliban representatives and the Afghan government to decades of conflict.

Pak women beat Zimbabwe by 178



HARARE: Javeria Khan scored 81 runs off 115 balls to lay down a solid foundation for Pakistan women to beat Zimbabwe women by 178 runs in first 50-overs game here on Tuesday. Nashra Sandhu picked up four wickets as Pakistan bowled out Zimbabwe for a paltry 77. Nida Dar also shined with his 3-9 whereas Diana Baig bagged a wicket. While batting first, Pakistan were not off to a good start after losing two wickets in early overs. Muneeba Ali went out for four runs while Ayesha Zafar made 14 runs. But, Javeria stood there for long as the right-handed batsman struck eight boundaries to make 81 runs and help Pakistan score 255-6 in 50 overs. Aliya Riaz supported her skipper well with her 74-run knock laced with six boundaries and a maximum. – Sports Desk

PDM vows to topple govt

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hold a long march towards Islamabad under all circumstances. He said the anti-poor government has made life difficult for people. "This is the same Imran Khan who promised to create 10 million jobs, provide 5 million houses and not take loans. He used to say that he would commit suicide before going to the IMF, but he has taken the most loans during the past three years. Bilawal Bhutto said that Imran Khan has put every Pakistani in debt. Today, Pakistan's growth rate lags behind that of Afghan-

istan and Bangladesh and it faces the highest inflation in the region. He said that according to Transparency International, historic corruption is taking place in Pakistan but he is not questioned about corruption in BRT and Billion Tree Tsunami projects. The PPP chairman said that the illegitimate Prime Minister has destroyed the economy as well as democracy. "Inshallah there will be a long march in March. We will form a people's government by removing the selected, incompetent and illegitimate Prime Minister", he said. (Picture on Page 2)



BEIJING: Pakistan embassy China hosts a gathering for Chinese media persons on the occasion of Chinese New year. Ambassador Moin ul Haq and others are cutting cake to celebrate the event. – DNA

'Social uplift key pillar for 'sustainable' world'

With coronavirus vaccines providing a glimmer of optimism around the world, Ambassador Akram said that it was "painful to witness" the dashed hopes of most people in the Global South who have little chance of receiving an inoculation anytime soon

UNITED NATIONS: The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) President, Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan, has called for tackling the crisis unleashed by the coronavirus pandemic, emphasizing that social development was "one of the critical pillars" for making the world more sustainable and resilient. "The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder of the key role social development plays in protecting people's lives and livelihoods, as well as the planet", he told the opening session of the Commission for Social Development held at UN headquarters in New York on Monday. Despite 25 years of extraordinary progress in human and social development, with a reduction in poverty, higher education standards, employment growth, rising incomes and increased longevity

for hundreds of millions, Ambassador Akram said that "today, 26 people own half the world's wealth". And today's crisis has shone a stark light on existing vulnerabilities and inequalities, it was pointed out. "We need to foster transformative resilience by choosing policies that tackles high and rising inequality...[and] policies that empower people and communities to become more resilient and offer multiple opportunities for decent work and social and economic transformation", the ECOSOC President stated. "While the virus knows no borders, it is painfully obvious that the poor and vulnerable countries and people are impacted the most," Ambassador Akram said. "The difference in amount of stimulus packages between the developed economies and the developing economies would dictate the



time of recovery of countries." With coronavirus vaccines providing a glimmer of optimism around the world, Ambassador Akram said that it was "painful to witness" the dashed hopes of most people in the Global South who have little chance of receiving an inoculation anytime soon. He said that advance purchase agreements for the COVID-19 vaccine have also created vaccine

inequality among nations. Under the premise that today's digital divide could become "the new face of the development divide", Ambassador underscored the "urgent need" to invest in infrastructure that connects people and strengthens international cooperation "to build a digitalized global economy" guided by regulation and fair competition. Meanwhile, UN General Assembly President Volkan Bozkir said that the world faces the "largest setback in socio-economic development since the Second World War", and that decades of gains and untold resources, risk being wiped away "if we do not act". "This is unacceptable", he spelled out, encouraging the members to act with urgency to drive a "people-centered" recovery to mitigate and overcome the negative impacts of COVID-19, particularly

on disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. However remote or disadvantaged, he stressed that all people must be reached, and that the needs of those hit hardest hit be reflected in recovery planning. As countries face the social and economic fallout of the pandemic, the Assembly President called for visionary action, solidarity, multilateral cooperation and "above all else", transformation. "The challenges we face today – from COVID-19 to climate to inequality – all go hand-in-hand", he observed, saying that "our efforts must be equally as reinforcing if we are to overcome them". Noting that it would not be easy, Mr. Bozkir pinpointed that a new social contract must be drawn up to address root causes of inequality and vulnerability, prioritize equal opportunities and close gaps across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Return of int'l cricket a result of sacrifices

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InshaAllah," the Chief of Army Staff said during the 239th Cops Commanders' Conference. 239th Corps Commanders' Conference was held at General Headquarters on Tuesday. The conference was chaired by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, according to a statement by ISPR. The participants undertook a comprehensive review of regional and domestic security environment with special focus on situation along borders, internal security and other professional matters of the Army, the statement further said.

In the backdrop of Kashmir Solidarity Day, forum positively noted the increasing realisation at international forums about worsening humanitarian and security crises in IIOJ&K. Forum reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support to resilient Kashmiri people for their just struggle for right to self-determination in accordance with relevant UNSC resolutions. Dilating upon Afghan Peace Process, the participants expressed hope for peaceful and stable Afghanistan for regional peace and stability. Commanders noted that the enormity of the security challenges warrants a holistic national response, keeping national interest above everything else. Participants underscored the need to ensure continuous operational preparedness to thwart any possible misadventure from adversary. Forum also deliberated upon the improved security situation in erstwhile FATA / KP in detail and concluded the requirement for early implementation of reforms in newly merged tribal districts especially towards enabling the LEAs' apparatus to achieve sustainable peace in the area. The forum also expressed complete satisfaction over countering hostile intelligence agencies' design to disrupt peace and progress particularly in Balochistan and Gilgit Baltistan which lay exposed to the entire world thus vindicating Pakistan's stance on role of hostile agencies in training & funding of terrorists.

Govt to ensure transparency

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Continued on Page 06 been a tradition in Senate elections," he said, adding that the PTI came to power with the aim to eradicate corrupt practices from the country, such as the tradition of horse-trading in Senate elections. "For the purpose, the government has tabled a Constitutional amendment in the National Assembly to hold Senate elections through an open-ballot voting system," he said. The minister added that the government has filed a presidential reference to the Supreme Court regarding holding the Senate elections through an open-ballot voting system, so it will respect the apex court's decision in this regard. The meeting was informed that effective measures have been taken to curb petrol's smuggling, which helped in saving Rs120 billion of taxpayers' money. (Picture on Page 3)

SC's guidance will be respected

From Page 01

Pakistan People's Party and Pakistan Muslim League-N always bluffed about democracy and demanded open voting, but now were deviating from their claims. "The Opposition still wants to protect continuity of corrupt practices. The interests of the Pakistani Democratic Movement (PDM) differ with their politics," he said. He mentioned that the government invited the opposition for talks and gave them a chance in accordance with the Charter of Democracy (CoD). The Foreign Minister said Director General Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) had made it clear that army should not be dragged into politics and also stressed that the institution was fulfilling its constitutional and legal responsibilities. He mentioned that army was fighting terrorists at the western border, countering miscreants in Balochistan and facing daily ceasefire violations on eastern front besides assisting the government in handling coronavirus challenge.

Briefs

Hungary to start vaccinations with Sputnik

FOREIGN DESK

BUDAPEST: Hungary will start vaccinating people suffering no chronic diseases with Russia's Sputnik COVID-19 vaccine soon, the surgeon general said on Tuesday, becoming the first European Union country to use it. Cecilia Muller said the first 2,800 doses of Sputnik would be given to those who have registered for inoculations, and that as Hungary was striving for "maximum safety" those who have a chronic disease will not get the shot. "It... can be used with appropriate caution in case of certain chronic diseases," she told a briefing.

Hungary's drug regulator granted the shot emergency use approval rather than waiting for the EU's European Medicines Agency (EMA) to give it the go-ahead. Hungary has also granted approval to Chinese company Sinopharm's vaccine. The country of around 10 million people is scheduled to receive 600,000 doses of Sputnik and another half a million doses of Sinopharm's vaccine this month, potentially allowing it to speed up its inoculation programme despite delays in Western vaccine deliveries. EU countries have so far relied almost entirely on the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine but Hungary's drug regulator approved Sputnik V for use last month.

'Pfizer vaccine effective against UK, SA strains'

WEB DESK

LONDON: The Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine is effective against the South African and British variants of the virus, the companies announced Monday. They cited a study published in *Natural Medicine* that said the vaccine elicits antibodies that neutralized mutated versions of the virus that first appeared in the UK and South Africa. A panel of human sera from 20 participants were tested by researchers after they were given the shot against viruses with key mutations. "A limitation of the current study is that the engineered viruses do not include the full set of spike mutations found in the UK or S.A. variants," the study warned. The study was published after a separate study revealed Sunday that the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is less effective against the South African variant.

House team rejects call to dismiss Trump case

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The team that will prosecute former US President Donald Trump's second impeachment trial starkly rejected Monday the former commander-in-chief's calls to dismiss the case. One day before he is set to stand trial in the Senate on a sole article of "incitement of insurrection," Trump's legal team sought to frame the case as "political theater," further describing the charge as "rushed." "Through this latest Article of Impeachment now before the Senate, Democrat politicians seek to carve out a mechanism by which they can silence a political opponent and a minority party," Trump's team wrote in a legal brief. They argued that the case cannot go forward because Trump has already left office. But the managers appointed by the House of Representatives to argue the case against Trump said evidence is "overwhelming" while rejecting the notion that Trump cannot be tried. "President Trump violated his Oath of Office and betrayed the American people," the managers wrote. "His incitement of insurrection against the United States government—which disrupted the peaceful transfer of power—is the most grievous constitutional crime ever committed by a president."



ISLAMABAD: Russian Ambassador D. Ganich took part in a webinar on the topic of Russian-Pakistani relations and prospects for their development, organized by the Karachin International Relations Council. – DNA

Aliyev hails ties with UK, pledges for more co-op

"Action must be taken according to the law with effective steps against offences which disturb, prevent and destroy the state's stability, public safety and the rule of law," the statement said

DNA

BAKU: President Ilham Aliyev has hailed Azerbaijan's partnership with the UK in a number of spheres and pledged cooperation for many more decades, Azertac has reported. He made the remarks at a meeting with Minister for European Neighbourhood and the Americas at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Wendy Morton in Baku on February 9.

"I am sure that the visit will be very successful, with very good results. It once again demonstrates a strong partnership relationship between our countries and, of course, our future plans to continue our cooperation. We have very good political contacts, very active political dialogue and your visit to Azerbaijan once again demonstrates that. Of course, energy cooperation is a very important part of our partnership and we are very happy to complete the major project—the Southern Gas Corridor," Aliyev said. Aliyev described BP as Azerbaijan's strategic partner, which partic-



ipated from the very beginning in the major projects in Azerbaijan as an investor. "After the prolongation of the 'Contract of the Century' our cooperation will continue for many more decades. Of course, with a new gas development in Azerbaijan and infrastructure which has been completed last December, the

new opportunities we have now. We hope that there will be more discoveries from BP-operated fields. We have good prospects for that. So this is a very important part of our bilateral cooperation, also cooperation between other countries," he said. Aliyev added that Azerbaijan and the UK established the "very probably

unique format of cooperation" between the regional countries and the European Union and with the strong support from the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States. "By the way, we will have the 7th meeting of the Advisory Council of the Southern Gas Corridor in two days' time where we will review the achievements and look forward to future cooperation. And of course, investments from the UK to Azerbaijan helped us a lot to modernize the country. These investments were mainly in the energy sector, almost 30 billion dollars. But it allowed us to use properly the revenues from oil and gas sales to diversify the economy," the president said. Aliyev expressed his confidence that the major area of Azerbaijani-UK cooperation in the coming years will be the development of the non-energy sector in Azerbaijan. "I looked at some of information before our meeting so that almost 600 British companies received registration in Azerbaijan, and this is really a good sign of diversification of our economic partnership. On the liberated territories, we have great potential for reconstruction and we already started our contacts with British companies."

2 US carrier groups conduct exercises in South China Sea

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: Two US carrier groups launched joint exercises in the South China Sea days after a US warship sailed near Chinese-controlled islands in the disputed waters that have emerged as another flashpoint in strained Sino-US relations. The Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group and the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group "conducted a multitude of exercises aimed at increasing interoperability between assets as well as command and control capabilities," the US Navy said on Tuesday, marking the first dual-carrier operations in the busy waterway since July 2020. The exercise comes days after China condemned the sailing of the USS John S. McCain destroyer near the Chinese-controlled Paracel Islands in what the US calls a "freedom of navigation operation" – the first such mission by the US navy since President Joe Biden took office. The busy waterway, through which as much as \$5.3 trillion in global trade passes annually, is one of a number of flashpoints in the US-China relationship. The US has contested China's extensive territorial claims in the region,

accusing it of militarising the South China Sea and trying to intimidate neighbours such as Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, who have claims that overlap with China's in the resource-rich area. "We are committed to ensuring the lawful use of the sea that all nations enjoy under international law," Rear Admiral Jim Kirk, commander of the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group, said in a statement. Beijing's foreign ministry responded to the deployment saying it will take "necessary measures to resolutely safeguard national sovereignty and security". The latest exercise also comes just days after a separate "mine warfare exercise" between the US Navy and Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force off the coast of southwestern Japan. Late on Friday in Washington, DC, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken had told Yang Jiechi, a senior Chinese official, that the US would hold Beijing "accountable for its efforts to threaten stability in the Indo-Pacific, including across the Taiwan Strait, and its undermining of the rules-based international system". China has been infuriated by the US's repeated forays in the South China Sea and has accused Washington of deliberately stoking tension.

Egypt voices interest in restoring Karabakh

DNA

BAKU: Egypt is interested in participating in future projects in Azerbaijan's liberated territories, Vice Chairman of Egypt's Dorra Group of companies for construction and engineering Mohamed Hassan has said. He made the remarks during the meeting with the Chairman of Azerbaijan Small and Medium Business Development Agency Orkhan Mammadov. Noting that his visit was aimed at discussing investment opportunities in

Azerbaijan, Hassan said that he would be holding meetings with relevant agencies. In addition, he shared his views on the prospects of cooperation with the Agency. Orkhan Mammadov noted that the Agency is ready to support the establishment of relations between SMBs and business associations working in the relevant field with the Dorra Group of Companies. In addition, agency's readiness for support in the implementation of joint projects was noted. He further briefed the participants on the agency's activities and the mechanisms of support for small and medium-sized businesses

and discussed the opportunities for cooperation. The participants of the meeting were also informed about the opportunities and benefits created for residents of industrial parks operating in Azerbaijan. It should be noted that trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$ 7.7 million in 2020. Out of the total turnover, export amounted to \$624,880, while import to \$7.1 million. Earlier, Azerbaijani President stated that companies from friendly countries will take part in the reconstruction works to be carried out in liberated territories.



BANGKOK: Pakistan ambassador to Thailand, Asim Iftikhar Ahmad called on Dr. Anuson Chinvano, Director of International Study Center (ISC) of the Devawongse Varopakarn Institute of Foreign Affairs (DVIFA), in pursuit of establishing linkages between Pakistani and Thai institutions. – DNA

Myanmar protesters hit with rubber bullets

Demonstrators began a fourth day of protests on Tuesday, defying a ban on gatherings of five or more people, and threats from coup leader Senior General Minh Aung Laing to take "action" against large rallies

FOREIGN DESK

YANGON: Police in Myanmar's capital Naypyidaw fired gunshots into the air on Tuesday to disperse demonstrations against the ruling military, witnesses said, as protesters defied bans on gatherings amid nationwide outrage at last week's coup. One witness said demonstrators were running away as weapons were fired into the air, but not in the direction of the crowd. Police initially used water cannon and tried to push a large crowd back, but demonstrators responded with projectiles. Footage on social media showed people running with the sound of several gunfire in the distance. "They fired warning shots to the sky two times, then they fired [at protesters] with rubber bullets," an unnamed resident

told AFP news agency, adding he saw some people injured. Demonstrators began a fourth day of protests on Tuesday, defying a ban on gatherings of five or more people, and threats from coup leader Senior General Minh Aung Laing to take "action" against large rallies. In Yangon's San Chaung township, dozens of teachers marched on the main road, waving a defiant three-finger salute, a gesture borrowed from pro-democracy movements across Asia. "We are teachers, We want justice!" "Free Daw Aung San Suu Kyi!" they yelled as they marched down the main road, where cars passing by honked their horns in support. "Down with the military dictatorship!" Soe Aung, a human rights activist based in neighbouring Thailand, said it was encouraging to see young people leading the demonstrations and

New Zealand suspends ties with Myanmar

ANKARA: New Zealand on Tuesday suspended all high-level political and military contact with Myanmar following the last week's military coup in the Southeast Asian nation, the New Zealand's foreign minister said. In a statement, Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta said her country will not recognize the legitimacy of the military-led government in Myanmar. "Aotearoa New Zealand is deeply concerned at the coup in Myanmar. We do not recognise the legitimacy of the military-led government and we call on the military to immediately release all detained political leaders and restore civilian rule," Mahuta said. "I have also directed that New Zealand's aid programme to Myanmar should not include projects that are delivered with, or benefit, the military government." Foreign Desk

predicted the protesters will not go away quietly. "I think they [the generals] are trying to scare the demonstrators by various means but the protesters are very determined. Many civil

servants joined the protests so it is very encouraging," Soe Aung told media. "More importantly, it is not just the students and young people but also the ethnic minorities in different

parts of the country. So, they are not going to back down. They understand if they back down, they will be the slaves of the dictatorship forever." Aung San Suu Kyi, the country's civilian leader and founder of the ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) was detained along with dozens of members of her government as the generals moved to seize power last week. Videos posted on social media showed the police using water cannon against protesters in a number of locations including the capital Naypyidaw and Bago, northeast of Yangon, as human rights experts urged the military to refrain from violence. Several people were seen injured in Naypyidaw after they got hit by water cannons, while in Mandalay, at least two protesters have reportedly been detained.

Azeri FM, US official mull Karabakh peace deal

FOREIGN DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov and US Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Reeker have discussed the implementation of November 10 Karabakh peace deal in a phone conversation, the ministry reported on February 8. The two men also discussed the January 11 meeting of the Azerbaijani, Armenian and Russian leaders held in Moscow. Bayramov and Reeker also focused on other issues of mutual interest during the phone conversation. A Moscow-brokered ceasefire deal that Baku and Yerevan signed on November 10 brought an end to six weeks of fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani army declared a victory against the Armenian troops. The signed agreement obliged Armenia to withdraw its troops from the Azerbaijani lands that it has occupied since the early 1990s. On January 11, the Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian leaders signed the second statement since the end of the 44-day war. The newly-signed statement is set to implement clause 9 of the November 2020 statement related to the unblocking of all economic and transport communications in the region. It should be noted that U.S. Ambassador Earle Litzinger on January 27 congratulated Azerbaijan on the restoration of its territorial integrity and expressed the U.S. readiness to participate in the restoration of the lands liberated from Armenia's occupation.

Iran starts nationwide COVID vaccination

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: In a ceremony held in Imam Khomeini Hospital of Tehran and several other centers across the country, the vaccination started with the order of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. Priorities for this phase of vaccination are health workers in ICU centers of hospitals across Iran. According to Health Ministry officials, some 1.3 million Iranians will be vaccinated against the virus by the end current [Iranian calendar] year (March 20). The next group of people that will receive the jabs after ICU personnel and health workers of COVID-19 sections of hospitals are the elderly and people with disabilities. Speaking in the ceremony, Health Minister Saeed Namaki said that the vaccination program started today in 635 centers nationwide. He said that next shipments of vaccines will gradually enter the country, adding that the works on home-made vaccines are also proceeding well and they may enter the mass production phase as soon as spring. Iran received the first shipment of the Russian Sputnik V vaccine on Saturday and is also to receive nearly four million doses of vaccine from the COVAX program. 2nd Brief-Right.

EU accepted registration of 'Sputnik V'

FOREIGN DESK

BRUSSELS: European Union (EU) has accepted Russia's application regarding registration of the "Sputnik V" vaccine, Russian Direct Investment Fund says, media reports citing RIA Novosti. It was noted that the official application has been sent to European Medicines Agency in January in order to register the "Sputnik V" vaccine in the EU and this application has been approved by the Agency. European Medicines Agency will make a decision on the issue of using Russian-produced vaccine in the EU, after determining whether that vaccine meets the relevant conditions.

Briefs

PML-N to challenge presidential ordinance

DNA

LAHORE: Ahsan Iqbal, General Secretary of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), on Tuesday said that promulgation of ordinance despite lacking two-thirds majority in Parliament is height of ignorance of incumbent government. Ahsan Iqbal, while talking to media persons outside accountability court in Lahore, alleged that Prime Minister Imran Khan wants to issue Senate tickets to his friends. He further said that Presidential ordinance is an attempt to pressurize the apex court. The PML-N leader, while announcing that his party will challenge presidential ordinance on open Senate vote, said that constitution of Pakistan cannot be amended just to benefit friends of Imran Khan. He also requested Supreme Court to reject Presidential reference on Senate elections through open ballot. Ahsan Iqbal said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is in power for last three years but has failed to prove any case against PML-N leaders. He further said that PML-N fulfilled its election promises. On the other hand, Imran Khan promised to provide 10 million jobs but in reality, people lost their jobs during tenure of this government.

C-130 to join Sadpara search

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A C-130 plane will now join the search operation on the K2 mountain to locate Pakistani hero Muhammad Ali Sadpara and two other foreign climbers. This is going to be the biggest air search in the history of the country, the sources claimed. The sources also said the C-130 plane is on standby as is ready to take off as soon as the weather becomes clear. Ali Sadpara's son Sajid Sadpara will also take part in the historic operation. The search for mountaineers John Snorri Sigurjónsson from Iceland, Ali Sadpara from Pakistan, and Juan Pablo Mohr Prieto from Chile will be carried out as soon as the weather is clear. The rescue operation faced difficulties for the last three days and Tuesday's helicopter search was also delayed due to harsh weather conditions. Earlier, Alpine Club of Pakistan claimed that K2 rescue team during their search operation on Monday found evidence at a few places including possible traces of a camp and sleeping bag of Muhammad Ali Sadpara, reported 24NewsHD TV channel on Tuesday. It has been claimed on the fourth day since the internationally acclaimed Pakistani mountaineer Sadpara and his co-climbers from Iceland and Chile were missing on K2 winter summit push. Three search operations led by Pakistan Army Aviation Department Lama helicopters failed to find the traces of the three summiters despite the harsh weather conditions at the world's second tallest mountain, "the savage mountain."

Four Afghan civil servants killed

DNA

KABUL: Militants shot dead four government employees in central Kabul Tuesday, police said, in the latest rush-hour violence to rock the capital as Afghanistan's spy agency said it had busted a "terrorist cell" involved in targeted killings. Kabul police spokesman Ferdaws Faramarz told reporters that gunmen had opened fire on a vehicle carrying staff from the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, killing four. A separate attack saw the driver of a vehicle belonging to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs killed in a bombing in Kabul, police and the ministry said. No group has so far claimed responsibility for the attacks.

'Pakistan establishes border markets to promote SMEs'

The President said the govt is regularly holding meetings with traders and business community across the country to resolve their issues

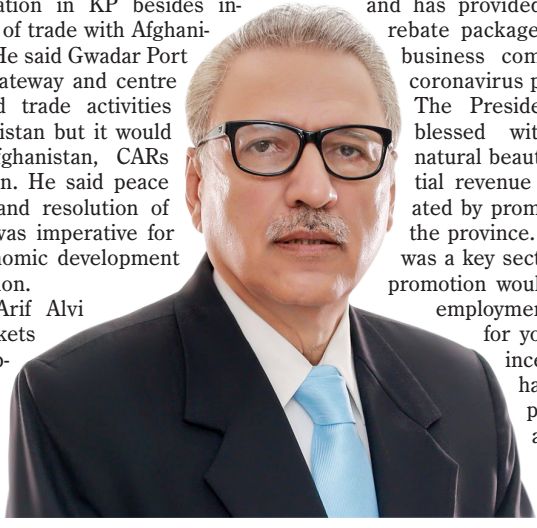
DNA

PESHAWAR: President Dr. Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan is establishing border markets with Iran and Afghanistan to facilitate small and medium enterprises in the country. Talking to a delegation of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) led by its President, Sherbaz Bilour here at Governor House in Peshawar on Tuesday, he said, businessmen play a vital role to create employment opportunities in any society. The President said traders and business community of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was playing a key role in the country's development and women entrepreneurs should be encouraged to give boost to socioeconomic development process. He said peace in Afghanistan was in the best interest of Pakistan especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its merged areas, which could serve a trade corridor for Afghanistan and onward to Central Asian Republics (CARs) following completion of CPEC projects.

The President was of the view that an effective mechanism and close coordination between Government departments and trade bodies are necessary to promote business and industrialization in KP besides increasing volume of trade with Afghanistan and CARs. He said Gwadar Port would prove a gateway and centre of business and trade activities not only for Pakistan but it would also benefit Afghanistan, CARs and entire region. He said peace in Afghanistan and resolution of Kashmir issue was imperative for sustainable economic development of the entire region. President Dr. Arif Alvi said border markets are being established with Iran and Afghanistan to facilitate business and trade activities besides

encouraging small and medium enterprises (SMEs). He said the government is working on various reforms for simplifying payment of taxes through tax automation and has provided Rs 1.1 trillion rebate package to traders and business community despite coronavirus pandemic. The President said KP is blessed with mesmerizing natural beauty and a substantial revenue could be generated by promoting tourism in the province. He said tourism was a key sector of KP and its promotion would help generate employment opportunities for youth in the province. He said KP had paid a heavy price in war against terrorism and held sacrifices of its people, business and

traders community in high esteem. President said quality roads infrastructure plays vital role for socioeconomic development and directed KP Government to complete all ongoing roads projects within stipulated time for benefits of common man. He said BRT has brought positive revolution in transport sector in Peshawar and 30 new buses are being inducted in its fleet to provide quality, safe and comfortable transportation facilities to hundreds of thousands of people on daily basis. The President said the government is regularly holding meetings with traders and business community across the country to resolve their issues. He said the government was well aware of the problems being faced by business community of KP and their problems pertaining to gas and electricity would be resolved amicably besides provision of warehousing and other facilities at ports. Earlier, President SCCI, Sherbaz Bilour informed the President about various issues being faced by traders and businessmen of KP.



ECP imposes Rs 50,000 fine on Faisal Vawda

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan on Tuesday imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on Federal Minister Faisal Vawda on seeking adjournments again and again in the disqualification case, directing him to appear in-person on the next hearing. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was hearing the petition seeking the federal minister's disqualification due to his dual nationality. Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja, who was presiding over the proceedings, said the case has already been delayed and reprimanded the counsel representing Vawda. When the hearing resumed today, assistant counsel Hasnain Ali Chohan sought an adjournment due to Vawda's lawyer, Muhammad bin Mohsin's, engagement in a Lahore court. Member Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Irshad Qaiser asked him, "In which capacity have you appeared, you don't even have the power of attorney". Another Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) member Altaf Ibrahim Qureshi said that the lawyer has not attached any evidence in this regard and the minister's attorney should have managed his time with the court. On this, petitioner Qadir Mandokhel responded to Hasnain Ali Chohan and said, "You are the minister's coordinator in Karachi". CEC Sultan Raja said the minister was supposed to respond to questions regarding his dual nationality in the hearing.

Uzbek president approves change of elections date



TASHKENT: Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has approved the amendments to the country's law to move the date of the presidential, parliamentary and local elections from December to October, the Uzbek parliamentary newspaper reported Tuesday.

Under the new law, the elections will be held on the first Sunday in the last 10 days of October, which means that the Central Asian nation will hold its next presidential election on Oct. 24. Uzbek senators, who approved the law last week, said holding elections in December led to delays in post-election political activities, including the adoption of a state program and other reforms. The change of voting day will also be convenient for the international election monitoring organizations, as Uzbekistan used to hold its elections on New Year Eve, senators said. Since Mirziyoyev took office in 2016, Uzbekistan has taken a series of measures to open up the country and promote political, economic and social reforms. - DNA

Send all Steel Mills staff and officers home: CJP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has directed all parties to resolve the Steel Mills issues amicably and appointed senior counsel Rasheed A Rizvi as mediator. The court also ordered payment of arrears of the Steel Mills employees and directed the Secretary of Privatization Commission and Secretary Industries and Production to submit a detailed report in two weeks. A three-member bench headed by Supreme Court Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed heard the Steel Mills Employees Promotion Case on Tuesday. The Chief Justice expressed anger over the plight of the Steel Mills and remarked all officers of the Steel Mills should be shown the red door with just one letter (dismissal letter) and money should be recovered from them. Federal Minister for Planning Asad Umar and Minister for Privatization Muhammad Mian Soomro also attended the court hearing. The court inquired from both the ministers about what to do with the Steel Mills. CJP Gulzar Ahmed said "Dismiss all 3,700 employees and 405 officers."

Video emerges of MPs receiving money

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A video has surfaced which exposed the horse-trading during Senate elections in 2018 by some party lawmakers who could be seen as counting bundles of currencies and hiding it inside the bag. The video shows how the loyalty of 20 lawmakers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was changed after horse-trading during Senate elections in 2018. The lawmakers had been ousted from the political party by the central leadership after holding a thorough investigation. It exposed that PTI lawmakers had been made hefty payments in 2018 during Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) polls. The lawmakers can be seen counting banknotes and putting it inside a bag. According to a private television channel the vote-trading had been carried out from February 20 to March 2, 2018. In 2021, Prime Minister Imran Khan had expressed aims to hold Senate elections through the open ballot in 2021 in order to eliminate the menace of vote-trading in the country. The federal government led by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had prepared an ordinance to pave way for holding the Upper House polls via open vote besides mov-

KP minister resigns

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Law Minister Sultan Khan tendered his resignation from the provincial cabinet on Tuesday, minutes after the chief minister tweeted that he had asked him to do so over his "alleged appearance in a video" leaked on social media. The video showed some parliamentarians sitting before and counting stacks of cash reportedly ahead of the Senate elections in 2018. In his resignation letter, shared by KP CM Mehmood Khan on Twitter, Sultan said he felt "it was his moral duty and obligation to withdraw from the cabinet and offer my resignation". He also expressed the hope that "justice will be done" and that he would be able to clear his name. "We will, as per vision of PM, uphold highest standards of accountability & transparency in this province," the chief minister earlier wrote on Twitter. - DNA

ing to the Supreme Court (SC) for the determination of legalities of the law. On the other hand, the major opposition parties including Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and JUI-F have strongly opposed the legislation to hold Senate polls by open vote. In a statement, PM Imran Khan said that he was fully aware of the menace of horse-trading in Senate polls continued for the last three decades. He said that 20 members of provincial assembly (MPAs) had been ousted from PTI in 2018 over their involvement in vote trading. The premier revealed that the PTI MPAs had traded their vote worth Rs50 million each during the polls

in 2018. He added that bidding process is started once again ahead of Senate polls this year and he was also aware of the persons behind it. On February 6, President Dr Arif Alvi had signed Elections (Amendment) ordinance 2021 that will pave way for the organisation of Senate elections through the open ballot. According to the Ordinance, changes have been brought to Sections 81, 122 and 185 of the Constitution. The ordinance will come into force "at once" and "extended to the whole of Pakistan." It may be noted here that the presidential reference is also being heard by the SC pertains to the organisation of Senate polls through an open vote.

Smart lockdown in Lahore areas

DNA

LAHORE: A smart lockdown has been imposed in six localities of Lahore after a rise in the number of coronavirus cases was reported. The Punjab Primary and Secondary Health Care Department issued a notification for it on Tuesday. The following six areas will be under the smart lockdown: Street Number 1, Ali View Garden, Baidian Road in Cantt, Street No 7 and 20, A Block, Phase 5, DHA in Cantt, Street 21, W Block Phase 3, DHA in Cantt, Main Street, Block C1, Faisal Town in Gulberg, Street from House No 156 to 167, Chenab Block, Allama Iqbal Town in Samanabad, Abdullah Street, A Block, Al Ahmed Garden, Manawan in Wahga. These areas will be sealed for the next two weeks. Entry and exit points have been closed. There has been a constant increase in the positivity percentage and prevalence of COVID-19 cases across Punjab in the last two weeks which poses a serious threat to public health, the notification read. It gave the SOPs of the smart lockdown in detail with timings for grocery stores, fruits and vegetable shops, and petrol pumps, what can stay open and what cannot.

Chinese envoy lauds WAPDA's assistance

LAHORE: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong here Tuesday called on Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Chairman Lt Gen (R) Muzammil Hussain and discussed with him matters relating to Chinese cooperation for WAPDA in construction of water and hydropower projects. The WAPDA Chairman expressed the gratitude for Chinese assistance in completion of WAPDA Projects. The Chinese Ambassador appreciated the efforts made by WAPDA for implementation of its projects to cope with water and electricity needs in Pakistan. He said that Pakistan and China have been the partners in progress since decades, and Chinese institutions would continue working with WAPDA in water and hydropower sectors for prosperity of the people. - DNA

Portuguese envoy calls on CNS

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Portugal to Pakistan Paulo Neves Pochinho visited Naval Headquarters in Islamabad and held a meeting with Naval Chief Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi on Tuesday. According to the spokesman of the Pak Navy, matters of bilateral cooperation and maritime security were discussed. It is pertinent to mention here that the seventh edition of the multinational maritime exercise Aman-2021 will be held in Karachi and in Pakistan waters from Feb 11 to 16. With around 45 countries participating in the exercise along with their surface and air assets, special operation forces/marine teams, senior officers and observers, Aman-2021 will have two phases: a harbour phase and a sea phase. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Portugal to Pakistan, Paulo Neves Pochinho visited Naval Headquarters & called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi. - DNA

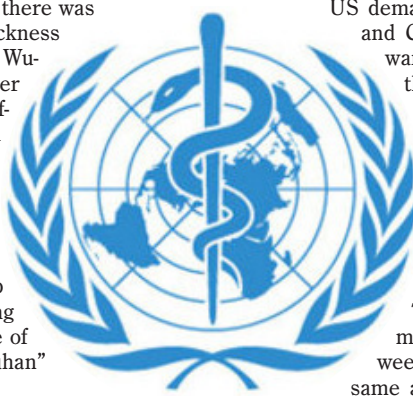
WHO team fails to find animal source of Covid-19

While transmission from animals was the likely route, so far "the reservoir hosts remain to be identified", Liang Wannian, head of the China team, told reporters

WEB DESK

WUHAN (CHINA): The WHO mission to China to uncover the origins of the coronavirus has failed to identify the animal source, scientists said Tuesday. Experts believe the disease - which has gone on to kill more than 2.3 million people worldwide - originated in bats and could have been transmitted to humans via another mammal. While transmission from animals was the likely route, so far "the reservoir hosts remain to be identified", Liang Wannian, head of the China team, told reporters. He added that studies showed the virus "can be carried long-distance on cold chain products," appearing to nudge towards the

possible importation of the virus - a theory that has abounded in China in recent months. He also said there was "no indication" the sickness was in circulation in Wuhan before December 2019 when the first official cases have been recorded. WHO foreign expert Ben Embarek, who was based in the WHO's Beijing office for two years from 2009, backed up the assertion saying there was no evidence of "large outbreaks in Wuhan" before then. The mission is a diplomatically



knotty one, which was trailed before it began by fears of a whitewash, with the US demanding a "robust" probe and China firing back with a warning not to "politicise" the investigation. During the closely-monitored visit, reporters were largely kept at arms' length from the experts, but snippets of their findings crept out over Twitter and interviews. The experts spent one month in China, two weeks in quarantine and the same again on fieldwork. But, already over a year after the virus

emerged, some of it was of questionable relevance to their stated aim of finding the virus source, including a visit to a propaganda exhibition celebrating China's recovery from the pandemic. The group spent just an hour at the seafood market where many of the first reported clusters of infections emerged over a year ago. They also appeared to spend several days inside their hotel, receiving visits from various Chinese officials without going out into the city. But deeper research was carried out at the Wuhan virology institute where they spent nearly four hours and said they met with Chinese scientists there including Shi Zhengli, one of China's leading experts on bat coronaviruses and deputy director of the Wuhan lab.

No rain spell during Feb's 2nd quarter

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Spokesman Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) Dr Khalid Malik on Tuesday said no rain spell is expected during the second quarter of February. Talking to media, he said during the month of February, Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) predicted two rain spells likely at the end of the month whereas heavy rain spells had occurred during February past year. The Met Officer spokesman mentioned that it was expected to have the second quarter of the ongoing month go dry without any rain spell.