



Islamabad POST

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India must end curbs in Kashmir, urges Turkey FM

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Dr. Sania Nishtar inaugurates control room

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Amb. Hamid Asghar elected VP of ICDT

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Briefs

UN chief grateful to Pakistan

DNA

NEW YORK: The head of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Inger Andersen, has expressed her "huge thanks" to Pakistan for its move to host World Environment Day 2021. The flagship day, to be celebrated in partnership with UNEP on June 5, will also mark the formal launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030. "Pakistan will lead the global charge to restore our ecosystems," Ms. Anderson, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) executive director, said in a statement.

Pervaiz Rashid is an ideology

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Maryam Nawaz on Tuesday has said that her party leader Pervaiz Rashid is not an individual but an ideology. While responding to the decision of Election Tribunal, the PML-N leader took to social-networking website Twitter and posted that Pervaiz Rashid is the bright symbol of democracy. Such leaders always live. He will continue to be ex-PM Nawaz Sharif's trustworthy companion, she said. The reaction came after LHC Election Tribunal had upheld the decision of returning officer and disqualified Pervaiz Rashid.

Government involved in election theft

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Tuesday accused incumbent government of involvement in election theft and said that everyone, including lawmakers, is sick of ruling party. Talking to media persons outside Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), he said that by-elections in NA-75 were stolen by the government as the ECP itself said that election of the constituency was rigged.

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NA passes bill against corporal punishment

According to Minister for HR Shireen Mazari, with the amendment proposed by the govt, it will now be possible for complaints to be filed in court

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: In a major victory for child's rights activists, a bill against the corporal punishment of children in Islamabad was passed on Tuesday in the National Assembly. The ICT Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill, a private member bill, was presented by PML-N MPA Mehnaz Akbar Aziz. An amendment in the bill presented by the government was also passed. According to Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari, with the amendment proposed by the government, it will now be possible for complaints to be filed in court. "The previous version of bill stated that complaints must be made to the government committee formed for the purpose," she said. The human rights minister said that now the court can directly be approached. At the start of the proceedings, the treasury and opposition lawmakers, carrying placards in their hands, stood in front of each other following which NA Speaker Asad Qaisar suspended the proceedings at 16:56 pm.

The sitting resumed at 17:14 pm and took up the agenda appearing on orders of the day. The house passed three private members' bills, which included the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill, 2020; the ICT Prohibition of Interest on Private Loans, 2020 and the Al-Karam International Institute Bill, 2020. On behalf of the chairman of the Standing Committee on Law and Justice, a member of the Committee presented the report of the Committee on the ICT Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill, 2020. The bill was presented by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) MPA Mehnaz Akbar Aziz. According to Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari, the amendment will make it possible for complainants to be filed in court.

India must end curbs in Kashmir

Turkish Foreign Minister says "We reiterate our call to the Government of India to ease current restrictions in

I.P.REPORT

GENEVA: Raising the Kashmir issue at the United Nations Human Rights Council, Turkey has called for resolving the decades-old dispute on the basis of UN resolutions and the "legitimate" expectations of Kashmiri people who are struggling for their right of self-determination. Turkey raised the Kashmir issue at the United Nations Human Rights Council, with a call for resolving the decades-old dispute on the basis of UN resolutions and the "legitimate" expectations of Kashmiri people who are struggling for their right of self-determination. "We reiterate our call to

the Government of India to ease current restrictions in Jammu and Kashmir," Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told the 47-member Council in Geneva. "We wish for the resolution of the issue through peaceful means on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions and the legitimate expectations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir," the Turkish foreign minister added. The Council on Monday began its month-long, 46th session, which is being held almost entirely remotely to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In Washington, Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, Secretary-General of the World Kashmir Awareness Forum, welcomed Cavusoglu's remarks about the deteriorating situation in Indian occupied Kashmir. "This has been the consistent policy of the Erdogan administration to sensitize the world opinion to help bring parties concerned together to resolve the Kashmir dispute for the sake of peace and security not only in Kashmir but in the region of South Asia," he said. "The people of Jammu & Kashmir were heartened to listen to Mr. Cavusoglu explaining before the world body the principle aspect of the Kashmir issue," Dr. Fai said. He added that the time has come for the world powers to find a solution to the Kashmir dispute between nuclear-armed India and Pakistan.

Japanese envoy lauds PM Khan's forests initiative

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: MATSUDA Kuninori, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, has expressed his deep appreciation for Prime Minister Imran Khan's initiative of adopting the Japanese Miyawaki planting technique in the country's urban localities to fight environmental pollution. The Ambassador, while lauding the PM Khan's vision for Green Pakistan, in a statement on Tuesday, said that he highly values this very fruitful initiative by the Pakistani PM of using Japanese style Miyawaki technique,

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- Condemns attack on health workers

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, has condemned the terrorist gun attack in North Waziristan area which took place on Monday 22nd February, in which four female vocational trainers were shot dead and their driver injured while reportedly driving through a village to provide vocational

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Afghan peace talks resume amid violence

The priority for the Afghan govt, Washington and NATO is a serious reduction in violence that can lead to a ceasefire, the Taliban have until now resisted any immediate ceasefire

FOREIGN DESK

DOHA: Peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government have resumed in the Qatari capital Doha after weeks of delays, escalating violence and a change in US diplomatic leadership as the Biden administration began. Taliban spokesman Mohammad Naeem tweeted on Monday night the resumption of the talks, which were the outcome of an agreement between the Afghan armed group and the US in February 2020. But the administration of President Joe Biden is reviewing the

agreement, which was aimed at ending the longest war the US has fought. The Taliban has been fighting the combined forces of the Western-backed Kabul government and foreign troops since it was toppled in a US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Last week, the Taliban in an open letter called on the US to fully implement the Doha accord, including the withdrawal of all international troops, saying it had committed to its side of the deal - to secure US security interests in the war-torn country. There were no details about the talks except for an announcement

that the first item of business would be setting the agenda. When talks ended abruptly in January, days after they began, both sides submitted their wish lists for agendas which they now have to sift through to agree on negotiation items and the order in which they will be tackled. The priority for the Afghan government, Washington and NATO is a serious reduction in violence that can lead to a ceasefire, the Taliban have until now resisted any immediate ceasefire. Washington is reviewing the Doha peace agreement the previous Trump administration signed with

the Taliban as consensus mounts in Washington that a delay of the withdrawal deadline is needed. The Taliban have resisted suggestions of even a brief extension. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said last week that the troops from the transatlantic alliance would not withdraw from Afghanistan "before the time is right", adding that the Taliban must do more to meet the terms of the agreement with the US. The resumption in talks in Doha comes on the heels of hectic diplomatic activity, including reaching out to Pakistani officials and its powerful Army Chief General

Qamar Javed Bajwa. Pakistan is seen as critical to getting the Taliban back to the negotiating table, and it can use its influence to pressure the Taliban to reduce violence in Afghanistan. Last week, the head of US Central Command, General Kenneth F McKenzie, was in Islamabad, as was Russian President Vladimir Putin's Afghan envoy, Zamir Kabulov and Qatari foreign ministry special envoy Mutlaq Bin Majed Al Qahtani. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's special envoy Umar Daudzai is expected in Islamabad on Wednesday.

COVID-19 claims 41 more lives

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The national tally on Tuesday of total active COVID-19 cases recorded 24,483 with 1,050 more people tested positive for the deadly virus and 752 people recovered from the disease during the last 24 hours. Forty one corona patients have died during past 24 hours, 38 of them were under treatment in hospital and three in their respective quarantines and homes on Monday, according to the latest update issued by the National command and Operation Centre (NCO).



COLOMBO: PM Imran Khan in a meeting with Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda. -DNA

Pakistan, Lanka resolve to strengthen relations

Earlier in the afternoon, PM Rajapaksa received PM Imran Khan on the latter's arrival here at the Bandaranaike International Airport

NEWS DESK

MoU's signed in various sectors

COLOMBO: Prime Minister Imran Khan had extensive consultations with Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa at the Temple Trees (Prime Minister's Office) on Tuesday. The one-on-one meeting between the two Prime Ministers was followed by delegation-level talks between the two sides. The two leaders held wide-ranging discussions with a focus on reinforcing a broad-based and enduring partnership between Pakistan and Sri Lanka to advance the shared objectives of peace,

COLOMBO: Pakistan and Sri Lanka have signed several Memorandums of Understanding in various sectors including commerce, investment, education, science and technology and industrial cooperation. The signing ceremony of MoUs was held in Colombo on Tuesday, in the presence of Prime Ministers of both countries. The agreements were signed by departmental representatives from both countries. - DNA

stability and economic prosperity in South Asia. The two leaders reaffirmed their resolve to work together across a broad range of areas. They acknowledged the immense opportunities and vast potential for mutu-

ally beneficial collaboration in the areas of trade and investment, IT and human resource development, agriculture and science and technology, security and defence cooperation, and culture and tourism.

Continued on Page 06

TTP commander gunned down

RAWALPINDI: Security Forces have on Tuesday gunned a notorious commander of a proscribed organisation in an Intelligence Based Operation (IBO) conducted in Mir Ali area of North Waziristan. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Service Public Relations (ISPR), the IBO was conducted on confirmation of the presence of terrorists in the area. During the exchange of fire, banned TTP commander Hafiz Gul Bahadur group Hassan alias Sajna was killed. Sajna was involved in the killing of four women workers yesterday in Mir Ali. The killed terrorist was also involved in several terrorist activities against the security forces and peaceful civilians including IED attacks, kidnapping for ransom, target killing, and extortion. Security forces also recovered cache of weapons were from the possession of killed terrorists. Cache of arms & weapons recovered. Area sanitisation was carried out by security forces.

Govt will accept ECP's decision, says Shibli Faraz

SUJUAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz Tuesday said Prime Minister Imran Khan had accepted the challenge of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) for re-polling at 20 polling stations in NA-75. Talking to the media here, he said the prime minister had always faced the challenges boldly and in this particular case, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was ready for the re-polling. He said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), an independent institution, would take the final decision about the by-election held in NA-75 Daska and the PTI would accept it. Shibli said it was ironic that

Continued on Page 06

PML-N demands re-election in NA-75

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday said that re-election should be held in entire constituency not just 20 polling stations. Talking to media persons, he said that code of conduct was openly violated during the Daska by-election and Punjab government failed to explain disappearance of 20 presiding officers. Ahsan Iqbal said that stealing votes is a bigger crime than a murder.

NA-75: RO submits details to ECP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The returning officer of the NA-75 Daska by-election has submitted details of irregularities before the Election Commission of Pakistan. Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja presided over a five-member bench meeting on Tuesday. The commission was meeting after the results for the NA-75 Daska by-polls had been withheld due to violence and alleged voting fraud. The results will now be announced by the ECP after a proper inquiry. The CEC had summoned Ali Asjad and Nosheen Iftikhar, both leading candidates belonging to the PTI and PML-N, respectively, to the federal capital for the hearing. During the proceedings, PTI's candidate Ali Asjad Malhi appeared before the panel and vowed to accept the decision of the commission.

Briefs

Rupee gains 18 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: The exchange rate of Pakistani rupee strengthened by 18 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Tuesday and closed at Rs158.88 as compared to the previous day's closing of Rs159.06. Meanwhile, according to Forex Association of Pakistan, the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs158.8 and Rs159.5 respectively. In interbank trading, the price of euro appreciated by 75 paise and closed at Rs193.18 against the last day's trading of Rs 192.43, State Bank of Pakistan reported. The Japanese Yen gained one paise to close at Rs1.51, whereas an increase of 99 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of British Pound which was traded at Rs223.63 as compared to its last closing of Rs222.64. The exchange rates of Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal declined by 05 paise each to close at Rs 43.25 and Rs 42.36 respectively. — APP

Minister orders strict monitoring of essential items' prices

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Industries and Trade Mian Aslam Iqbal Tuesday directed the administration as well as line departments to regularly and strictly monitor prices and supply and demand of essential items in the markets. According to the Provincial Industries Department here, the minister directed that every effort should be made to sell quality items at government fixed rates and consumers' rights should be protected. He ordered for continuing indiscriminate crackdown on hoarders and illegal profiteers as the mafia did not deserve any leniency. "Jail is the best place for those who usurp public rights by earning illegal profit and anti-people elements will not be allowed to add to miseries of the masses for the sake of some coins," the minister added. Legitimate profit was the right of sellers, but illegal profiteering was a dacoity, he said and vowed to go to every extent to protect consumers' rights. The government would not leave the people at the mercy of exploiters and the administration should remain fully vigilant to overcome hoarding and illegal profiteering.

JI announces new series of protests

DNA

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has announced a new series of protests under Huqooqi-Karachi Movement [Karachi Rights' Movement] from February 28. Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said in a statement that Huqooqi-Karachi Movement of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) is underway and a 'big demonstration' will be organised on M A Jinnah Road on February 28. While unveiling further plans for the upcoming protests in a press conference today, the JI Karachi chief said that a rally will be taken out on March 14 to get the attention of the rulers towards the miseries of Karachiites. Naeemur Rehman said that JI Karachi will organise a social media competition for raising the civic issues of the metropolis. He reiterated the demand for conducting a 15-year forensic audit of the sole power provider of the metropolis, KElectric.

He censured the rulers for showing their enmity with the economic hub of Pakistan after extending the quota system. The JI Karachi chief also criticised that the approval of the population census has also shown their enmity with the Karachi citizens. Jamaat-e-Islami will begin its public contact campaign to get the support of all segments of the society for the ongoing campaign for Karachi rights. He announced that JI will soon issue a white paper regarding education and demanded to award scholarships to Karachi students. Under the Karachi Rights' Movement, the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) had earlier held big demonstration across the metropolis in order to push the government for resolving civic and administrative issues besides campaigning against power outages, destroyed infrastructure, local bodies elections, government jobs and lack of transport system.



RAWALPINDI: Meeting of Standing Committee of ICT chaired by Col Aziz was observed today. MD PSEB Osman Nasir and GM North PTCL Suleman were the special invitee in the meeting. SVP RCCI Osman Ashraf discussed different aspects of collaboration with PSEB and PTCL. Both organisations agreed to offer their support to each other to increase trade in this sector. — DNA

CNS reiterates PN resolve to insure seaward defence

The Chief Guest while appreciating quality of the papers commended panel members for presenting well researched papers and organizers for conducting the seminar in a professional manner

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy Operational Commands Seminar was held at Bahria Auditorium Karachi. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi graced the occasion as Chief Guest. While addressing the seminar, Naval Chief emphasized on maintaining highest level of combat readiness. Chief of the Naval Staff further explained to constantly align employment and development strategies with evolving threats to deliver a resolute and strong response to any misadventure by the adversary. The Admiral reiterated PN resolve to ensure seaward defence and to safeguard national maritime interests of the mother-



land at all costs. He highlighted various development initiatives being undertaken by Pakistan Navy to maintain a balanced and potent force capable to defend Pakistan against maritime threats and challenges. The Chief Guest while appreciating quality of the papers commended panel members for presenting well researched papers and organizers for conducting the seminar in a professional manner. Pakistan Navy Operational Command Seminar is a prominent event held annually under the auspices of Operational Commands i.e. Fleet and Coastal Command during which selected panels of officers from relevant Commands present papers on contemporary naval professional issues.

Sindh CM orders resolution of pension issues of employees

KARACHI: Sindh chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed all the departments, particularly the local bodies, authorities and different boards and other semi government organizations to resolve the pension issues of their employees and report to him. He took this decision while presiding over a cabinet meeting here at New Sindh Secretariat on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by all the provincial ministers, senior advisor, Chief Secretary Mumtaz Shah, chairman P&D Mohammad Waseem and

concerned secretaries.

At the outset of the meeting, the chief minister was told that there were pension issues of local bodies employees. "An employee who retires from his/her service must be given their pension and dues in time," he said and added the local bodies such as KMC, DMCs, sukkr municipal corporation and such other have failed to develop payment of pension mechanism, therefore the employees have run from pillar to post for their legitimate right. "This is unfair and should be addressed on priority basis," he ordered. Murad

Ali Shah directed the chief secretary to personally resolve the issue so that payment pension and other areas may be resolved once for all.

Teachers transfer policy: The education department presented a transfer policy for teaching staff of school education department saying that with the aim to ensure continuity of teachers during an academic year and restrain frequent transfer and postings, especially transfer of teachers from remote rural areas to urban areas, a ban on transfer was imposed on November 5, 2018. — DNA

PML-N again shifts its stance: Fawad

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Tuesday said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had again shifted its stance on re-polling in 20 polling stations to re-polling in the whole constituency. "PML-N raised objection over polling in the 20 polling stations in the by-elections and demanded re-polls on which we agreed but now it has changed its stance and demanding re-election in the whole constituency, making the elections disputed", he said. The minister was talking to the media outside Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) along with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders including Usman Dar, Farrukh Habib and the party candidate Ali Asjad Malhi. He said legally, ECP was not authorized to hold the results after compilation and this was also not our obligation to withdraw writ of demanding ECP to announce the results of PTI success in NA-75 (Daska) immediately.

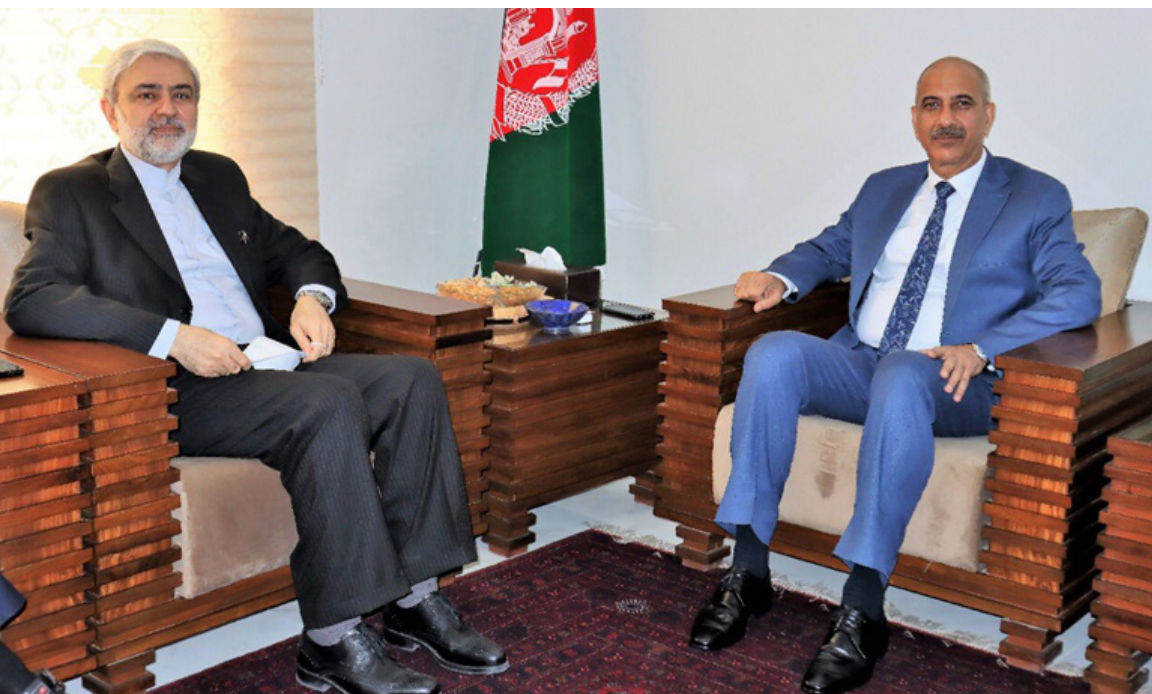
However, the Prime Minister Imran Khan yesterday asked not to resist PML-N application of re-polling in 20 polling stations and directed Ali Asjad Malhi to withdraw his application without resistance. "PTI candidate has foregone his legal right", the federal minister said. It was for the first time that any government had not shown its power in the by-election, he said. Chaudhry Fawad said the Prime Minister had always taken steps to ensure transparent elections, "He is such a person who introduced a neutral empire in the cricket". Following the same vision and principle, the Prime Minister wanted to make this election impartial and transparent. The government had also initiated efforts to make the senate elections transparent, he said. The masses have witnessed the by-elections conducted in the past but they were happy since PTI took over, he said adding, ECP was working as an independent institution and they have great respect for their decisions. — APP

CDNS reaches at Rs 530 billion free deposits

ISLAMABAD: The savings of the Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has reached to the free deposit of Rs 530 billion during the last 7 months in the current Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21. The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) had compensated an amount of Rs 258 billion to its investors after the termination of major prize bonds of Rs 40,000 and also rewarded the amount of Rs 101 billion in recent cancellation of prize bonds of Rs 25000, senior official of CDNS told APP here on Tuesday. He said that the federal government had recently suspended the prize bonds of Rs 25,000 and had given a six-month deadline to investors to re-cash their savings of Rs 160 billion. The government has already canceled prize bonds of Rs 40,000 and CDNS repaid to the investors the re-cashment worth of Rs 158 billion in previous FY 2019-20, he said. The CDNS has set Rs 249 billion annual collection target for the year 2020-21 as compared to Rs 352 billion for the previous year's 2019-20 to enhance savings and promote saving culture in the country. The CDNS had set Rs 352 billion annual collection target for the year 2019-20 as compared to Rs 350 billion for the previous year's 2018-19, he said. The directorate had also revised and increased the gross target of Rs1570 billion for the fiscal year 2019-20, he said. Replying to a question on current revision of CDNS certificate profit rates, he said CDNS has maintained the same interest rate on the savings certificates investment due to the market situation and as per Pakistan Investment Bonds (PIB) policy decision. He informed that the CDNS interest rates were linked with the policy of PIB, set by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

Joint opp seeks Haleem's production order

KARACHI: The joint opposition in Sindh Assembly has submitted a request in the assembly secretariat for issuance of a production order for Opposition Leader in SA, Haleem Adil Sheikh. Sheikh is currently hospitalised after he was allegedly attacked by goons of gang war in Karachi Central Jail. Speaker Sindh Assembly, Agha Siraj Durrani said few members of the joint opposition moved a request for Haleem Adil Sheikh's production orders. Until now the assembly session has been not summoned, the application will be reviewed in accordance with the law, he said. Answering a question, Agha Siraj Durrani said what the opposition leader said he is unaware because when Sheikh was taken into custody, he was not here. The PTI leader was moved to NICVD after he complained pain in the chest, earlier this week. It may be recalled that an anti-terrorism court (ATC), last week, sent Leader of the Opposition in the Sindh Assembly Haleem Adil to jail on judicial remand in a case pertaining to interference in official affairs. — DNA



ISLAMABAD: Afghan ambassador to Pakistan Najibullah Alikhil met with Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini the ambassador of Iran to Pakistan. Both envoys discussed the bilateral friendly relations, the efforts for peace, the need for the reduction of violence and the importance of constructive role of the regional countries. — DNA

Senator Sirajul Haq demands lifting ban on student union

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Senator Sirajul Haq has demanded the government lift ban on student union, providing millions of students an opportunity to exercise their democratic and constitutional right. "Ban on student unions was imposed in Zia regime and it remained intact during tenures of civil governments which is proof of their insincerity to the democratic cause," he said while talking to a delegation of Islami Jamiat Talba at Mansoor on Tuesday. "Without the existence of independent student unions in educational institutes, the potential of leaders would

never come to light and they would never reach a platform from where they could serve Pakistan."

He said the governments of the PTI, the PML-N and the PPP failed to prove their democratic credentials and they befooled the youth with mere sloganeering and tall claims. He said the PTI failed to bring improvement in education sector. He said the government had announced the single national curriculum would be implemented in January 2020 but it seemed the claim would hardly be fulfilled in its tenure.

He said the government made cut in higher education budget which badly affected multiple ongoing projects. He said the politicians and bureaucrats

would be able to better judge the plethora of problems of the government educational institutions if their children studied in them. He regretted the few hundred families ruled over country for decades, capturing the resources of Pakistan and depriving millions of people from their basic rights.

He said the elite ruling over country used their power and wealth to influence the electoral system and get their desired results. He said there must be check on these evil practices and the youth should pay their role to highlight the problems. He said young generation must struggle to strengthen the Islamic and democratic values in the country. He said youth was the future of Pakistan.

ADDENDUM

Reference tender notice dated 13-02-2021 "Privatization / Provision of Services for Secondary Collection & Transportation of Solid Waste / Garbage & Cleaning in ICT Rural and Modal Villages Islamabad". The Scope of work for the services shall be:-

S #	Name of Work	NIT Cost per annum	Earnest Money 3% of NIT Cost
1.	(Package-I) Privatization / Provision of Cleaning Services i.e. Cleaning, Sweeping, Collection & Transportation of Solid Waste / Garbage from Sectors G-6, G-7 & G-8 etc. Islamabad.	Rs. 180,509,538/-	Rs. 5,415,300/-
2.	(Package-II) Privatization / Provision of Cleaning, Sweeping, Collection & Transportation of Solid Waste / Garbage from Sectors G-9, G-10 & G-11 etc. Islamabad	Rs. 189,166,560/-	5,675,000/-
3.	(Package-III) Privatization / Provision of Cleaning Services i.e. Cleaning, Sweeping, Collection & Transportation of Solid Waste / Garbage from Sectors I-8, I-10 & Islamabad Expressway etc, Islamabad	Rs. 159,765,606/-	Rs. 4,793,000/-
4.	Privatization / Provision of Services for Secondary Collection & Transportation of Solid Waste / Garbage & Cleaning of All Major Roads of UC's in ICT Rural Area and Model Villages, Islamabad.	Rs. 260,904,127/-	Rs. 7,828,000/-

2. Tender document along with BOQ, terms & conditions and other detailed information can be obtained upto 15-03-2021 from the office of undersigned. The proposals (Technical and Financial) will be received till 11:30 A.M on 17-03-2021.

3. Other terms and conditions of the tender notice dated 13-02-2021 shall remain same.

PID (I) No. 4549/20

(Deputy Director (Sanitation))

Briefs

PDM can't blackmail govt: Faisal

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: PDM cannot blackmail the incumbent government by using its false tactics of intimidation, propaganda and violence, said Senator Faisal Javed here on Tuesday. Talking to the media, he said the Opposition was rigging and using tricks of intimidation in the by-polls to get their own benefits. The [PDM leadership] was united only for the sake of its vested interests as they were in favor of secret balloting in Senate polls which was not suitable in the prevailing system. He said: "Prime minister Imran Khan is a visionary leader who always tried to eliminate corruption from the political system." Adding he said, PM would never give NRO to the Opposition which they wanted and were doing efforts since so long. Senator said PM Imran Khan has raised Kashmir Issue at every international forum to shake the conscious of the global community to resolve this longstanding issue.

IESCO to hold 'e' katcharies

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: According to IESCO spokesman for immediate solution of valued customers complaints, online 'E' Katcharies in all Operations Circles are being conducted regularly and positive response of customers are being received. According to schedule on 24 February 2021, SE IESCO Islamabad Circle on telephone No. 051-9260194, SE Rawalpindi City Circle on telephone No. 051-9292675, SE Rawalpindi Cantt Circle on telephone No. 051-9292675, SE Attock Circle on telephone No. 051-4950343, SE Chakwal circle on telephone No. 0543-668500 and SE Jhelum Circle on telephone No. 0544-9270276 will attend complaints/suggestions of customers from 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM. IESCO requested valued customers to participate in 'E' Katcharies for immediate solution of their complaints.

Police held nine kite sellers, flyers

SHAHEEN HANIF

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in their crackdown against kite sellers and kite flyers conducted raids in different areas and arrested nine besides recovering 174 kites and 11 kite flying string rolls from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Waris Khan, Bani, New Town and Civil Line police conducted raids in their jurisdiction and rounded up Tahir, Qasim, Sajad Khan, Asad, Usman Khan, Saif Ali, Safyan, Tamoore Ali and Muhammad Zeeshan and recovered 174 kites with 11 kite flying string rolls from their possession. Separate cases have been registered against the accused. He said, Police on the directives of CPO Rawalpindi Muhammad Ahsan Younas were conducting raids against the kite flying ban violators and taking action in accordance with the law.

IRSA releases 106,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: IRSA Tuesday released 106,400 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 42,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1416.35 feet, which was 24.35 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 18,100 and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1147.45 feet, which was 107.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 12,500 and 55,000 cusecs respectively. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Kashmir Committee Shaharyar Afridi, Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada presenting souvenir to Arman Tynybek, Counselor Embassy of Kazakhstan, on the occasion of a seminar organised to highlight Khojaly genocide. DNA

Control room to oversee Ehsaas stipends inaugurated

The digitally equipped control room has been set up to oversee large operations education Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programme, considering the importance of central capability to monitor

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Sania Nishtar on Tuesday inaugurated the newly established monitoring center of Waseela-e-Taleem Digital housed in Ehsaas offices. The digitally equipped control room has been set up to oversee large operations education Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programme, considering the importance of central capability to monitor. To assist with this, 25 Compliance Monitoring Coordinators have been hired who would monitor

the control room and 882 Compliance Monitors have been hired for monitoring in the field. Over the last two years, comprehensive and deep-rooted reforms were deployed as a result of which massive reforms have been substantiated in the Waseela-e-Taleem Digital. There are four key pillars of reforms. First, end-to-end digitization of a number of processes, which are previously managed manually. Apps have been developed which are used by staff to register children and monitor compliance. Secondly, cost-effective changes institutional infrastructure was developed to expand this program nationwide and reliance on Non-Government



Organizations was eliminated. Because of this, operational cost has been reduced from eight to three percent. Third, the stipend given to children has been modified as per Ehsaas' new Stipend policy. Children of poorest families will now be provided conditional cash

grants of Rs. 1,500 for boy child and Rs. 2,000 per quarter for girl child on attainment of 70 per cent attendance in school. Finally, and most importantly, the program is being expanded to all districts of the country. "Since the system is made end to end digital, monitoring is bedrocked in digital means as well. In this regard, a new cohort of qualified Compliance Monitors have been taken on board duly following hiring procedures of the government", Dr. Sania Nishtar said. She said, "Compliance Monitoring Coordinators stationed in the Control Room have access to dashboards where they can track performance of all those in the field who are tracking attendance

of children. Attendance is important as on that basis, Ehsaas stipends are delivered." Linked to Policy #73 of "Ehsaas Education Conditional Cash Transfers", the scale up and reform of Waseela-e-Taleem Digital falls under Pillar III, "Human Capital Development" of the Ehsaas Strategy. Education CCTs are an important pillar of any social protection strategy. Education CCTs serve the twofold purpose of socially assisting vulnerable households and at the same time reduce the number of out of school children. When transfers are linked to incentives for investments in human capital, they help reduce inter-generational transmission of poverty as well.

NAB recovers 562 acres land as plea bargain

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Tuesday informed the Accountability Court (AC) that it had recovered 562 acres government land worth Rs21 billions as plea bargain from accused Ahsan Elahi in fake accounts reference. The court endorsed the plea bargain after inquiry it from the accused. ACI Judge Muhammad Bashir heard the fake accounts case pertaining to illegal allotment of land. Deputy Prosecutor General National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Sardar Muzafar Abbasi informed the court that his department had recovered land worth Rs 21 billions from the accused as plea bargain in fake accounts reference. Ahsan Elahi who was an accused of land grabbing had confessed his crime, he said, adding that the NAB had recovered a total 562 acres land in plea. He said that a committee had transferred this land to Ghulam Hussain Hilari and Yousaf Edhi in 2012, adding that secretary board of revenue Shahzer Shamon, Deputy Commissioner Malir Qazi Jan Muhammad and Ghulam Mustafa Phal were part of the committee. He stated that it also include the 262 acres land owned by Pakistan Steel Mills. The Sindh government had taken this land from mill to construct university and oil tankers' yard.

WAPDA to rehabilitate Rasul Hydel Power Station

ZUBAIR AHMED

ISLAMABAD: The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has planned to rehabilitate 69-year old Rasul Hydel Power Station located at a link between Upper Jhelum and Lower Jhelum Canals near Khokhra Head Works in Mandi Bahaudin District of Punjab Province. Rasul Hydel Power Station was commissioned in 1952 with an installed capacity of 22 Mega Watt (MW), said a press release. It was the biggest hydel power project of Pakistan that was commissioned after independence. Since its commissioning, the Hydel Power Station has contributed about 5.5 billion units of low-cost, clean, green and environment-friendly electricity to the National Grid. The reduced efficiency of the equipment due to obsolete technology and aging factor have necessitated rehabilitation of the Hydel Power Station to regain and increase its generation capacity. An in-house feasibility study has been completed to proceed further to implement rehabilitation of Rasul Hydel Power Station.

2 dacoit gangs busted; seven arrested

GHULAM MURTAZA

RAWALPINDI: In a crackdown against criminal elements, Rawalpindi Police have busted two dacoit gangs and arrested their seven members besides recovering cash and four pistols 30 bore from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Sadiqabad police in a raid arrested Nasir, Anwar, Yasir and Usman, four dacoit gang members of 'Mani' gang and recovered cash, four 30 bore pistols and other items from their possession. He informed that the Police team constituted under the supervision of SHO Sadiqabad Police Station on the directives of SP Rawal conducted a raid and managed to net the gang members. As per preliminary police record, the criminals were also involved in other crimes, he added. He stated that other members and facilitators of the gang would also be arrested following preliminary investigations with the detainee culprits. Meanwhile, Airport police rounded up three members of another dacoit gang namely Shahid, Bilal and Ali. They are members of 'Boxer' gang, he added.

USC to announce Ramzan package from April 1

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director, Utility Stores Corporation (USC) Umer Lodhi on Tuesday announced that a special Ramzan discount Package would start from April 1 at all utility stores of the country with affordable rates, giving subsidy to over 19 essential commodities. Talking to a private news channel, he said like every year, USC would announce a special Ramazan relief package for citizens which would continue till Eid UL Fit, adding, this Ramazan relief package would be more special as compared to previous years. He said in the light of the present experiences of high prices of food items in market, a comprehensive steps would be taken for the provision of best facilities to people during Ramazan. The MD said the package would be approved by the Economic Coordination Council (ECC). He said smooth supply of all commodities across the country would also be ensured during the holy month. USC MD said that a special mechanism to monitor stock and availability of necessary food items at the utility stores would also be installed at district level. The MD said USC would maintain stocks of daily essential items to act as a price moderator in the market to prevent profiteering and hoarding, adding, the corporation would buy quality items directly from producers and sell them at cheaper prices. Replying to a query about high prices, he denied that the prices of milk, sugar, flour and ghee were yet stable and there was no any price difference but in coming days the price of ghee would increase 30 percent due to prices of manufacturing. He mentioned that the USC network has been playing an important role in providing essential items at discounted prices to the masses as the prices of USC are significantly low as compared to the prices prevailing in domestic markets. - DNA



RAWALPINDI: Distribution of spectacles to the remaining patients of eye camp was observed today at RCCI. 200 spectacles were delivered. - DNA

Road safety campaign kicks off in capital

"They would deliver messages to the road users and special announcement about road safety tips would be made at important boulevards, chowks, commercial centers and main avenues of the city", SSP Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) briefed

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has launched "Road Safety Campaign" in order to ensure traffic discipline in the city and overcome accidents through creating awareness about traffic rules among road users. The campaign was formally inaugurated by the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil Ur Rehman and DIG (Security) Waqar Ud Din Syed. A ceremony was organized at F-8 Exchange chowk which was attended

by SSP (ITP) Farrukh Rasheed, other officers and a large number of citizens. SSP Traffic Farrukh Rasheed while briefing the IGP told that ITP Education Team, ITP's Float, Capital Highway Inspection Patrolling Squads (CHIPS), Quick Response Team, staff of ITP FM Radio 92.4 and other operation staff would participate in this campaign. "They would deliver messages to the road users and special announcement about road safety tips would be made at important boulevards, chowks, commercial

centers and main avenues of the city", SSP ITP briefed. He said that, during this campaign, motorcyclists would be educated about using front and rear mirrors. Motorists would be educated to follow lane discipline and avoid use of mobile phones during driving along with other laws, he added. Superintendent of Police (Traffic) would himself monitor this campaign while staff of ITP would work in shifts to impart traffic education among road users. The SSP (Traffic) said that teams of traffic police would remain

present in shifts at Faizabad, Dhokri Chowk, Khayaban Chowk, Express Chowk, Shaheen Chowk, Jinnah Super Market, Super Market, Blue Area, G-9 Markaz, F-10 Markaz, G-11 Markaz, Aabpara Market and other areas to educate citizens about traffic rules. Talking to media, the IGP Islamabad said that the purpose of this campaign is to ensure better traffic discipline through cooperation of citizens and create traffic sense among them. ITP is striving hard for safety of its citizens and to overcome the traffic accidents by ensuring safe road

environment in the city. To check over-speeding, he said 13 speed checking cameras have been installed at different points. Special campaign is being run in educational institutions to educate students. "We have requested the Government to enhance the traffic fines to overcome traffic violations" the IGP maintained. Qazi Jamil Ur Rehman said that ITP is trying its best to facilitate public. Online appointment system is started for driving licenses. He said that Islamabad police is also in coordination with CDA to solve the parking issues.

Briefs

NEPRA reserves judgment on KE petition

ZUBAIR AHMED

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Neptra) on Tuesday reserved judgment on a petition filed for hike in power tariff under fuel adjustment mechanism. Tauseef Farooqi, Chairman NEPRA, heard a plea of KE to increase the price of electricity by Rs 1.71 per unit. During the hearing, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) Chairman Tauseef Farooqi has directed K Electric, the primary power supplier of Karachi to improve its system, saying that the situation like the past year summers should not occur this time. K Electric officials told NEPRA that the situation will be better in the upcoming summer season as the first unit of Bin Qasim 3 Plant will be ready by May 15 and the completion of the unit will generate 450 MW of electricity. The KE officials told the meeting that the sole power supplier for the metropolis has signed a power purchase agreement with the government for an additional supply of 1400 megawatts of electricity. NEPRA, while concluding the hearing on the request for hike in power tariff, remarked that it would take a decision after reviewing all the facts and figures. It is pertinent to mention here that the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Neptra) recently had approved an increase of Rs1.95 per unit in power tariff, putting an additional burden of Rs200 billion on consumers. According to the power regulator, the tariff hike will be applicable to all consumers including lifeline consumers using 50 units in a month.

Traders urge to take action against encroachment

RAWALPINDI: Traders on Tuesday expressed concerns on increasing encroachments on roads and demanded of the district administration to remove illegal construction affecting their business and causing frequent traffic jams. President Traders Welfare Association Sharjeel Mir led by a delegation met Deputy Commissioner (DC) Capt (r) Anwar Ul Haq here and conveyed their concern regarding growing encroachments in the markets. He said illegal car parking was becoming a common practice, creating nuisance for them. He said they were losing their customers as they were forced to park their vehicles far away due to lack of proper parking place and encroachments. "Proper parking plazas for city markets and strict action against encroachments were direly needed", he demanded. The DC assured the traders that their concerns would be addressed on priority. — APP

MoNHSRC dissatisfied with 'slow' vaccination

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of National Health Services has expressed dissatisfaction over the pace of vaccination of frontline health workers against the coronavirus in Islamabad. In a letter to the capital's public and private hospitals as well as labs, the ministry pointed out that the vaccination pace is slow as less than half of the total registered health workers have been inoculated against the virus as yet. It lamented that the vaccination pace didn't pick up despite its directives in this regard. A total of 8,000 health workers got themselves registered for Covid-19 vaccination in the first phase but a mere 3,200 have been administered jabs, even though vaccination counters remain operational throughout the week in Islamabad. The ministry stressed that the vaccination of health workers is the need of the hour, advising medics and paramedical staff working at health facilities of the capital to get jabs on a priority basis. It said the second phase that will see citizens aged 65 and above getting the vaccine will start next month.



ISLAMABAD: Visitors taking interest in pictures on the occasion of a seminar arranged by the Azerbaijan embassy to highlight the Khojaly massacre. — DNA

Envoy hopes to extend African trade deal to Pakistan in future

The President's statement came in reference to the bill passed by the French parliament's lower house on Tuesday with overwhelming majority that would strengthen oversight of mosques, in an act of discrimination against Muslims

KHAYAM ABABSI

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted an In-House Meeting with H.E. Ambassador Mthuzeli Madikiza, the High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa to Pakistan. Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director General, ISSI, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman, BOG ISSI, Ms. Amina Khan Director CAMEA, and Team CAMEA had an interactive session with him. Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, DG ISSI, warmly welcomed the Ambassador and briefed him about the structure and the activities of ISSI Ambassador Chaudhry said that Pakistan



highly valued its relationship with South Africa. While giving a presentation on the overall working of CAMEA, Ms. Amina Khan remarked that

academic and research interaction between both sides was key to strengthening Pakistan-South Africa bilateral relations.

Ambassador Mthuzeli Madikiza expressed his desire for closer collaboration with CAMEA and ISSI. He appreciated the work which CAMEA has done so far and remarked that this work will help

in understanding how Pakistan's "Engage Africa" policy will unfold in broader terms. In this regard, he expressed his desire to facilitate collaboration between the ISSI and reputed South African think tanks.

While talking about the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) which came into effect this year in January, Ambassador Madikiza said that the agreement is a vehicle to establish relations based on trade and commerce and hoped that the agreement could be extended to Pakistan in the future.

While commenting on the regional situation, he emphasized that peace in Afghanistan is crucial for Africa, particularly South Africa due to the illegal flow of drugs and humans trafficking which has a tremendous impact on its society.

HEC teams visit universities for evaluation

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has successfully concluded evaluation visits of three HEC recognised higher education institutions through Institutional Performance Evaluation (IPE) and Postgraduate Programme Review (PGPR). The universities evaluated by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). HEC paid three days visits included University of Gujrat, University of Laki Marwat and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Medical University, Larkana, a press release on Tuesday said. HEC will conduct evaluation of 15 institutions/universities by June 2021. IPE is a holistic review of an institution

or a university, in which its overall performance is evaluated on the basis of 11 IPE standards, which are Mission Statement and Goals, Planning and Evaluation, Organisation and Governance, Integrity, Faculty, Students, Institutional Resources, Academic Programmes and Curricula, Public Disclosure & Transparency, Assessment and Quality Assurance and Student Support Services. Likewise, in PGPR, an institution or a university is reviewed to check whether or not it is implementing HEC minimum criteria for launching MS/MPH and PhD programmes. The purpose of these evaluations is to bring improvement in higher education sector so that ultimate objective of quality could be achieved.

CDA committed to ensure water supply during summer



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The work of Capital Development Authority (CDA) for ensuring the water supply during summer is continued. Old pipe lines are being repaired, new pipe lines are being installed and the work of repairing of tube wells, water tankers, filtration plants is underway. New water project is also being considered.

According to detail, the administration of CDA is committed for providing basic facilities to the citizens. Planning for a new project of water supply is also underway. The department of water supply repaired various pipelines, tube wells, motors during last few days. CDA has total 194 tube wells. 10 out of these tube wells are none functional. 19 are being repaired. Boring process is continued on 14 tube wells. Repairing work is underway at Distribution

Division South in sector I-9, I-10/1, I-10/2, I-10/3, I-9/4, and I-8. Pipe lines are being repaired at Distribution Division North in sector G-11/1, G-11/3, G-9, F-8, and G-10. Work of restoration and repairing of pipes is also underway in other areas. 17 tankers are being used to provide water in the areas where there is issue of water. Pipeline of the water works of sector G-10 has been made functional. New cable has been installed in sector G-9/3.

Chairman J&KSM welcomed the British MPs' statements

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Jammu & Kashmir Salvation Movement (J&KSM) Altaf Ahmed Bhat and President TeK UK Raja Fahim Kayani welcomed the statements of British MPs for showing their concern about the rising human rights violations in IIOJ&K saying following

the statement of the UN rapporteurs, world and International Bodies should come forward to settle the IIOJ&K dispute once for all as per the aspirations of Kashmiri people to make South Asia peaceful. The United Nations special rapporteurs have confirmed the international and widespread concern about the unilateral removal of the special territory status

in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). This revocation has led to demographic change, which could ultimately curtail minority rights in IIOJK. British Parliament members hailed the special rapporteurs statement. Andrew Gwynne MP Chairman of Labour Friends of Kashmir said that we must all accept the UN experts'

observations and restore the special status and protect the human rights of minority communities in IIOJK. Sam Tarry MP said that we should all pay attention to what UN experts have said in Kashmir. The revocation of Article 370 has led to demographical change which will result in the curtailment of human rights of minority communities.

SBP defers Rs 657.16B under refinancing scheme

MURTAZA HASSAN

ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), under its refinancing scheme for protecting businesses from the impact of COVID-19, has so far deferred Rs657.14 billion principal repayments of loans up to one year. The bank also allowed restructuring or rescheduling of around Rs235.8 billion so far, according to the updated data of the central bank. The number of borrowers that would benefit from this rescheduling relief has risen to 1,767,599 with outstanding amount of Rs 2.54 billion, it said. Under its Rozgar scheme for protecting businesses and employees working with them from the impact of COVID-19, the central bank has so far approved Rs238.2 billion for 2,958 businesses. Meanwhile, the bank under this refinancing scheme for hospitals to combat COVID-19, approved financing of Rs10.073 billion for 43 hospitals so far. As many as 46 hospitals had requested for the financing amounting to Rs13.8 billion.

With respect to progress on refinancing scheme for setting up new projects or expansion, the central bank approved 457 projects with an amount of Rs385.7 billion for which it received requests for 629 projects with amount of Rs 704.8 billion. Furthermore, from March 20, 2020 to February 19, the Bank had issued fresh currency notes to the commercial banks worth of Rs1.411 trillion. Similarly an amount of Rs 46.6 billion was quarantined during the period that was received from hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies. While overall the bank received cash worth of Rs1.45 trillion which was quarantined for 14 days. It is pertinent to mention here that in order to combat the impact of COVID-19 and to help the businesses in payment of wages and salaries to their workers and employees and thereby support continued employment in this challenging environment, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has introduced a temporary refinancing scheme for payment of wages and salaries to the workers and employees of the business concerns.

AC hears reference against Gilani

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An accountability court (AC) on Tuesday heard a graft case related to awarding an alleged illegal advertisement contract against former Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and others. AC Judge Muhammad Azam Khan presided over the hearing. NAB prosecutor Mirza Usman appeared before the court in person. The lawyer of Farooq Awan, co-accused in the reference pleaded with the court to strike down his client's name from the Exit Control List (ECL), citing his health issues. "My client is being treated abroad and he should be allowed to appear before the court through a representative." Meanwhile, the NAB prosecutor opposed the plea and said in his supporting arguments that for any leniency the accused should appear before the court first. Later, the hearing was adjourned until March 15. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) approved filing corruption references against former Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and others for their alleged involvement in illegally awarding an advertising contract in violation of Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) rules. The other accused in the case included former secretary Information Technology Farooq Awan, former principal information officer Muhammad Saleem, Syed Hassan Sheikh, Inam Akbar, and other officials of the Ministry of Information Technology, who allegedly misused their authority which caused a loss of Rs128.07 million to the national exchequer.

IHC removes objections on bench in blasphemy case

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday removed the plaintiff's objections on the bench in appeals against death sentences to the accused of blasphemy who uploaded blasphemous content on social media. The court ordered the registrar office to fix the appeals for hearing after removing the objections. Chief Justice Athar Minallah, hearing the case, remarked that objecting bench in such cases was like expressing doubt on the faith of concerned judge. Whether the petitioner had any doubt on my faith, the chief justice questioned. The petitioner's lawyer said that his client had no doubt on faith of anybody, the reasons of objection had been mentioned in application given in chamber. The court asked the lawyer to once again take instructions from his client and adjourned hearing of the case till next date. — APP

3 quacks arrested, 10 clinics sealed

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration Tuesday arrested three quacks and sealed ten clinics in Bhara Kahu. Assistant Commissioner Aneel Saeed along with District Health Officer Dr Zaeem Zia and local station house officer conducted raids in various areas of Bhara Kahu, including Simli Dam road, New Abadi and others, following public complaints regarding the quackery. Talking to media, the assistant commissioner appealed the masses to figure out the quacks so that the illegal medical practice could be controlled in their areas. He said the administration had also taken action against the medical stores selling drugs without prescription of the certified doctors. Saeed asked the Islamabad denizens not to visit illegal medical practitioners to save their money and health. "No one will be allowed to play with the lives of citizens," he remarked and added the law would take its course if someone found involved in this heinous business. He said it was the priority of ICT administration to ensure the provision of basic health facilities to the citizens. Meanwhile, ICT team also inspected various meat and vegetable shops to ensure quality edibles to the people. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's ambassador to Uzbekistan, Syed Ali Asad Gillani, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, President has underscored the need for further strengthening the existing bilateral relations with Uzbekistan in all areas of mutual interests. — DNA

Handling threats

THE recent uptick in violence in Afghanistan undoubtedly stems from local power struggles, but it is clear that foreign influence also has a big part to play. Pakistan's revelations on this subject have so far not received the right sort of traction. But given our familiarity with the conflict Kabul and the rest of the country is mired in, it is important for international powers to pay heed. India's funding of non-state actors in Afghanistan is undoubtedly a major cause for the flare-up and resulting doubts being sown about the peace deal. It must be remembered that New Delhi's longstanding policy of Pakistan's encirclement and diplomatic isolation remains the key focus for the Modi government. Rs500 million have been allocated to fund terror groups in Afghanistan, but this is only one aspect of the double game being played by the eastern neighbour. Apart from sponsoring terror groups to attack Pakistan, as reiterated by the DGISPR in another press conference on Monday, Afghanistan would also do well to protect itself from Indian influence. India continues to provide military support to the Afghan government while also funding terrorists, thereby ensuring that both sides continue to engage in conflict. A peaceful Afghanistan is of no use to India; opportunities for cross border attacks from Pakistan's western front would be fairly limited. States such as Pakistan and China have long dreamt of regional peace for decades. It is easy to take a cue from the DGISPR's helpful words yesterday, regarding operations to root out terrorism. It is clear that our security forces are capable of handling anything India throws at us, through both conventional and non-conventional routes. As always, there is still work to be done to fight terror here on home soil. But our consistent efforts and the vigilance of our forces will lead us to victory against the unlawful warmongering actions of our belligerent neighbor.

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A new start

ACCORDING to Wang Yi, a senior Chinese diplomat, it is about time that the US and China repair their previously soured bilateral relationship and start over fresh in order to work towards solving global issues together. Considering that the new administration has just been sworn in as the US government, it would seem as though the prospects of such a friendship are much better in the current scenario. One can hope that the two countries overlook the overarching narrative, which pits them against one another in the quest for global domination, imposed by experts and one that does not hold much currency within policy circles in Beijing. Already, the Chinese President, Xi Jinping, talked about creating constructive approaches to resolve worldly issues, like the pandemic and climate change, on a call with the US President, Joe Biden. This was the first positive step to be taken towards the desire to improve relations between the two nations. Considering all the technological, industrial, scientific and medicinal development being achieved within the borders of these two global giants, cooperation with one another would surely result in more innovative takes on solving issues across the globe. Even the political power that such an alliance would have is tremendous. As such, a little effort to establish a new friendship right now could be fruitful for the future that is to come. It is imperative to note that the perceived competition between China and the US in the quest for supremacy is one that has been modelled by experts and policy-makers alone. China has called for changes in the international landscape to promote unity and harmony. If joint efforts to eradicate the pandemic and control climate change can facilitate better relations between the two states, it will bode well for the world not only in the current situation but in later years as well.

Khojaly Genocide from grief to shining Azerbaijan

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan



Armenian military forces committed genocides in the town of Khojaly with the population of seven thousand people on February 26 1992. There were three thousand people in the town at the time of Armenian military forces' attack. 613 people were killed, 1000 peaceful people of different age became invalid during Khojaly genocide. 106 women, 63 children, 70 old men were killed. 8 families were completely annihilated, 130 children lost one parents, while 25 both of them

UNFORTUNATELY, The Republic of Azerbaijan faced severer genocides in the last two centuries which was indeed heartbreaking and bleeding wounds. Genocide was crime against humanity and humans/Azerbaijanis. It was act of state terrorism. It was act of ethnic cleansing. The "Khojaly genocide" was action of inconceivable cruelty during which inhuman punitive methods was used. Armenians chauvinists and their supportive forces violated the rights of Azerbaijani people, created the obstacles to get the education in native language and exerted a strong pressure upon them. The historical names of Azerbaijani villages were changed. History of human evolution and civilization has been swinging between the pendulum of evilness and search of genuine equality, unlimited tragedies and tranquillities, barbarism and vivid reflection of best human qualities, genocides and genosities, discriminations and diversities. In this regard, Khojaly tragedy showcased momentum of evil energies whereas, The Center of Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad is the hub of positive energy, channelizing human spirits towards greater resolution, infinite voyage of peace, harmony, dignity and development. We arranged this event "Cooperative Perspectives between Azerbaijani & Pakistani Youth Diaspora to the international recognition of Khojaly" to move forward from grief to greater socio-economic development, regional connectivity and above all qualitative life because human spirits are die-hard to conquer. Azerbaijani population was repeatedly subjected to the gross human rights violations, ethnic cleansing and deportation accompanied by inhuman and degrading treatment by Armenian nationalists (in 1905-1907, 1918-1920, 1948-1953, 1988-1993). The most horrible one of such tragedies against the Azerbaijanis is the genocide committed 100 years ago, on March 31, 1918, and it differs for its severe atrocities. Since March of 1918, thousands of the Azerbaijani civilians have been killed on the ground of their nationality; people were burned alive; rare historical monuments, schools, hospitals, mosques were ruined. It completely targeted the people of Azerbaijan and represented a barbarian act. The Khojaly genocide the tragedy of the 20th century was a result of Armenian aggressive and criminal policy. The Khojaly genocide was one of the most terrible and tragic pages of Azerbaijan history. Merciless and cruel genocide was the most dreadful mass terror act in the history of humankind. It was one of the most serious crimes not only against the people of Azerbaijan, but humanity as a whole. The Khojaly genocide is comparable to the genocides in Khatin, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Songmi. Khojaly reflected the history and traditions of Azerbaijan since the ancient times. Its culture is classified as Khojaly-Gadabay in the Azerbaijani history. Cromlechs, dolmens, Cyclops, tumulus's of Khojaly, as well as different housing wares are the patterns of material culture that re-

fect the dynamics of social development. The destruction of all these material culture monuments and Khojaly graveyard one of the most ancient cemeteries in history after the Armenian occupation is are obvious examples of Armenian barbarism and aggression against the world culture. Armenian military forces committed genocides in the town of Khojaly with the population of seven thousand people on February 26 1992. There were three thousand people in the town at the time of Armenian military forces' attack. 613 people were killed, 1000 peaceful people of different age became invalid during Khojaly genocide. 106 women, 63 children, 70 old men were killed. 8 families were completely annihilated, 130 children lost one parents, while 25 both of them. 1275 peace residents were taken hostages the fate of 150 of them is still unknown. Azerbaijan has had been victim of planned ethnic cleansing and genocide by Armenian for 200 years. The people of Azerbaijan were deported from their historical lands and became refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) because of Armenian illegal occupation. Azerbaijanis were also forced from their historical lands during the Soviet period. 150,000 Azerbaijanis were deported from Armenia and placed in the Kur-Araz plain from 1948-1953. 250,000 Azerbaijanis were forced from their historical territories in 1988 and Armenia became a mono-ethnic state. The Daghigh Garabagh events, which started in 1988 along with continuous efforts to implement the Armenian desire of building a state from sea to sea, led to the destruction of towns and villages, murder of thousands of innocent people, as well as the exile of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis from their native lands. To achieve dreams of great Armenian its nationalists expanded their illegal activities in the early 20th century. It was coined by the Dashnaksutun Party which systematically expelled Azerbaijanis from their historical lands and native homes and embarked on a policy of ethnic cleansing and genocide. For example, in 1905-1906 the Armenians committed massacres against Azerbaijani civilians in Baku, Ganja, Karabakh, Irevan, Nakhchivan, Ordubad, Sharur-Daralayaz, Tiflis, Zangezur, Gazakh and other places, perpetrated ruthless massacres against the local population, burned and destroyed cities and villages. Armenian armed forces destroyed more than 200 Azerbaijani villages in Shusha, Zangezur and Jabrayil region, Irevan and Ganja provinces, expelling tens of thousands of Azerbaijanis from their homes Human bloods were everywhere and beasts were in search of innocent Azerbaijanis. Bloody events soon spread out covering the entire territory of Azerbaijan. In March-April 1918, about 8,000 civilians were slaughtered in Shamakhi. Armenian gangs stormed the city, setting houses on fire. Those who were trying to escape from the fire were shot. The majority of Muslim monuments of culture, including the Friday Mosque of Shamakhi, were set on fire and burnt to the ground with elderly, women and children

hiding in it. People were buried alive, while some were brutally tortured before being killed. Moreover, Armenian nationalists killed with utmost cruelty more than 16,000 people in Guba, the "valley of blood" in the first five months of 1918. The facts of mass extermination of the Azerbaijanis of Guba by Armenian-Dashnak gangs were proven again in the 21st century the discovery in 2007 of mass graves in Guba is a fact confirming the Armenian brutality. The study of the burial site revealed that people were subjected to unprecedented violence and killed with cruelty during the Armenian armed attack on Guba in 1918. A ruthless massacre of the Azerbaijanis was also perpetrated in Shusha, Irevan, Zangezur, Karabakh, Nakhchivan, Kars and other regions. When committing these atrocities on historical Azerbaijani lands, the Armenians burned schools and mosques and destroyed samples of material culture of Azerbaijanis. During genocides humanity was "bleed" and "beasts" were everywhere in different cities of Azerbaijan but it could not strike-down the true spirits of interfaith harmony, patriotism, national pride and communal unity and people having diversity of faith, belief and origin stood fast to fight against all odds. Cities were sieged and darkness was everywhere. Men were arrested. Media was blocked and the people were deprived of the right to access information. There was complete chaos. Azerbaijanis were determined to protect their territorial integrity and did not step back, showing their sacrifice and vigor for the national freedom. Genocides against Azerbaijanis also uphold "grief" which has enduring human befitting propositions. It united the people of Azerbaijan despite ethnic diversity and strengthened their resolve to achieve that independence. Ultimately, it sustained values of faith, courage, and the strength of human spirits which are universal and everlasting. It was act of perseverance and will to move on and move forward with a better life, a life of freedom, fairness, tolerance and peace and it had also left an even stronger and even greater impression in daily lives of people to centralization of command to national politics to the regional geopolitics. To conclude, genocides against Azerbaijan achieved nothing but widespread condemnation. Rather it fueled concepts of self-defense, self-reliance, economic sustainability, protection of national pride, safety of heritage and unbending passions for territorial sovereignty. Khojaly grief shadows has been converted into shining Azerbaijan due to which it has now achieved and secured a miraculous victory and de-occupied Nagorno karabakh and others areas from Armenia after 30 years. Let us pray for all the martyrs of Khojaly because our survival is dividend of their sacrifices. Long live Azerbaijan and Pakistan friendship and brotherhood.

- The writer is Director: Geopolitics/Economics and Member Board of Experts: CGSS, Islamabad.

Ending the forever war in Afghanistan

Carl Bildt



The Biden administration must also decide what to do about America's NATO allies, which together have substantially more forces in Afghanistan than the US does. And – as the post-Soviet experience indicates – it must devise a plan for influencing the situation in the country and region after the withdrawal. The challenge is formidable. Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest countries

SPEAKING in Kabul on this month's 32nd anniversary of the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan, the country's president, Ashraf Ghani, made an important distinction. The civil war that devastated Afghanistan after the withdrawal was caused not by the departure of Soviet troops, but by the failure to formulate a viable plan for Afghanistan's future. As the US considers its own exit from the country, it should heed this lesson. After withdrawing its troops in 1989, the Soviet Union continued to provide financial support to the communist-nationalist regime led by Mohammed Najibullah. However, lacking domestic legitimacy, Najibullah's regime quickly collapsed when Russia withdrew its financial support in 1992, triggering the civil war. Then, in 1996, the Taliban gained control of Kabul and, ultimately, the country. The Taliban remained in power until 2001, when a US-led invasion – spurred by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks – ended its rule. Last February, then-US President Donald Trump's administration reached a deal with the Taliban intended to end the nearly 20-year-long war: The US and its NATO allies would withdraw all troops by May 2021 if the Taliban fulfilled certain commitments, including cutting ties with terrorist groups and reducing violence. The Taliban would also have to engage in meaningful negotiations with the Afghan government, which was not involved in the deal. The Trump administration apparently hoped that an intra-Afghan peace agreement would materialize by the designated withdrawal date, ending the fighting and minimizing the risk that Afghanistan would become a haven

for terrorists. That has not happened. While US force levels are down to near 2,000 troops, fighting in Afghanistan has not decreased. On the contrary, a US watchdog agency reports that the Taliban carried out more attacks in the last quarter of 2020 than during the same period of 2019. Moreover, the latest intra-Afghan talks, which began in Doha in September, have produced virtually no results. It seems that the Taliban's plan was to keep fighting until US troops left, at which point they might be able to secure a victory in the long war. Now, however, they face the possibility that US troops will not leave nearly as soon as expected. President Joe Biden's administration has announced that it is reviewing the deal to determine whether the Taliban is "living up to its commitments." The Biden administration must also decide what to do about America's NATO allies, which together have substantially more forces in Afghanistan than the US does. And – as the post-Soviet experience indicates – it must devise a plan for influencing the situation in the country and region after the withdrawal. The challenge is formidable. Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest countries. Today, the Afghan state's income amounts to little more than a third of what the US pays only to sustain its various security forces, to say nothing of US aid to the civilian sector (which, to be sure, amounts to less than half Europe's contributions). In fact, Afghanistan has depended on outside support to sustain its statehood since Russia and Britain played their "Great Game" in the 19th century. As it stands, the US seems to be leaning toward maintaining some sort of security pres-

ence, focused on fighting the terrorists of Al-Qaeda and Daesh, beyond the May deadline. German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas has advocated this approach. But there are risks. The Taliban could reject this solution, leading to an intensification of fighting and renewed attacks on international forces. US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad is most likely already working to assess this risk. The Taliban's acceptance of a continued security presence may depend on progress in the intra-Afghan talks, though no one seems to have a clear vision for a power-sharing agreement. The gap between today's Islamic Republic and the Taliban's desired Islamic Emirate is wide, and narrowing it will require a recalibration of the diplomatic process concerning Afghanistan. To that end, regional powers – including Iran, Russia and China – should be engaged in all talks about the country's future, with one or two also taking a more active role in facilitating the intra-Afghan political dialogue. In this process, managing the dynamics between India and Pakistan, for which developments in Afghanistan hold profound national security implications, will undoubtedly emerge as a key challenge. Indeed, Russia is currently taking the initiative in this regard. The pressure in the US and elsewhere to end the "forever war" in Afghanistan is understandable. But, as Ghani wisely warned, simply withdrawing international forces is unlikely to yield that result. To avoid a new spiral of violence, we must first determine what will come after.

- Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

Japanese
envoy lauds
PM Khan's

From Page 01

which is unique and was pioneered by Dr. MIYAWAKI Akira, a Japanese botanist and expert in plant ecology who advocated the value of natural forests.

"Combating environmental challenges is one of the priority areas for Japan and we appreciate the Government of Pakistan and Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision for creating a pure, green and healthy environment for the people," said the Ambassador. It is pertinent to mention here that under the Japanese Miyawaki approach, dozens of species that suit the environment are planted in the same area, close to each other, which ensures that they grow in a competitive environment, allowing the trees to grow faster compared to normal plantation. The Ambassador expressed the resolve that Japan supports PM Khan's vision of green Pakistan as this spirit was demonstrated by the Embassy of Japan in Islamabad by planting many trees in the compound of the Embassy as well as in the Islamabad Japanese Garden recently.

Condemns
attack on
health
workers

From Page 06

training to local women. In his message, Ambassador MATSUDA on Tuesday said, "I am deeply saddened and shocked by the killing of four innocent women in North Waziristan area. I extend my deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences to the grieving families and pray for the speedy recovery of those injured in the cowardly attack targeting women." The Ambassador said that Japan strongly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and we will continue to support the efforts by the Government of Pakistan to combat terrorism.

Pakistan,
Lanka
resolve to

From Page 01

"open new avenues for the development of regional ties". PM Mahinda Rajapaksa thanked the premier for Pakistan's cooperation in the field of sports.

The two leaders also affirmed the resolve to strengthen relations in diverse areas in the meeting held at Temple Trees – the Sri Lankan prime minister's office – and focused on strengthening ties in areas of trade and investment, health and education, agriculture, science and technology, security, culture and tourism. Appreciating the rich Buddhist heritage of Pakistan and existence of great potential for religious tourism, it was agreed to enhance mutual collaboration including through sharing expertise in the hospitality industry, training and capacity-building. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the close cooperation between the two countries at multilateral fora and resolved to further deepen strategic communication and coordination at all levels.

It was also agreed to keep the momentum of high-level exchanges between the two countries. The Prime Minister emphasised the importance of resolving disputes through dialogue and promoting the vision of peace, progress and prosperity in South Asia and beyond.

Tharanga
retires from
international
cricket

SPORTS DESK

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's former opening batsman Upul Tharanga on Tuesday announced his retirement from international cricket after a 15-year career. Tharanga, 36, has played 31 Tests, 235 one-day internationals and 26 Twenty20 matches. "I believe it is time for me to bid farewell to my international cricket career," he said on Twitter. His last Test appearance was in August 2017 against India at Pallekele where he scored 12 runs in a match Sri Lanka lost by an innings and 171 runs.



Match-4

Peshawar Zalmi beat
Sultans by six wickets

DNA

KARACHI: Peshawar Zalmi chased a huge target of 195 and beat Multan Sultans by six wickets in the fifth fixture of Pakistan Super League's (PSL) sixth edition at the city's National Stadium. Kamran Akmal and Imam-ul-Haq partnered for 56-0 in the powerplay as Peshawar Zalmi are chasing 194 runs against Multan Sultans.

James Vince was on the song with his blissful knock as Multan Sultans set Peshawar Zalmi to chase 194 runs in fifth match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season 6. Vince looked dominant with firepower as Zalmi bowlers suffered immense pressure. The right-handed batsman struck 84 runs off 55 balls with the help of nine boundaries and three sixes as Sultans posted 193-4 in 20 overs.

Earlier, Vince partnered with Rizwan to put Multan Sultans in driving seat in 10 overs. They both consolidated for scoring 82 runs together after Sultans lost Chris Lynn earlier for just 6 runs. Lynn fell to Mohammad Irfan with Haider Ali taking a blinder in slips. Sohaib Maqsood smashed 36 runs with the help of four boundaries and two sixes.



Saqib Mahmood bagged two wickets while Irfan and Mohammad Imran took a wicket each
Toss
Peshawar Zalmi have won the toss and decided to bowl first

against Multan Sultans in the fifth match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season 6.
Squads
Peshawar Zalmi: Kamran Akmal, Imam-ul-Haq, Shoaib Ma-

lik, Haider Ali, Tom Cadmore, Sherfane Rutherford, Wahab Riaz, Mujeeb-ur-Rehman, Saqib Mahmood, Mohammad Imran, Mohammad Irfan
Multan Sultans: Mohammad Ri-

zwan, Chris Lynn, James Vince, Sohaib Maqsood, Rilee Rossouw, Khushdil Shah, Shahid Afridi, Carlos Brathwaite, Sohail Tanvir, Usman Qadir, Shah Nawaz Dhani

Ambassador Hamid
Asghar elected
VP of ICDT

DNA

CASABLANCA: Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan of Pakistan elected Vice President of the Islamic Center

for Development of Trade, Casablanca at Annual Board of Directors meeting held on 23 February 2021. Pakistan will host OIC Trade Fair with ICOT to be attended by over 35 countries in 2022 at Karachi. Mofa, M/O Commerce and TDAP will work together to ensure success of this mega event. DG ICOT to visit Pakistan to meet with FM, Advisor Commerce, Secretary Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Chairman TDAP

FB agrees to
restore Australian
news pages

FOREIGN DESK

CANBERRA: Facebook has agreed to restore Australian news pages after the government offered amendments to legislation that would force tech giants to pay for media content displayed on their platforms.

The deal on Tuesday came amid a standoff that lasted more than a week between the Australian government and the social media group over the so-called Media Bargaining Code. Facebook and Google strongly

opposed the draft Australian legislation, which will force the tech giants to reach commercial deals with Australian publishers or face compulsory arbitration. The bill passed the House of Representatives last Wednesday, prompting Facebook to block its 13 million Australian users from accessing and sharing all news on its platform. The blackout also erased content on the pages of emergency services, health authorities and non-profit organisations, sparking widespread outrage.

Armenian PM Pashinyan
faces fresh calls to quit

FOREIGN DESK

YEREVAN: Months-long calls for Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to resign escalated again on Tuesday, as thousands of protesters staged the third demonstration in a week demanding he quit over his handling of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan. Police cordons were deployed to guard government buildings near Republic Square in the capital Yerevan, with officers accompanying Pashinyan when he walked from one

building to another as demonstrators shouted "traitor!".

A day earlier, protesters marched to Yerevan's France Square and blocked several adjacent streets, temporarily paralysing traffic in the area.

The demonstrations follow protests last November, which grew after Pashinyan signed a Russian-brokered peace deal following six weeks of conflict that claimed thousands of lives and saw swathes of territory in and around Nagorno-Karabakh ceded to Azerbaijan. The mountainous region is internationally recognised as Azerbaijan's

land, but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces and self-appointed Armenian officials, backed by Armenia, since an earlier war between the rivals concluded in a ceasefire in 1994. The protests had gone dormant for a spell in the depth of Armenia's winter, but first resumed on Saturday, when thousands of demonstrators took to Yerevan's streets.

"Actions of [civil] disobedience need to continue for a long time, the city should be paralysed every once in a while," said Ayk Mamidzhanyan of the Republican Party of Armenia.



BAKU: Pakistan ambassador to Azerbaijan, Bilal Hayee met with rector of Azerbaijan Medical University and discussed the process for recognition of AZMU by Pakistan Medical Commission and ways to streamline admission of Pakistani students. – DNA

Myanmar: Protests swell after threat raises

Tens of thousands gathered near the US Embassy in Yangon on Tuesday despite barriers blocking the way, but left to avoid a confrontation after 20 military trucks with riot police arrived nearby. Protests continued in other parts of the city, including next to Sule Pagoda, a traditional gathering point

FOREIGN DESK

YANGON: Protesters gathered near the US Embassy in Yangon despite barriers blocking the way, but left to avoid a confrontation after 20 military trucks with riot police arrived nearby.

Hundreds of thousands of protesters have gathered for mass rallies across Myanmar despite the ruling junta's threat to use lethal force against people who join a general strike against the military's takeover three weeks ago. Tens of thousands gathered near the US Embassy in Yangon on Tuesday despite barriers blocking the way, but left to avoid a confrontation after 20 military trucks with riot police arrived nearby. Protests continued in other parts of the city, including next to Sule Pagoda, a traditional gathering point. Factories, workplaces and shops were shuttered across the country Monday in response to the call for a nationwide strike. The closings extended to the capital,

Naypyitaw. The junta had warned against a general strike in a public announcement Sunday night on state television broadcaster.

"It is found that the protesters have raised their incitement towards riot and anarchy mob on the day of 22 February. Protesters are now inciting the people, especially emotional teenagers and youths, to a confrontation path where they will suffer the loss of life," the onscreen text said in English, replicating the spoken announcement in Burmese. The junta's statement also blamed criminals for past protest violence, with the result that "the security force members had to fire back." Three protesters have been fatally shot. Trucks cruised the streets of Yangon on Sunday night, blaring similar warnings. The protest movement, which seeks to restore power to the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi and have her and other leaders released from detention, has embraced nonviolence. The nationwide strike was dubbed Five Twos, for the five number twos in the numeric form of Monday's date. "I am joining the 222222

Jakarta denies report it
backs new elections

JAKARTA: Indonesia's foreign ministry on Tuesday denied a report it is devising a plan to hold Myanmar's military junta to its promise of holding new elections. The rebuttal comes as hundreds of people gathered outside the Indonesian embassy in Yangon, the economic capital of Myanmar. Angered by a Reuters report on Monday detailing the plan, the protesters held up placards saying they do not want another election, and that their votes cast in November should be respected. The Reuters report, based on sources familiar with the matter, said Indonesia was pushing its Southeast Asian neighbor to "agree on an action plan over Myanmar's coup" that would uphold the junta's pledge to hold new elections, but stipulated that monitors should be present to ensure they are fair and inclusive. Lei Wah, a 29-year-old office worker protesting outside the embassy in Yangon, told Nikkei Asia she was there because of the report. "The election is already over and the public, including me, accepted the result," she said. Pyae Sone Aung, 23, a student at Myanmar Maritime University, said: "We just came here to protest against holding a [new] election... We just want them to confirm and accept our previous election result and respect our votes, that's why we come here to protest." – Foreign Desk

nationwide protest as a citizen of the country. We must join the protest this time without fail," said 42-year-old Zayar, who owns a bottled water business in the capital. "So I've closed down my factory and joined the demonstration." Zin Mi Mi Aung, a 27-year-old

saleswoman, also joined the strike. "We don't want to be governed by the regime," she said as people marched and chanted behind her. "We will fight against them until we win." Thousands of people gathered in the capital's wide boulevards,

many on motorbikes to allow swift movement in the event of any police action.

Reports and photos of protests in at least a dozen cities and towns were posted on social media. Overhead views, some shot from drones, showed massive crowds in six cities appearing to number in the tens of thousands.

There were pictures of a particularly colorful event in Taunggyi, the capital of Shan state, where scores of small red hot-air balloons were set aloft. A bigger one was adorned with a drawing of the three-finger salute adopted by the anti-coup movement. The city is famous for its annual hot-air balloon festival.

In Pinyinna, a satellite town of Naypyitaw, police chased people through the streets to arrest them. Reports on social media, including from worried family members, said police had arrested 200 people or more, mostly young people, and sent them to a military base. If confirmed, it would be the biggest mass arrest since the protests started.

PSL-6
Fixture

Wednesday, February 24: Karachi Kings v Islamabad United (7pm)

Friday, February 26: Lahore Qalandars v Multan Sultans (3pm); Peshawar Zalmi v Quetta Gladiators (8pm)

Saturday, February 27: Karachi Kings v Multan Sultans (2pm); Peshawar Zalmi v Islamabad United (7pm)

Sunday, February 28: Karachi Kings v Lahore Qalandars (7pm)

Monday, March 1: Islamabad United v Quetta Gladiators (7pm)

Wednesday, March 3: Karachi Kings v Peshawar Zalmi (2pm); Quetta Gladiators v Multan Sultans (7pm)

Thursday, March 4: Lahore Qalandars v Islamabad United (7pm)

Friday, March 5: Multan Sultans v Karachi Kings (7pm)

Saturday, March 6: Islamabad United v Quetta Gladiators (2pm); Peshawar Zalmi v Lahore Qalandars (7pm)

Sunday, March 7: Multan Sultans v Quetta Gladiators (2pm); Islamabad United v Karachi Kings (7pm)

Wednesday, March 10: Peshawar Zalmi v Karachi Kings (7pm)

Thursday, March 11: Quetta Gladiators v Lahore Qalandars (7pm)

Friday, March 12: Multan Sultans v Peshawar Zalmi (3pm); Islamabad United v Lahore Qalandars (8pm)

Saturday, March 13: Quetta Gladiators v Karachi Kings (2pm); Multan Sultans v Islamabad United (7pm)

Sunday, March 14: Quetta Gladiators v Peshawar Zalmi (2pm); Lahore Qalandars v Karachi Kings (7pm)

Monday, March 15: Islamabad United v Peshawar Zalmi (7pm)

Tuesday, March 16: Multan Sultans v Lahore Qalandars (7pm)

Thursday, March 18: Qualifier (1 v 2) (7pm)

Friday, March 19: Eliminator 1 (3 v 4) (7pm)

Saturday, March 20: Eliminator 2 (loser Qualifier 1 v winner Eliminator 1) (7pm)

Monday, March 22: Final (7pm)

Govt will
accept ECP's
decision,
says Shibli
Faraz

From Page 01

the PML-N which was the inventor of Chhanga Manga style of politics and horse trading in the politics was today crying foul.

He said whenever the opposition parties won elections, they termed them fair and transparent but when they lost, they started crying hoarse.

Criticizing the duplicity of the opposition parties, he said those who promote corruption and horse trading were opposing open ballot in the Senate elections.

He said only those opposed open ballot who planned to indulge in horse trading and malpractices.

He said the PTI government wanted to introduce electronic voting system in general elections to ensure transparency in the election process.

The PML-N had always pursued a policy of bullying and rigging and people like Rana Sanaullah and Javed Latif were sent in the constituency on the election day for the purpose.

He said the PML-N goons disturbed the law and order situation in by-polls. He said keeping its tradition of changing stances, the PML-N had backtracked from its earlier stance and now demanding new elections in the entire constituency.

The minister said the PML-N leadership was known for its narrative of deceit and lies and Calibri font and the statement of owning no property even in Pakistan what to speak of England were its examples.

He said the politics of opposition parties, PML-N and Pakistan Peoples Party, was based on deceit and lies.

He said the final decision regarding the re-election in NA-75 constituency would be taken by the ECP which was an independent institution and the PTI would accept it.

Shibli said the PTI believed in institutions whereas the opponents believed in bullying and violence and opened fire on women and children in Model Town, Lahore.

He said the PML-N vote bank in the Punjab was shrinking whereas the PTI's vote bank was increasing with every passing day.

Briefs

Kuwait to close border in latest restrictions

FOREIGN DESK

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait says it will close its land and sea border crossings from Wednesday until further notice as it imposes curbs to control coronavirus infections in the Gulf nation. Citizens and domestic workers accompanying them are, however, allowed to return through land and sea ports, as are citizens' first-degree relatives, the cabinet said in its meeting on Monday.

The closure will not affect shipping operations and excludes some domestic workers and people employed in the Saudi Arabia-Kuwait neutral zone. The Gulf nation barred the entry of non-citizens on Saturday. The Cabinet also banned dine-in service in restaurants and cafés as part of its latest attempt to curb the spread of the coronavirus, as the tiny oil-rich state reported an upward trend in the number of daily infections over the past few weeks. Earlier this month, Kuwait imposed a new round of restrictions, including a two-week entry ban on non-citizens and a requirement for all travellers to quarantine upon arrival. Immediate relatives of citizens, such as parents and children, and accompanying domestic workers were exempt from the entry ban.

On Monday, the Kuwaiti Health Ministry announced 899 new coronavirus infections, bringing the total number of cases to 184,989. The total number of fatalities due to COVID-19 stands at 1,049.

Georgian police storm opposition party offices

MONITORING DESK

TBILISI: Georgian police have stormed the party offices of opposition leader Nika Melia and detained him days after the prime minister resigned after a disagreement over whether to take the prominent politician into custody. Live television footage showed Melia, the leader of the United National Movement (UNM), the country's main opposition party, being dragged from his party headquarters to be placed in pre-trial detention early on Tuesday. Hundreds of riot police used tear gas against his supporters who camped out in the building, images broadcast by Mtavari TV showed. Dozens of opposition backers were detained. Footage from inside UNM offices published by the Sputnik Georgia media outlet showed Melia barricaded inside a room with some of his supporters, while opposition activists clashed with police on the street.

A Tbilisi court last week ruled to place Melia - who is accused of organising "mass violence" during anti-government protests in 2019 - in pre-trial detention.

"We call on both the representatives of political parties and their supporters to protest in a peaceful manner to refrain from violent actions and not interfere with the court's decision," Sputnik Georgia quoted the interior ministry as saying, referring to the order to have Melia detained. The ministry added in a statement that "police used proportional force and special means" in the police operation.

Pakistan wants to play role in IGAD region: Ambassador Shozab

The Ambassador highlighted Pakistan's "Engage Africa Policy" and informed that the Government of Pakistan has decided to open five new Embassies in Africa, the first being in Djibouti

DNA

ETHIOPIA (DNA) - The Ambassador of Pakistan to Ethiopia, concurrently accredited to Republic of Djibouti Shozab Abbas, presented his credentials to Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti. During the bilateral meeting, the President welcomed the Ambassador and expressed his strong desire to build closer partnership with Pakistan including security, trade and science & technology sectors. The Ambassador highlighted Pakistan's "Engage Africa Policy" and informed that the Government of Pakistan has decided to open five new Embassies in Africa, the first being in Djibouti, which is reflective of Pakistan's intention to build bridges of cooperation with Djibouti. The Ambassador emphasized the need to further expand economic, commercial and naval ties between #Pakistan and #Djibouti. Both expressed agreement to bolstering high level political interactions, Parliamentary exchanges and promoting Blue Economy in Arabian Sea region.

The Ambassador underscored the desire of the Government of Pakistan to play an important role in IGAD region to promote partnership in all realms of life including agriculture, science & technology, maritime safety and climate change sectors and specifically to mitigate poverty in the region. The Ambassador briefed the President about #CPEC and high-



lighted that CPEC is instrumental in solidifying our relations with China. The Ambassador also wished to expand Pakistani frontiers of trade with African states. On Jammu & Kashmir issue, the Ambassador also highlighted the growing atrocities by the Indian govern-

ment and military in violation of international law and their nefarious efforts to change the geography and demography of #IOJK.

The President welcomed the laying of undersea Pakistan-East Africa Cable Express (PEACE), linking, at the first stage,

Gwadar to Djibouti.

President Ismail Omar Guelleh also appreciated Ambassador's diplomatic goals and assured his full support for the advancement of friendly relations between the two brotherly countries.

Azerbaijan, Germany mull co-op in energy sector

DNA

BAKU: An online meeting was held between the Ministry of Energy, the Azerbaijan Energy Regulatory Agency (AERA), and the German-Azerbaijani Chamber of Commerce (AHK Azerbaijan), Report informs, referring to AERA. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and German companies operating in the oil and gas sector.

Chairman of the AERA Board, Samir Akhundov, noted that significant work is being done in Azerbaijan to develop the sphere of energy regulation. He spoke about current and planned essential projects in renewable energy, oil, and gas. He also noted the interest in bilateral cooperation between Germany and Azerbaijan in the relevant field.

Representatives of German oil and gas companies made presentations about their products and services and answered questions about development trends, tenders, and cooperation opportunities.

Suicide bomber strikes near Somali mall

FOREIGN DESK

MOGADISHU: A suicide bomber blew himself up near a busy shopping mall and a police station in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Tuesday, officials said, with no casualties as yet confirmed. "A man blew himself up between the Mogadishu Mall and the Hamar Wayne District Police Station in Mogadishu," said Ismail Mukhtar Oronjo, spokesman for the Information Ministry. "He exploded while security forces were chasing him after the police identified him as a suspect before the bomb went off." Eyewitness who spoke to Anadolu Agency over the phone said that they saw at least two people wounded.

US sanctions two more Myanmar generals

FOREIGN DESK

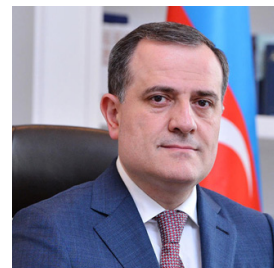
WASHINGTON: The United States has imposed sanctions on two more generals involved in the February 1 military coup in Myanmar and said it did not rule out additional action after hundreds of thousands took to the streets on Monday despite the threat of violence. The Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control said on Monday the action was "in response to the security forces' killing of peaceful protesters" after two people were killed over the weekend, and a 23-year-old woman died from her injuries after being shot in the head on February 9. The sanctions penalise Lieutenant General Moe Myint Tun and General Maung Maung Kyaw who are members of the State Administrative Council (SAC), which the military set up to rule the country after seizing power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Armenia committed grave crimes against Azerbaijan's civilians: FM

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan will take all measures to bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against Azerbaijanis committed during the First Karabakh War in the early 1990s and the 44-day Second Karabakh War in 2020, Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov said. Bayramov made the remarks in an address to the High-Level Segment of the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council, which was posted on the website of the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry. "2021 has been proclaimed as the International Year of Peace and Trust by the relevant UNGA [UN General Assembly] resolution. This year will also be remarkable for Azerbaijan since it enters into the post-conflict recovery and rehabilitation phase following the liberation of its territo-

ries from almost 30-year-old occupation... Series of grave crimes have been committed by Armenia against the civilian population of Azerbaijan, as well as its cultural heritage and infrastructure throughout the years of occupation... Azerbaijan is determined to take all measures stemming from its rights under relevant bilateral and multilateral mechanisms to bring the perpetrators of those crimes to justice," Bayramov said. The minister said that the recent aggression by Armenia which started on 27 September against Azerbaijan was "accompanied by grave violations of international humanitarian law tantamount to war crimes and crimes against humanity in order to seed the panic among the civilian population of Azerbaijan. For this purpose, Armenia deliberately attacked the densely populated civilian settlements of Azerbaijan located



far from the conflict zone, as a result of which 101 civilians were killed more than 400 seriously injured. There have also been undeniable facts depicting a number of human rights violations by Armenian servicemen against Azerbaijani captives, including acts of humiliation and ill-treatment, such as physical assault, verbal abuse, executions through beatings, and ill-treatment of dead bodies". Bayramov added that Armenia in an open attempt to cover-up its above-mentioned wrongdoings brazenly accuses Azerbaijan of

the same with a view to diverting the attention of the international community, and to that end carries out a massive campaign of fake news. UN human rights mechanisms, including the OHCHR, treaty bodies and mandate-holders have also been subjected by Armenia to its fake propaganda. He stressed that having exploited the political settlement process, as well as Azerbaijan's commitment to this process for almost 30 years, Armenia took consistent steps to consolidate the results of occupation of territories of Azerbaijan aiming at their annexation. This included, among others, implantation of settlers into the occupied territories, destruction, pillage and looting of historical and cultural heritage, illegal exploitation of natural resources, misappropriation of private and public property in the seized lands.

The minister noted that the de-occupation of territories of Azerbaijan paves the way for hundreds of thousands of displaced persons to exercise their right to safe and dignified return to their places of origin. "Yet, the unprecedented magnitude of destruction of public and private property, critical civilian infrastructure, including educational and medical facilities, as well as historical and cultural heritage and the environment in the conflict-affected territories places a huge task ahead of the Government of Azerbaijan in terms of rehabilitation and reconstruction of these territories. The Government has already initiated practical steps in order to enable the safe and dignified return of the displaced population and ensure peaceful co-existence within the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan," he underlined.

Malaysia deports 1,086 Myanmar nationals

WEB DESK

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia has deported 1,086 Myanmar nationals, despite a court order temporarily halting the repatriation amid concerns the group could be at risk if they are returned to military-ruled Myanmar. Kairul Dzamee Daud, director-general of Malaysia's immigration department, said on Tuesday the group had agreed to return voluntarily and were sent back on three ships belonging to Myanmar's navy. The move came hours after the Kuala Lumpur High Court granted an interim stay barring the removal of some 1,200 peo-

ple until 10am (02:00 GMT) on Wednesday. The order was issued in response to a request for a judicial review from Amnesty International and Asylum Access, who said the lives of the people in the group would be at risk and that more than a dozen of the detainees were children with at least one parent in Malaysia. Daud said those sent back were all Myanmar nationals who were detained last year and did not include asylum-seekers or any refugees from the persecuted Rohingya minority. "All of those who have been deported agreed to return of their own free will, without being forced," the immigration chief said in his statement.



KABUL: Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan Bénédicte Cerjat who is also accredited to Afghanistan, met with the former President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai during his recent visit to Afghanistan. - DNA

Long-serving Saudi oil minister dies at 90

FOREIGN DESK

RIYADH: Ahmed Zaki Yamani - a long-serving oil minister in Saudi Arabia who led the kingdom through the 1973 oil crisis and the nationalisation of its state energy company, and later found himself kidnapped by the assassin Carlos the Jackal - has died in London. He was 90. Saudi state television reported his death on Tuesday without mentioning a cause. It said he would be buried in the holy city of Mecca. Known for his Western-style business suits and soft-spoken, measured tones, Yamani helped Saudi Arabia command a dominating presence in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) from its birth. The kingdom remains a heavy-weight in the group even today and its decisions ripple through the oil in-



Daniel Yergin wrote in his seminal book on the oil industry, The Prize. "His visage, with his large, limpid, seemingly unblinking brown eyes and his clipped, slightly curved Van Dyke beard, became familiar the planet over." Yamani became oil minister in 1962 and would lead the ministry until 1986. He served a crucial role in the nascent oil cartel OPEC as producers around the world began to try to dictate prices to the world market previously dominated by the economic policies of Western nations. Yamani was the first

Saudi representative on OPEC's board of governors in 1961. From his position, he became known for an ever-calm negotiating style that Saudi ministers after him sought to mimic. But that style for an oil kingpin known by the honorific "the Sheikh" would be tested by the times, which included upheaval in the global energy market. That was especially true in the 1973 October War, in which Egypt, Syria, and its allies launched a surprise attack on Israel on the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur. When the US under President Richard Nixon moved to support Israel, Arab producers in OPEC agreed to cut their supply by 5 percent a month. When Nixon continued his support, the decision gave birth to what would become known as the "oil weapon" - a total embargo on the US and other countries.

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Briefs

Pervaiz Rashid declared ineligible

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: An election tribunal rejected on Tuesday PML-N leader Pervaiz Rashid's appeal against the rejection of his nomination papers by a returning officer. The verdict was issued by a single-member bench of Justice Shahid Waheed after the arguments in the case had finished. Rashid, who spoke to the media following the verdict, said his lawyers had suggested an appeal could be filed against the decision, but he was "not convinced". "Lawyers say it can be appealed, but I am not convinced. I may not move to seek justice for myself," said the former senator. He added that he was expecting the tribunal to direct him to pay the dues in today's verdict rather than his disqualification. He also alleged that the Punjab House management refused to take payment from him once when he went to pay his dues.

Faisal Vawda allowed to contest in Senate polls

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court election tribunal rejected on Tuesday an appeal against the nomination papers of PTI leader and federal minister Faisal Vawda for the Senate election, declaring him eligible to contest the upcoming polls. The tribunal heard Qadir Khan Mandokhel's appeal against the returning officer's decision to approve Vawda's nomination papers for the Senate elections. The media was barred from covering the hearing. Court staff directed media representatives to leave the courtroom. During the hearing, the tribunal rejected Mandokhel's appeal against Vawda and upheld the PTI leader's nomination. The tribunal said the appellant can file a constitutional petition if he wishes to. Senate tickets being given to Vawda and wealthy construction contractor Saifullah Abro had created a rift among PTI leaders from Sindh. They wrote a letter to Sindh Governor Imran Ismail to express their reservations.

Afghanistan begins vaccination campaign

KHAYAM ABBASI

KABUL: Afghanistan launched its vaccination campaign aimed at inoculating hundreds of thousands, as the war-weary nation reels from near-daily attacks by insurgents. Doctors, security personnel, and journalists were among the first volunteers to receive doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine, donated earlier this month by India. Afghanistan is believed to have been hit hard by the pandemic in the last year, but limited testing and a ramshackle healthcare sector have hampered its ability to track the virus. Officially the country has recorded just 55,600 confirmed cases and about 2,430 deaths.

CJP constitutes bench in Faez Isa petition

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The Chief Justice of Pakistan Gulzar Ahmed has constituted a 10-member larger bench headed by Justice Umar Ata Bandial to review Justice Qazi Faez Isa review case on March 1. Earlier, a six-member larger bench headed by Justice Umar Ata Bandial had referred the matter to the Chief Justice of Pakistan. Various bar councils, including Justice Qazi Faez Isa and his wife, have filed review petitions.

'Efforts to counter Indian hybrid war needed'

Senator Mushahid Hussain said it was a myth that propoganda was a prerogative of only dictatorships, in fact, democracies like India, Israel and US, too engaged in disinformation and India's propoganda against Pakistan is unique for three reasons

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, has said India has a clear Pakistan policy, in which disinformation and destabilisation are key components, while Pakistan needs clarity in its India policy to respond effectively. He made these remarks at a Conference on 'Disinformation as a Tool of Strategic Warfare' organised by the Institute of Regional Studies. Senator Mushahid Hussain chaired the panel on 'India's Disinformation Campaign against Pakistan and its Impact'. He referred to American scholar Dr Noam Chomsky's landmark study on propoganda, 'Manuf-

turing Consent', where he talks of a nexus between Media Ownership, Advertisers and Media Elites, which act in concert to demoralise the 'enemy'. Senator Mushahid Hussain said that the Indian approach to disinformation is an example of this model, referring also to the tapes of Indian journalist Arnab Goswami and distortions by Indian media of the Senator's own statement on Pulwama. Senator Mushahid Hussain said it was a myth that propoganda was a prerogative of only dictatorships, in fact, democracies like India, Israel and US, too engaged in disinformation and India's propoganda against Pakistan is unique for three reasons. First, it is the only example of a neighbour to wage such system-



atic information warfare against a neighbour in peacetime, belying claims it wants good neighbourly ties. Second, it predates Modi, as this campaign started in 2005. Third, it was the 'largest network ever exposed' of falsehood, lies and disinformation, spread over 750 fake sites, over 10 UN-accredited NGOs, a number of think tanks, using an Indian news agen-

cy, ANI, to disseminate disinformation. The scale and sustained nature of such disinformation is staggering and unprecedented, said the Senator. And the purpose of this multi-million dollar effort was one: 'to discredit Pakistan internationally', as the EU DisinfoLab rightly put it. Senator Mushahid Hussain also quoted from a recent tweet of Indian defence analyst, Pravin Sawhney, who linked India military's withdrawal from the Line of Actual Control with China, to Indian government's desire 'to go back to its chosen enemy -Pakistan' as 'China was distracting the extremists from their core mission'. Given this context, Senator Mushahid Hussain proposed the immediate establishment of a Joint Cyber Inter-Services Com-

mand to play a pivotal role in the emerging threat of an undeclared hybrid war by India against Pakistan. He said, for Pakistan, 'truth is the best weapon' against India, adding that The Economist had a cover story on 'Intolerant India', while The New York Times carried Indian writer Arundhati Roy's article in which she rightly said 'RSS is the State in today's India' and 'an architecture of fascism is being erected in India'. These themes reflect the reality of Modi's India. There was an animated discussion, including questions and comments, and Senator Mushahid Hussain thanked IRS President, Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz, for reviving the IRS as the preeminent Pakistani think tank on India and South Asia.

President stresses enhanced Pak-Uzbek relationship

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday stressed further strengthening of bilateral relations with Uzbekistan in areas of mutual interests including political, trade, economic and cultural fields. The President said close interaction with Uzbekistan was important amid regional and international developments through exchange of high-level visits, parliamentary exchanges and ministerial interactions. The President expressed these views while talking to Pakistan's Ambassador to Uzbekistan Syed Ali Asad Gillani, here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. He asked the ambassador to work for promotion of trade and economic relations between the two countries. He emphasized the need to diversify Pakistan's exports to Uzbekistan by including manufactured goods, finished products, pharmaceuticals and services etc.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Qatar to Pakistan Saoud Abdul Rehman Al Thani called on Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhur Imam, the wives of both dignataries were also present. - DNA

KSHARC, WFP sign USD 40m agreement

RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA: The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre signed today a Joint Cooperation Agreement with the World Food Programme (WFP) to improve food security for the most affected families in some areas of Yemen. This agreement will benefit 2,333,333 individuals at a cost of USD 40,000,000 to prevent famine and malnutrition. The agreement was signed by Advisor to the Royal Court and Supervisor General of KSharc, Dr. Abdullah Al Rabeeah, and Executive Director of the WFP, Mr. David Beasley. The agreement aims to meet the priorities of food security and nutritional needs in accordance with the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Report (IPC) for the food insecurity analysis in Yemen, to benefit the following governorates: Abyan, Al Hudaydah, Amran, Al Bayda, Dhale, Ma'rib, Shabwah, Taiz, Al Mahrah, Socotra, Hadramawt, Aden, Al Jawf, Hajjah, Ibb, Lahij, Sada'a, Sanaa, Al Mahwit, Dhamar, Amanat Al Asimah and Raymah. The project will be completed within six months. Dr. Abdullah Al Rabeeah affirmed in a press statement that Kingdom has reached a pioneering role in global relief and humanitarian work. Throughout its history, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has extended the hand of support to brotherly and friendly countries based on its belief in the importance of humanitarian work. - DNA

Masroor takes charge as Chariman OGRA

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Masroor Khan has assumed the charge of Chairman OGRA bringing 30 years of local and international experience notably in the field of Downstream Retail fuel, Engineering, Project Management, Oil Asset Management, Joint Venture Governance/Management, Cross Country Oil Pipeline, Downstream Assets acquisition portfolio projects, and operational experience in the oil and gas industry including LNG & CNG. Masroor Khan's vast experience in the energy sector includes Oil infrastructure development and formation of corporate alliances. He has both national and international industrial exposure, as he has had the opportunity to work in various markets including Pakistan, Malaysia, UK and the Philippines. Mr. Khan held regional roles for Thailand, Oman, Cambodia, Laos and Dubai as well. Mr. Khan has a proven track record as a senior executive and is a strong strategic thinker. He remained part of the team responsible for transforming Pakistan Burma



Shell network into the Shell Pakistan brand. Mr. Khan was formerly working as Operations Manager in Pakistan overseeing a widespread Shell Oil Assets across country, providing operational & technical assurance and leading a large team of professionals. He also remained Head of Distribution Engineering for Pakistan, UAE & Oman and was responsible for company owned Oil Installations and depots, SBMs and Oil pipelines. He also served as Shareholder Representative for PAPCO (WOP - White Oil Pipeline Project) which is a joint venture with PARCO. Mr. Khan also led a strategic growth LNG project from inception to EPCM final design & planning stage. Moreover, Mr. Khan also held the positions of Network Manager for Pakistan and Oman in Shell Oil Company. Other positions included Planning Manager for Pakistan, Thailand, Oman, Cambodia and Laos and Maintenance Advisor for Asia and Australia based at Malaysia. During the initial stages of his career as 'Planning Engineer' and was deputied at Civil Aviation Authority for the Jinnah Terminal Project, New Quaid-e-Azam International Airport, Karachi.

SAPM displeased with govt

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Imran Khan and the Education Minister of Balochistan, Sardar Yar Mohammad Rind said Tuesday that he had "severe reservations" with the ruling PTL, complaining that he is never consulted on important matters. "I am the parliamentary leader of the PTI but am never consulted on any important matter," said Rind, speaking to Geo News. "Despite being a member of the cabinet, the prime minister doesn't give me five minutes for a meeting," he complained. "Balochistan is being unjustly treated when it comes to the Senate elections," he said, lamenting that there is no representation of the province in the parliamentary board of the party.

Enhancing Pakistan-Qatar bilateral ties urged

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Qatar to Pakistan Saoud Abdul Rehman Al Thani here on Tuesday called on Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhur Imam and discussed ways and means to further strengthen bilateral relations between both the countries. According to a press release issued by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research the spouses of both the minister and ambassador were also present in the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, Fakhur Imam pointed out the importance of language and stressed the need for grooming the youth to strengthen the cultural roots of both the countries. Both sides also deliberated upon research in the agricultural field in both Qatar and Pakistan and stressed the need for enhancing bilateral collaboration for mutual benefit of both the countries. The minister also suggested students exchange program for Qatari students to study in the agricultural research institutions of Pakistan. Both dignitaries said that the bilateral relationship between Qatar and Pak was very cordial and should be further strengthened. - DNA

Certificated Pakistan honey could triple its value: CEN

"The NARC is trying to establish an int'l certification. Once honey is certified, it can be exported to high-end markets"

DNA

BEIJING: Certificated Pakistani honey could triple its value, enhancing its export to other countries, says a report published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Tuesday. The report quoting Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan, Chairman of Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) stated that their honey is sold for merely USD 20 or USD 25 per kilogram, but the price can rise to USD 100 per kilogram when it is packaged at other countries. The situation could improve if we establish labs and certification systems and implement management and supervision policies. He expressed the urgency of upgrading the Pakistani

honey industry. Meanwhile, the report says, China's honey-producing companies are willing to provide honey production and processing technology to Pakistan, according to Li Dingshun, Chairman of Beijing Aojinda Bee Products Cooperative. This technology is very mature and is recognized by our customers," he added. The honey processing technology is said to feature the honey raw material processing, including honey filtration, sterilization, and temperature control. Li Dingshun illustrated that the honey collected by bees is full in the hive, but it is high in moisture. So we remove the moisture by a honey dryer, in which the honey is put on the upper chamber and the empty container on the

lower chamber. China is the world's largest producer and exporter of honey, he added. In addition, China also has a demand for bee product imports such as propolis. "China's propolis production is too low to satisfy the domestic market demand. We have to export propolis from Brazil, Turkey, and Iran each year. If Pakistan's beekeeping industry can develop rapidly with government support, the raw materials of Pakistani propolis will be very attractive to the Chinese market in the future," commented Yang Rong, president of the China Bee Products Association. "Due to quarantine, the Pakistani honey has to undergo OEM service in Arab countries before exported to Europe and the US," said Zohaib, a Pakistani honey

distributor. According to the National Bank of Pakistan, Pakistan exported 6.351 million US dollars of natural honey from July to November 2020, most of which were exported to Saudi Arabia, reaching 4.275 million tons and accounting for 67% of Pakistan's total honey exports. The lack of honey detection technology will also take a toll on Pakistani beekeepers. "Beekeepers do not have honey testing kits, and Pakistan does not have a laboratory that issues honey testing certificates. When beekeepers export uncertified honey, they may face losses such as seizure," said Nasreen Muzaffar. Ending the OED service and enhancing product value have become tough and urgent issues.

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