



# Islamabad POST

Friday, March 05, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

**PM Imran vows to continue struggle for the rule of law**

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## Briefs

**Open ballots vital: Shibli**

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz Thursday said that Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf under the honest leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan firmly believed that open balloting was the only way to eliminate horse-trading in the Senate elections. Talking to a private news channel, he said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had a major role to play in maintaining the sanctity of the ballot, adding, "PTI's struggle was and is for the transparency of the voting process."

**PDM to make final decisions**

**IBRAR KHAN**  
ISLAMABAD: Chairman PPP Bilawal Zardari has termed the vote of confidence as an attempt to hide Imran Khan's defeat in the Senate and said that PDM will decide when and where the no-confidence motion will be tabled. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad with Yousaf Raza Gillani, Bilawal said that Imran Khan had challenged that if the opposition wins the seat in Islamabad, he would hold new elections. We had accepted his challenge and will take on the government on every forum, including the election of Chairman Senate.

**J&K dispute needs to be resolved**

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri says Jammu and Kashmir is an internationally recognized dispute and it needs to be resolved as per UN Security Council's resolutions, which clearly call for a plebiscite under UN auspices. Responding to a question at his weekly-news briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, he said welfare of Kashmiris and protection of their lives are important to Pakistan and it will take measures in the best interest of the people of Kashmir.

## PSL postponed after 7 corona positive cases

The PCB will concentrate on "safe and secure passage" for participants and is set to arrange repeat PCR tests, vaccines, and isolation facilities for six franchises

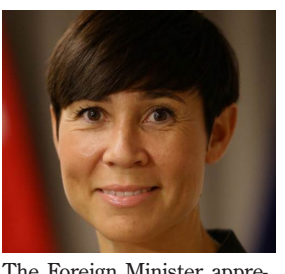
**NAZIR SAYAL**  
KARACHI: The Pakistan Cricket Board announced on Thursday that the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 6 has been delayed "with immediate effect" after seven people participating in the tournament tested positive for Covid-19. The PCB said the decision had been taken out of consideration for the health and wellbeing of all participants in the tournament. "Following a meeting with the team owners and considering the health and wellbeing of all participants is paramount, the Pakistan Cricket Board has decided to postpone the HBL Pakistan Super League 6 with immediate effect. The decision was made after seven cases were reported in the competition, which had started on 20 February," the cricket body said in a press release. The PCB will concentrate on "safe and secure passage" for the participants and is set to arrange repeat PCR tests, vaccines, and isolation facilities for the six franchises.

### Players express disappointment

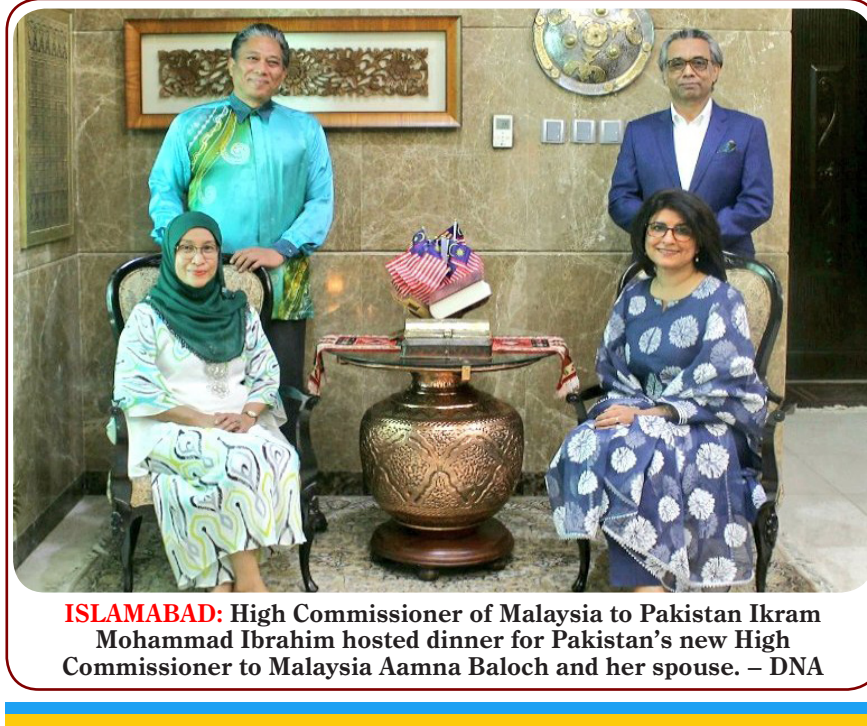
KARACHI: The players part of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season six have expressed disappointment after the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) decided to postpone the event. The rising cases of COVID-19 among participants led PCB to take this decision. The news broke out after an emergency meeting between the PSL's organizing committee and franchises. Islamabad United captain Shadab Khan, Lahore Qalandars' Mohammad Hafeez, fans took to Twitter and shared their disappointment. Sad news about PSL6 Everyone stay safe, Mohammad Hafeez wrote. 'Ya Allah humary psl ko kis ke nazr laga de' wrote Shadab Khan. Disappointing news that the 6th addition of the PSL t20 has been postponed, tweeted English player Ravi Bopara. Pakistani fast bowler Hasan Ali Also share his views. He wrote 'Nazar lag gi kisi ki humri PSL ko'. - DNA

## Qureshi briefs Norwegian FM on Afghan issue

**STAFF REPORT**  
ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi had a telephone call with Foreign Minister of Norway Ine Eriksen Soriede. Matters relating to bilateral, regional and international importance including Afghanistan and Covid-19 situation were discussed. The two Foreign Ministers also exchanged views on enhancing cooperation in diverse sectors such as trade, investment and clean energy.



The Foreign Minister appreciated the growing business relations between Pakistan and Norway and expressed satisfaction at Norwegian investment in Pakistan. The Foreign Minister of Norway appreciated the role of Government of Pakistan in facilitating the signing of solar power project between Scatec and Nizam Energy. She also lauded the constructive role of Norwegians in the economic development of Norway.



ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan Ikram Mohammad Ibrahim hosted dinner for Pakistan's new High Commissioner to Malaysia Aamna Baloch and her spouse. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan meeting with senior PTI leadership and Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani. The govt has decided to field Sanjrani for the post of Senate Chairman. - DNA

## PM meets COAS, DG ISI

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday held a detailed meeting with Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Director General Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Lt General Faiz Hameed to discuss matters pertaining to national security. The three leaders discussed matters pertaining to internal and external security in the meeting. Army Chief General Bajwa and Lt Gen Faiz Hamid last called on Imran Khan on February 1, 2021, for a meeting wherein the three talked about matters pertaining to national security. The Pakistan Army Chief had lauded the ISI's tireless efforts towards national security during a visit to the intelligence headquarters last month.

## PDM to skip vote of trust

**IP REPORT**  
ISLAMABAD: Opposition parties, part of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), on Thursday decided not to attend the National Assembly's session in which Prime Minister Imran Khan is due to take the vote of confidence from the lawmakers. Quoting sources, the TV channel reported that PDM seniors namely Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman took the decision after consultation with each other. Prime Minister Imran Khan had, on late Wednesday night, decided to take a vote of confidence from the NA.

## CJCSC meets Azeri President, Mily chiefs

During the meetings, important facets of defence and security relationship came under discussion

### PM felicitates Azerbaijan

**SHUJAAT HAMZA**  
BAKU: General Nadeem Raza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, who is on official visit to Azerbaijan, called on Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan. Chairman JCS also held separate meetings with Colonel General Zakir Hasanov, Minister of Defence, Colonel General Ali Naghi Oglu Naghiyev, Chief of State Security Service, and other military leadership. During the meetings, important facets of defence and security relationship between Pakistan and Azerbaijan came under discussion. Both sides also deliberated upon various areas of bilateral cooperation and prevailing regional environment particularly with reference to Kashmir and Afghanistan. CJCSC reaffirmed solidarity of Pakistan Armed Forces with the Armed Forces and brotherly nation of Azerbaijan. Earlier upon arrival at Ministry of Defence, Chairman JCS was given Guard of Honour by a smartly turned out contingent of Azerbaijan Armed Forces. CJCSC also laid wreath at Alley of Martyrs.

## Ties with Germany are of great importance: COAS

**STAFF REPORT**  
RAWALPINDI: The Chief Of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa has said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Germany. He was talking to Bernhard Stephan Schlagheck, German Ambassador to Pakistan, who called on General Qamar Bajwa at GHQ, on Thursday. According to an ISPR statement, matters of mutual interest, overall regional situation, bilateral cooperation in various fields and Afghan Peace Process were discussed during the meeting. The Army Chief also appreciated holding of 5th round of Pak-Germany strategic dialogue in September 2020 and expressed hope for mutually benefiting bilateral relations. The visiting dignitary acknowledged Pakistan's continuous efforts for peace and stability in the region and pledged to further enhance bilateral relations between both countries, the statement added.

## ECP takes notice of allegations

**STAFF REPORT**  
ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has taken notice of federal ministers' presser in which they had stated that the Election Commission had failed to hold transparent Senate elections. According to a private television channel, the ECP has directed Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) to provide a complete record of the federal ministers' news conference in Islamabad on Wednesday. The ECP said further action will be taken after reviewing the record of the presser. On Wednesday, Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) candidate Yousuf Raza Gilani won the Senate seat from Islamabad, defeating PTI's Hafeez Shaikh. Gilani secured 169 votes, while his opponent Shaikh got 164 Senate votes.

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## PM vows to continue struggle for rule of law

The prime minister's remarks came in a televised address to the nation after yesterday's upset in the Senate race. Prime Minister Imran Khan, as he began his address, said that he wishes to discuss what happened in Senate elections

**A.M.BHATTI**  
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday vowed that whether or not he is in power, he will never let the corrupt off the hook and will rally the nation against them. "Whether I am in the government or out of the Assembly, I will not spare them," he said, adding that his efforts for the rule of law in this country will continue as long as he is alive. The prime minister's remarks came in a televised address to the nation after yesterday's upset in the Senate race. PM Imran Khan, as he began his address, said that he wishes to discuss what happened in Senate elections. "This is important because what problems our nation suffers from stem from the very situation that unfolded yesterday," he said. He said that the country's leadership comes from within the members of parliament "and here you have people becoming Senators after bribing others". "What sort of democracy is this? So I began a campaign for open balloting," PM Imran Khan said. The premier said in the 2018 Senate elections, the party found that 20 lawmakers "sold themselves off". "But it was not just me that had started this. The PML-N and PPP signed a Charter of Democracy favouring the open balloting method because money rules in the Senate elections," he continued. "We presented a bill in the parliament for open balloting in Senate elections. When other parties who previously supported open balloting did not support our demand, we went to the Supreme Court. "Even a video surfaced in which KP MPs were receiving bribes in exchange for Senate votes," said PM Imran Khan. The Supreme Court told the Election Commission of Pakistan that it is the electoral body's responsibility to hold transparent elections, he said. The prime minister said that meanwhile, the Opposition parties banded together to demand a secret ballot, whereas in the past they had agreed on an open ballot. "I now ask you. Why do you think the same parties who wanted an open ballot now geared all their efforts to have a secret ballot?" asked the premier. PM Imran Khan said they were saying it is "unconstitutional" and "non-democratic" but asked was it not so before when they signed the Charter of Democracy. "They even had a Senate bill asking for open ballot." "What happened was that ever since our government came into power, all the corrupt people panicked that since we had a campaign on corruption running, that we would close in on them," the prime minister said. He said all the corruption cases were not made by the incumbent government; they predate it. "I had predicted on the very first day, they will all stand together and their sole interest will be to put so much pressure on me that I relent and wrap up their cases," PM Imran Khan said. He said that they "blackmailed" the government on a "rigged election" and then criticised the coronavirus response. PM Imran Khan also spoke of the Financial Action Task Force's listing of Pakistan as a "grey list" country. He explained that Pakistan is required to do what FATF says, otherwise it will be "blacklisted" and "sanctioned".

## Maryam lashes out at PM Imran

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz taunted the government on Thursday, saying that those who were trying to break up the PML-N were themselves disintegrating. Addressing a general council meeting of the PML-N, Maryam Nawaz thanked the party's lawmakers for voting for PPP's Yousaf Raza Gilani - the PDM's joint candidate - during the Senate elections. Gilani had pulled off an upset victory, beating Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh from the Islamabad seat by securing 169 votes. Shaikh received 164 votes.



Continued on Page 06



## Briefs

## 'Citizens should know compliance of road signs'

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Road safety is really essential to aware citizens about road traffic crashes. The road users should know that the compliance of road signs is pivotal to save their lives on roads. Impatience and recklessness cause accidents on highways. The workshops and seminars are important tool of inculcating road sense and education about traffic signs, right of way, maintaining of safe distance, and hazards of over speeding and use of mobile phone during driving. Most of the fatalities occur due to human error. Incharge Mobile Education unit, Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti expressed his feelings while addressing citizens about the sensitive subject of road safety precautions and awareness. Furthermore, in order to buttress the clean and green Pakistan movement, SSP patrolling Zubaida Perveen planted a tree on different Patrolling posts during her formal and informal inspections.

## CTD requests sharing JIT report

DNA

KARACHI: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) has requested the foreign ministry to share the report of the Joint Interrogation Team (JIT) against Muttahida Qaumi Movement London (MQM-L) terrorist Wahid Hussain alias Guddu aka Sodagar with the Belgium Embassy. The CTD Deputy Inspector General Omar Shahid Hamid has written a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) regarding an arrested terrorist allegedly associated with MQM-L. Wahid Hussain alias Guddu is holding dual nationality of Pakistan and Belgium, the letter read. Wahid Hussain had disclosed names of his associates including Arif Ajakia, Saleem Belgium and others in committing various crimes in Belgium, according to CTD. It added that the JIT report was also being sent to the ministry against the MQM-L terrorist. The CTD DIG requested the foreign ministry to share the JIT report with the Embassy of Belgium. Earlier in February, the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of the Sindh police had arrested a terrorist affiliated with Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-London) during a raid conducted in Karachi's Gulistan-e-Jauhar area. SSP CTD Arif Aziz had said that a terrorist named Wahid Hussain aka Guddu was arrested during their raid in the Gulistan-e-Jauhar area of the city. "We have recovered a hand grenade from his possession," the SSP said. The SSP CTD had claimed that the arrested terrorist was part of the MQM London and is an associate of another terrorist identified as Saleem aka Saleem Belgium.

## PAC examines audit paras of MNHS

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Thursday examined the maximum five highlighted audit paras of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination in order of highest amount involved there in. Chairman of the committee, MNA Rana Tanveer Hussain chaired the meeting. The meeting was also attended by MNA Sardar Nasrullah Dreshak, MNA Riaz Fatyana, MNA Raza Riaz, MNA Munaza Hassan, MNA Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, MNA Syed Hussain Tariq, MNA Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, MNA Ms. Shahida Akhtar Ali, MNA Ali Nawaz Shah and Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed. The committee directed Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination to conduct inquiry regarding issuance of medicines on fake chits and fix responsibility on persons at fault. The committee also further directed to explain the situation to the committee regarding issue.



ISLAMABAD: Maryam Nawaz, vice president Pakistan Muslim League N and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party in a meeting along with their senior party leadership. - DNA

## China reaffirms commitment to revitalize Pak agri sector

He further said steps would be taken to train Pakistani farmers by the Chinese experts and this initiative to be started from Gilgit Baltistan as these areas have vast potential of agriculture, livestock, dairy and fisheries sectors development

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Agricultural Commissioner of China to Pakistan Dr Gu Wenling here on Thursday reaffirmed the commitment to support Pakistan for revitalizing its agriculture, livestock, dairy, fisheries and food processing sectors to attain sustainable agriculture growth. Dr Guo visited Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and met with Chairman FPCCI Qurban Ali. They discussed areas of mutual cooperation, particularly agriculture sector research and development and transfer of

technology to uplift local agriculture sector. Dr Gu Wenling urged the governments and institutions of both the countries for working together for the development of agriculture sector, besides linking agriculture, livestock and fisheries with tourism as these three things were the center of attraction for tourists, said a news release. He further said steps would be taken to train Pakistani farmers by the Chinese experts and this initiative to be started from Gilgit Baltistan as these areas have vast potential of agriculture, livestock, dairy and fisheries sectors development.

He said China-Pakistan Agriculture and Industrial Cooperation had already been established, aimed to further strengthening bilateral cooperation in agriculture and industrial development for the mutual benefits of both the countries. Speaking on the occasion Chairman FPCCI said there were ample potential for increasing agricultural production in Pakistan, adding that cooperation in the agricultural sector between Pakistan and China would help develop agricultural and allied sectors. He said that 90 percent of the population of Gilgit-Baltistan was depending on agriculture and allied sector, adding,

besides cultivation of major and minor crops, these areas were also producing other agro-commodities including fresh fruits, dried fruits and vegetables for local consumption as well as for exporting. Qurban Ali suggested for establishing Pak-China Modern Village in Gilgit-Baltistan as it was the gateway of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, besides establishing Pak-China Agriculture Research Centers. Addressing the meeting Mirza Abdul Rehman, Coordinator, FPCCI urged the need for taking all necessary measures to take full advantage of the agreements between both the countries

and taking measures for transfer of technology and capacity building. FPCCI and China's agro-tourism project were under consideration. Both the sides agreed on various projects in Pakistan including development of agriculture, research and development, training of farmers through agricultural experts. Qurban Ali Chairman FPCCI also proposed to the Chinese Commissioner for Agriculture to set up Pak-China Model Village and Pak-China Agri Research Centers. The meeting was attended by the Commissioner of Agriculture of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan Dr.Guo Wenling as the special guest.

## 'Pak-India ceasefire will bring peace'

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Confederation of Asia Pacific Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CACC) on Thursday said that ceasefire declaration across line of control between Pakistan and India will promise peace and stability in the region.

Talking to a 10 member delegation of traders led by president Pakistan furniture importers association Mian Faryad Ahmad Raza life member CACCI Iftekhar Ali Malik said that it's good omen for the people of the region that both nuclear armed neighbouring countries amicably agreed to a long awaited meaningful ceasefire.

## Changing obesity leadership forum launched

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Obesity is a complex chronic disease, and losing weight is not just a question of eating less and moving more, stated the medical experts at the Changing Obesity Leadership Forum, organized by the Embassy of Denmark in Pakistan and Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (MoNHSRC), in association with Novo Nordisk Pakistan's Changing Obesity™ initiative. The Leadership Forum, attended by the Danish Ambassador, dignitaries, subject specialists, and medical practitioners, marked the start of a new journey towards a nationwide effort to confront

the challenge of obesity in Pakistan, the 9th most obese country in the world. Sharing her thoughts, H.E. Ms. Lis Rosenholm, the Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan emphasized on strengthening the co-operation on all levels for a healthier world and the need for countering obesity as a disease with united efforts. Speaking at the occasion Mr. Rashed Rafique Butt, Vice President & General Manager Novo Nordisk Pharma, said "The launch of Changing Obesity™ initiative is the beginning of Novo Nordisk's long-term commitment to improve the lives of people with obesity by collaborating with the community on education and advocacy, increasing access to care, and advancing medical management.

## CDA retrieves 250 kanal government's land

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Administration of Capital Development Authority (CDA) conducted operation at Mairabari and retrieved 250 kanal government's land by conducting operation against land grabbers at Mairabari here on Thursday. Dozens of illegal constructions were demolished during the operation. CDA's administration has started doing plantation on retrieved land. According to detail, the administration of CDA is taking action against en-

croachments and illegal constructions on daily basis. In this regard, CDA conducted operation at Mairabari and retrieved 250 kanal government's land. The operation against illegal construction was conducted under the supervision of the department of Enforcement. Deputy Director Enforcement department, Assistant Director, and other officers and staff members were present at the occasion. The land grabbers had illegally constructed homes, boundary walls, and washrooms at the land of CDA.

The government's land was also being used commercially. Land mafia had constructed hotels, huts, workshops, shops, and shades for buffalos. Mafia was involved in doing further constructions at the land of government. Before conducting operation, CDA had been sending notices to land mafia. However, 24 rooms, 5 homes, 29 boundary walls, 17 wash rooms, 10 kitchens, DPC of 36 rooms, and two cattle farms were demolished during the operation conducted by CDA on Thursday.



ISLAMABAD: Danish ambassador, Lis Rosenholm speaking press conference with Rashid Rafique Butt, GM Novo Nordisk Pakistan, Dr Abbas Raza consultant SKMTH. - DNA

## 'FO needs to review incentive structures'

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) says economic diplomacy was one of key component of modern diplomatic practice. Speaking to delegation of business community, PBF President Mian Usman Zulfikar said Pakistan envisions to cultivate and broaden mutually beneficial trade and economic partnerships with European and African countries, focusing on key goals of trade promotion, financial inflows, investments, remittances, tourism and technology transfer. Though economic diplomacy may be a relatively new concept in Pakistan, using economic and diplomatic

resources in sync as tools to advance a country's financial, political and strategic goals has been in practice for a long time. Some countries such as Australia, Brazil, Canada and Mauritius strengthened their economic diplomacy through merging their trade and foreign ministries. Other nations, such as Turkey, created a separate unit in the office of the head of government. Those countries which preferred to maintain the two traditional ministries of foreign affairs and commerce set up joint bodies to improve coordination between them. Pakistan must be following this model by setting up an outreach committee. Whatever the approach, it is crucial that all the stake-

holders wholeheartedly accept the initiative of promoting economic diplomacy to gain greater economic leverage. Unless we have synergy, we will find it very difficult to meet challenges not only arising from the shifting world order, but also of the emergence of new international task forces and organisations. In the case of Pakistan, an economic diplomacy strategy may focus on an in-depth partnership framework with China and regional players, a private sector-led model to undertake large commercial transactions, revamping of the ministries of foreign affairs and economic management and a new way of engaging with multilateral and regional financial institutions.

## MoU signed to pursue agri-tech initiatives

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Institute of Business Management (IoBM) and Future AgriTech Pvt. Ltd. (a subsidiary of Tufail Group-TG) have collaborated to empower the youth of Pakistan in Food Science, Technology, and Security. This will be done through research, training, education, and support for start-ups. The strategic alliance of IoBM and TG will pursue a project, "The Farm". They will conduct academic and research activities on readily deployable sustainable systems to produce vegetables, fruits, and plants. The latest methods in precision agriculture and vertical farming will be used. IoBM has provided 1,000 sq/yds of land on its campus to help TG develop an innovative Agri-Tech farm, research lab, and urban forest.

## DG EPA abrogates NOC granted to WASA

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD : Director General, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Punjab, has abrogated the NOC granted to WASA Faisalabad for the construction of a disposal station in Dawood Colony, Madina Town, Faisalabad, which was creating health hazards to 1500 students of a school and hundreds of residents of this populous colony by emitting bad smell and polluting the atmospheric air. Moreover, the heavy generator installed by WASA in this disposal station was causing great noise trouble for the students to carry-on their studies in the school and the residents of the area too. The DG Environmental Protection Agency further observed in his order that the WASA disposal station in Dawood Colony is emitting pollution, bad odor and germination of insects causing "Dengue" which would not only threaten health of the students and dwellers of this colony. The school management had also applied to Managing Director, WASA, for an alternative suitable site for the construction of the disposal station but he did not pay any heed to this genuine demand. Hence, there was no other alternative but to cancel the permission granted to WASA for the construction and running of a "Disposal Station" in vicinity of Dawood Colony, Faisalabad.

## EFP intensifies work on national strategy

KARACHI: For the first time in the history of Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP) its National Field team comprising of representatives from its offices in Karachi, Mirpur Khas, Lahore, Faisalabad, Sialkot, Multan, Islamabad, KP and Baluchistan gathered for a two days' membership strategy development Workshop in Karachi. Membership development workshop was organized by EFP in collaboration with ILO/ITC, ILO/ACTEMP and ILO country office Islamabad. Peiris Ravindra from ILO/ACTEMP New Delhi, Paolo Salvia and Ms. Barbara Maino from ILO/ITC conducted the workshop and explained the dynamics of Membership growth, recruitment and retention strategies. Through group exercises the participants were intensively involved in developing the Membership growth, recruit-

## ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY (DIRECTORATE OF WORKS)

## INVITATION OF TENDER

Re-Tender is invited from the reputed Government Contractors/Constructors/Firms registered with PEC and Sales Tax Directorate, for the following work:

Tender Ref No.	Name of work	Tender Fee	Time Limit	Bid Security
R 05/Car Park / 2020-21/ ADP#7	Construction of Car Parking at AIU Main Campus Islamabad.	Rs. 3000	45 Days	2% of Bid

**Kindly Note:** Detail requirements of invitation of tender for the above work is available at AIU and PPRA websites ([www.aiou.edu.pk](http://www.aiou.edu.pk)), and ([www.ppra.org.pk](http://www.ppra.org.pk)), which are mandatory for the issuance of the Tender Documents.

The Tender on the prescribed documents shall be received in the office of the undersigned on **25.03.2021 (Thursday) up to 1100 Hrs. and will be opened at 1130 Hrs.** on the same day in the presence of Tender Opening Committee and the representatives of the firms who desire to participate.

Director Works  
Tel: 051-905-7212, 051-905-7208  
Fax: 051-9250100, E-mail: [xen@aiou.edu.pk](mailto:xen@aiou.edu.pk)



## Briefs

### Green Islamabad project' underway

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Director General Environment CDA Naveed Tareen Thursday said that 'Green Islamabad project' is moving forward at a rapid pace, which aptly reflects vision of Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan to make highways and sectors pollution free.

Talking to a private news channel, he said under the 'Green Islamabad project' CDA has been identifying the locations of various sectors, parks and highways to overcome pollution and plant trees. He appealed the public to actively participate in plant for Islamabad campaign and added that effective monitoring of the campaign will be conducted. He said that civil society, administration, forestry department and citizens should work together to make the campaign successful. Naveed Tareen said that due to pollution the health of the general public is deteriorating and it was high time to initiate a response to the problem.

He said that the purpose of launching 'Green Islamabad' drive was to support the mission of government for Clean and Green Pakistan. He also shed light on the impact of deforestation in the country that not only does cutting down trees lead to an increase in pollution but it also harmfully affects the public health.

### Orientation arranged for media in ICT schools

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training has arranged an orientation session for media organizations on the significance and need for ICT school-based children de-worming programme aged between 5 to 16 years. According to a notification issued by the Federal Education Ministry on Thursday, the session has been arranged, in order to engage media organizations to create public awareness in the upcoming round of de-worming to be held in March, 2021.

The preparations by the government were underway to carry out the school based de-worming programme and, in that regard an orientation session for media persons was scheduled to be held on 6th March, 2021 (Saturday) at 03:00 PM at Islamabad Model School for Boys F-8/4, Islamabad. World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over 1.5 billion people were infected globally with Soil-Transmitted Helminthes (STH)-Intestinal Worms, with over 835 million children worldwide in need of treatment.

### CTP urged to check parking violations

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi have been urged to strictly check parking rules violations to avoid traffic jams on city road as wrong and double parking are the main hurdle in smooth flow of traffic on various roads particularly in commercial areas of the town.

Illegal and wrong parking coupled with encroachments at footpaths and roadsides are not only affecting smooth movement of pedestrians but also aggravating traffic flow in all business hubs of the city and cantonment. Though, the city traffic police and civic authorities claimed to have been carrying out special operations, pushing the encroachers back and clearing several areas, but no permanent solution of the problem could be brought. The situation is worst in Raja Bazaar, Bohar Bazar, Banni Chowk, Circular Road, Murree Road, Pindora Road, Tench Bhatta, Sarafa Bazaar, Mochi Bazaar, City Saddar Road, Gawalmandi, Sadiqabad, Satellite Town and several other roads.



ISLAMABAD: Visitor takes keen interest in a painting exhibition at Tanzara Art gallery. – DNA

## 75 Pakistani scholars to pursue PhD in QMUL

British Council Pakistan organized a virtual signing ceremony. Executive Director, HEC, Dr. Shaista Sohail and Vice Principal, International Education, Queen Mary University of London, Prof. Colin Grant signed the agreement

### STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan and Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) have signed a Memorandum of Agreement for 75 HEC scholars to pursue their PhD degrees from QMUL in the next five years.

In this connection, the British Council Pakistan organized a virtual signing ceremony. Executive Director, HEC, Dr. Shaista Sohail and Vice Principal, International Education, QMUL, Prof. Colin Grant signed the agreement. HEC and QMUL have been co-funding PhD scholars since 2016, as the two sides signed the first Memorandum of Agreement in September 2016 to nurture a collaborative partnership to provide high quality research training to Pakistani PhD students at QMUL.

Under the first agreement, 35 scholars have proceeded for pursuing doctoral degrees in various fields. About half of these scholars opted fields of Engineering and Technology which is much needed field in Pakistan. Another group of scholars are pursuing higher education in the field of biological sciences which will help to improve the research culture in the field of biological sciences in Pakistan. Similarly, a good number of HEC scholars are studying in diverse fields of social science who are expected to contribute towards the improvement



of social constructs of our society. Now as part of the new agreement, 75 more scholars will be selected in different fields of studies to pursue their PhDs from QMUL. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Shaista appreciated the QMUL's cooperation and support to Pakistani scholars. She hoped that the bi-

lateral cooperation will pave the way for achieving a larger national goal of human development. "There is no medium better than the education to improve perceptions about each other." She said that Pakistani scholars are fortunate enough to have the opportunity to study at QMUL, as such opportunities enhanced ed-

ucational as well as cultural experiences. She appreciated the role of QMUL administration for offering generous tuition waiver to HEC selected scholars through this agreement. She also recognized the efforts of QMUL team led by Prof. Grant, and comprised Ms. Flora McKay, PhD Recruitment Manager, QMUL, Dr. Felicity Shelley, PhD Recruitment Manager, Partnerships and Sponsor Relations Manager, QMUL, and Ms. Sarah Pervez, Head of Higher Education and Skills, British Council for their contribution towards the collaboration between HEC and QMUL. She also congratulated HEC team led by Dr. Hassan Jalil Shah, Advisor Human Resource Development, HEC,

Ms. Ayesha Ikram, Director General, Human Resource Development, HEC, and Dr. Arshad Bashir, Project Director, Overseas Scholarships, HEC, for success of the project. Prof. Grant gave a comprehensive overview of QMUL and its unique academic and research credentials. During his presentation, he acknowledged the role of HEC and Pakistani scholars in enriching intellectual and research environment at QMUL. He also showcased the great achievements accomplished by alumni of QMUL for the entire globe. In his remarks, Country Head, British Council, Mr. Amir Ramzan highlighted the role of British Council in collaboration between HEC and QMUL.



ISLAMABAD: UN Women Country Representative for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Sharmela Rassool, called on Pakistan special representative for Afghanistan, Mohammad Sadiq in his office. Great discussion on inclusive peace process, sustainable initiatives for women, youth, civil societies, businesses were held. – DNA

## NUMS gets Associate membership

RAWALPINDI: National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS) has been accorded Associate membership of the Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of the Islamic World (AQAAIW) which will help it contribute in enhancing quality of higher education in the comity of the Muslim countries. This membership will enable NUMS to promote/enhance quality of higher education by participating and making contributions of higher education in the comity of the Islamic World through Islamic - QA forum, said a statement of the university here Thursday. In his brief remarks on this achievement of NUMS the Vice Chancellor Lt Gen Syed Muhammad Imran Majeed HI (M) (Retd), said the decision of Islamic QA "was an acknowledgement of efforts by NUMS' faculty in ensuring quality of higher education which could not have been possible without its unwavering commitment to teaching and research." Islamic QA was established on May 4, 2011 to promote and enhance quality higher education in the countries of the Islamic world. The full membership has been accorded to 16 educational institutions while there are 21 Associate members. Currently the Higher Education Commission (HEC) is a full member of QA Islamic World along with 15 Pakistani universities as associate members. – DNA

## Secretary Narcotic Control visits Anti-Narcotic HQ

The secretary lauded ANF's achievements and its role as a specialized force in combating trafficking of illicit drugs at national, regional and global level. He assured his support to ANF for addressing the inadequacies

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Secretary, Ministry of Narcotics Control, Capt. (Retd) Akbar Hussain Durrani paid his first formal visit to Headquarters Anti-Narcotics Force, Rawalpindi after assuming the charge of Secretary MNC. He was welcomed by Director General ANF, Major General Muhammad Arif Malik, HI (M). The secretary was briefed on counternarcotic endeavors by ANF, professional achievements, current drug situation and major challenges with regard to trafficking of narcotics, precursor chemicals and psychotropic substances. He was apprised that ANF



is also vigorously undertaking drug demand reduction campaign through public awareness drives and community participation activities throughout Pakistan; apart from running rehabilitation centers providing free of cost treatment to drug addicts. He was also informed about the organizational requirements of ANF with respect to enhancement of infrastructure, acquisition of latest technology and establishment of more drug treatment centers in the country. The secretary lauded ANF's achievements and its role as a specialized force in combating trafficking of illicit drugs at national, regional and global level. He assured his support to ANF for addressing the inadequacies.

## CDNS receives Rs 29b new investments

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has received Rs 29 billion new investments by February 28, through registered Premium Prize Bonds of Rs 40,000 and Rs 25000 introduced by the institution. The CDNS has introduced the new registered Premium Prize Bonds after the termination of both major Prize bonds of Rs 40,000 and Rs 25000. This initiative documentation of the country's economy, senior official of CDNS told media here on Thursday.

New registered Premium Prize Bonds of Rs 40,000 and Rs 25000 were registered by State Bank of Pakistan and en-cashed only by the registered financial institution under the SBP, he said. Replying to the question, he said CDNS has opened new avenues for public and private investment to document the country's economy and ensure transparency in the financial system.

While replying to another question, he informed, "We paid the encashment of Rs 116 billion by March 1st to the investors against the suspension of prize bonds of Rs 25,000". He said the federal government recently suspended the prize bonds of Rs 25,000 and had given a six-month deadline to investors to en-cash their total savings of Rs 160 billion.

## Overseas Employment Promoters meets ED NAVTTC

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: A meeting was held between Executive Director, National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC), Dr. Nasir Khan and delegation of Overseas Employment Promoters in NAVTTC headquarters Islamabad. Issues regarding export of certified skilled work force and their legal migration to the destination countries were discussed in the meeting. Executive Director NAVTTC, Dr. Nasir Khan apprised the delegation about NAVTTC's initiatives to facilitate the Overseas Employment Promoters, which will be helpful to provide internationally recognized skilled workforce to the destination countries. In this regard, detailed presentation on the creation of National Employment Exchange Tool (NEXT), establishment of 123 job placement centers across Pakistan and ten country of destination specific facilitation centers was given to the Overseas Employment Promoters. Further, the Executive Director highlighted the significance of more than hundred centers registered under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) initiative to certify the uncertified skilled work force.

## Bahawalpur Corps hold annual training

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The troops of Bahawalpur Corps were practicing drills and procedures as part of annual winter collective training exercise "Zarb-e-Hadeed". The corps level exercise was aimed at enhancing operational preparedness, synergy amongst various components of forces, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release. The exercise area covered a vast expanse of desert and plains, where the participating units were rehearsing various response measures under testing weather conditions, challenging terrain and actual battlefield environment. The participating units displayed high level of synergy and professionalism during the assembly, move, tactical combat and fire power demonstration phases of the exercise.



## Briefs

## 'Islamabad records 231 fresh cases'

ISLAMABAD: The COVID-19 cases are surging continuously in the federal capital as 231 new corona cases were reported during the last 24 hours, National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) said on Thursday. According to an NCOC official, as many as 174 cases were reported on Wednesday while 143 cases were reported on Tuesday. He said so far 44,921 cases were reported from the federal capital while 503 deaths were reported from Islamabad capital territory (ICT). He added 42,419 patients had been recovered completely. Meanwhile, on the direction of Ministry of National Health Services, the ICT administration has continued surveillance of different streets to reduce transmission of the infection in the selected streets and other sectors of the federal capital. It has also started taking actions on violation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) related with the corona while visiting marriage halls, markets and petrol pumps by its inspection teams. The administration has been asked to seal schools, shops, workshop and restaurants on violation of the SOPs. The inspection teams have been directed to issue notices to marriage halls besides imposing fines on owners of different shops in case of violation of the SOPs. Commenting on the situation, an official of Ministry of National Health Services said several local level administrative decisions were made to control the disease. He advised the citizens to continue following the social distancing, use of mask and other precautionary measures to stop increasing local transmission of COVID-19 in the city. — APP

Twin cities  
Police conduct search operation

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad and Rawalpindi police on Thursday conducted joint patrolling as well as search operation at IJP road and nabbed 75 suspects. SSP (Operations) Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer said that police of both districts conducted patrolling as well as search operation from 6: p.m. to 10: p.m. last night near the areas of IJP Road, Double Road and Carriage Factory. This exercise, he said, was participated by police officials of Industrial area, Sabzi Mandi police stations of Islamabad and New Town and Pirwadi police stations of Rawalpindi. Special Protection Unit of Islamabad police and Elite and Dolphin Force of Rawalpindi also participated in it and nabbed a total of 75 suspects. As many as 60 suspects were shifted to police stations of Islamabad while 15 to police stations of Rawalpindi. SSP (Operations) Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer said that purpose of such operation is to curb crime through coordinated efforts. He said that such joint efforts would be improved and crackdown to be ensured against proclaimed offenders, absconders, criminal elements and car lifters. He said that wanted persons would be arrested and such efforts would continue in future to ensure protection to the lives and property of the citizens. — APP

## Int'l Labor standards training for Pakistani labor

ISLAMABAD: Speedy and fair justice for workers who are the real builders of the nation, wealth and growth, should be a priority of the judicial system, particularly the labor courts. This was said by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan during the concluding ceremony of the workshop for judges of the labor courts and members of the National Industrial Relations Commission (NIRC). Speaking at the same event, Justice Shah added that, "as dispute settlement managers, labor court judges should wear a human rights cap while adjudicating cases and make full use of the whole corpus of guarantees and rights articulated in the country's constitution, national, international and case laws. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society, Abrar ul Haq and Wife of Turkish Ambassador Mrs. Zlatomira Yurdakul cutting cake during ceremony in connection with "World Orphan Week" organized by Pakistan Red Crescent Society in collaboration with Turkish Red Crescent Society. — DNA

## Japan provides grant assistance to two NGOs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has decided to provide grant assistance up to US\$149,827 (Equivalent to around 24.3 million PKR) to two development projects for local communities in Pakistan. The projects will be implemented by two organizations: SESWA and Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS). The two grant contracts signed on March 4, 2021 between Mr. MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan and representatives of the two organizations at the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Islamabad. The SESWA will receive the grant of US\$58,928 (Equivalent to around 9.6 million PKR) to install solar panels in the school run by the organization in District Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Since its establishment in 1990, the organization has been working in the fields of education, health, and



infrastructure development. Power outages often happen in Pakistan due to lack of electricity during which students at the school have to learn under a bad illumination level. Through this project, the school will be able

to provide more than 1,000 students with better educational environment even during the power outage. The PRCS will receive the grant of US\$90,899 (Equivalent to around 14.7 million PKR) to be utilized for

fully equipped five ambulances, transportation from Japan to Pakistan, and training of PRCS staffs in order to improve the operational and outreach capacity of the organization in emergency circumstances.

## Japan provides financial assistance to PRCS

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has provided five ambulances and a financial assistance of \$90,899 to the Pakistan Red Crescent Society to help expand its outreach and services in the wake of any calamity or emergency situation.

A MoU in this regard was signed on Thursday between PRCS Chairman Abrar ul Haq and Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan Kuniori Matsuda at his residence. PRCS Acting Secretary General Dr. Adee Nawaz, Brig (r) Abdul Hadi, Col (r) Shahrugh and senior officials from the Japan Embassy also attended the ceremony.

## 'Islamabad Police moving towards community policing'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General Police Qazi Jameel ur Rehman on Thursday said that Islamabad police was moving towards community policing with the objective to control the crime in the city with the help of citizens. IG Islamabad Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of retired government officials, civil society, business community, bankers and various departments. During the meeting, the participants put forward suggestions to improve law and order and security in the city. Talking to the delegation, IGP said that maintaining law and order, eliminating crime was the main responsibility of the police. With the help of community policing crime can be controlled in the city. He was of the view that the community policing will enhance trust among the people and force. He assured the participants that their suggestions will be implemented. He further said that to promote community policing a campaign had been started in the district. He said that various steps had been taken to bring improvement in the police force. He said, that modern training policy, improvement in investigation process, investigation wing

department revamped, registration of immediate FIR on complaints, deployment of competent and talented SHO's / clerks at police station through test interviews had been introduced to improve the performance police. Through safety campaign ensure enforcement of traffic rules through on roads installation of checking cameras and traffic sign boards, online appointment service and introduction of e-challan system with the help of Safe City. Awareness about drug use and its harms is being provided at the level of schools, colleges and universities. The IGP said that effective police measures have resulted in a significant reduction in crime. The role of citizens is very important in maintaining law and order in any city. "Your suggestions will help to improve the performance of the police force. He was of the view that such meetings should be continued in the future for positive policing. Protecting lives and property of people is our first duty. We strive to provide the best possible facilities to the citizens" he added. The delegation appreciated the steps taken by IGP to improve the police force and provide facilities to the citizens. On this occasion, SS Operations Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer, AIG Operations, SP Saddar, SP city and other police officers were also present in the meeting.

## 'Ehsaas working to improve ecosystem for Street Hawkers'

ISLAMABAD: The Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a multitude of stakeholders in a ceremony held here to set up a collaborative framework for the forthcoming Ehsaas Street Hawkers Initiative. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Safety and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Sania Nishtar was also present on the occasion. As per the memorandum, Ehsaas has joined hands with Capital Development Authority (CDA), Islamabad Capital Territory Administration (ICTA), Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI), and Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) to collaboratively steer the design and execution of the Ehsaas Street Hawkers' Initiative under Mazdoor Ka Ehsaas. The memorandum is centered on improving the ecosystem for street vending. According to conservative estimates, there are around 20,000 street vendors operating in Islamabad, who are generating annual net income up to Rupees 9.6 billion. Ehsaas' support for street vendors is in line with the Prime Minister's vision of the welfare state based on Riyasat-e-Madina model. In this regard, PASSD is collaborating with city authorities and research

institutes to organize street vending in a more sustainable manner. Dr. Nishtar said in a statement after signing the MoU, "For the first time in Pakistan, the government is embarking upon the initiative for street vendors. This is a very difficult policy space; we are trying to work out solutions." She then continued, "The marginalized segment of street vendors is an integral part of the local economy, which cannot be wished away in a low-income country like Pakistan. The MoU will enable a more strategic and coordinated approach towards delivering impact." — DNA

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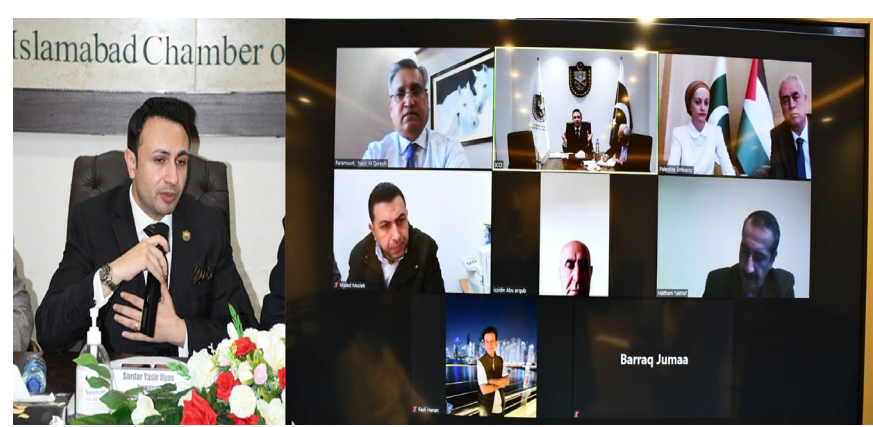
ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Climate Change and High Commissioner of Canada Wendy Gilmour inaugurating Trail 2 in the Margallah Hills National Park on the occasion of World Wildlife Day at Islamabad Zoo. — DNA

## Pak-Palestine urged for co-op with private sector

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Thursday urged the governments of Pakistan and Palestine to cooperate with private sectors for promoting trade and investment relations between two brotherly countries. It said that as their current volume of bilateral trade was quite negligible compared to the actual potential of both countries. Addressing a zoom meeting organized by the Embassy of Palestine to explore trade and investment opportunities between Pakistan and Palestine, President ICCI Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that many Pakistani products including Basmati rice, pharmaceuticals, IT, sports goods, textiles, marble products and others could find good market in Palestine. He emphasized that strong business linkages between the private sectors of both countries were important to explore all untapped areas for promoting trade and investment on reciprocal basis. ICCI members Nasir Qureshi and Fazal-e-Hanan briefed the Palestinian side about the state-of-the-art manufacturing capabilities of Pakistani pharmaceuticals

companies that were exporting their quality products around the world. Karim Aziz Malik former Senior Vice President ICCI apprized the Palestinian side about the high quality Basmati rice of Pakistan that

was being exported to around 28 countries including Japan. Ahmed Rabei, Ambassador of Palestine welcomed the participants to the zoom meeting and said that it was the best time to explore the opportunities for promoting trade and investment relations between Palestine and Pakistan. He also thanked Pakistan for providing training and other support to Palestine in various fields and said that Palestine wanted to enhance its economic relations with Pakistan. Khalid Mosleh of the Federation of Palestine Chambers of Commerce and Industry stressed that all possible channels of trade should be explored to enhance bilateral trade between Palestine and Pakistan. He said that both countries should focus on exchange of trade delegations and participation in each other's exhibition for promotion of bilateral trade and investment. — APP



## PHA installs birdhouses to save birds

RAWALPINDI: Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi on the directives of Advisor to Chief Minister Punjab/Chairman PHA Rawalpindi Asif Mehmood is installing birdhouses at different places to save the birds from bad weather conditions. Talking to APP, Vice Chairman PHA, Malik Abid Hussain informed that PHA had made the decision in order to protect the birds from inclement weather conditions of summer and winter. He informed that special poles mounted beautiful bird houses in attractive colors have been installed at Moti Mehal, Rialto Park. He said, PHA was making efforts to make the city beautiful and green. "Our birdhouses project will help bring back the birds in city areas and the residents will enjoy the amazing voices of the beautiful birds in natural environment," he added. He informed that the birdhouses were being erected well before the breeding season. To a question he said that a number of sites were selected in the city including Allama Iqbal Park, Liaquat Bagh, Rashid Minhas Road, PHA parks and others to install the birdhouse to attract certain kinds of birds. Special metal poles and trees were used to erect small birdhouses, he said. The VC informed that a number of birdhouses had been installed in Allama Iqbal Park while the project was underway at Rashid Minhas Road and several other areas. To another question he said, PHA was making all out efforts to turn the city into a green town. He said, the authority had kicked off the Plantation Campaign, under Clean and Green Pakistan Program. He informed that to encourage the citizens and different organizations and to turn the city into a green town, the authority had prepared a plan. — APP

## Citizens urged to discourage professional beggars

RAWALPINDI: City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi on the directives of Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Rai Mazhar Iqbal, have accelerated their on-going campaign against professional beggars while 1269 were netted from city roads during February. In-charge Anti-Begging Squad CTP urged the citizens to play their role to discourage professional beggars. He informed that the CTP had also lodged a large number of FIRs in different police stations against beggars caught from different areas. He said that the squad had launched a grand operation and rounded up over 1269 during last month. The CTP were trying to eliminate begging from the city roads and during their efforts, professional beggars were being sent behind the bars. Out of total nearly 80 percent beggars roaming in the city are professional, he added. 60 percent beggars caught from city roads were healthy and fit while only 20 percent were disabled persons and 20 were drug addicts, he informed. A large number of beggars are brought to Rawalpindi from Southern Punjab, KPK, Sindh and other far-flung areas of the country and operating through contractors, he said adding, CTP had launched grand operation against professional beggars and taking action in accordance with the law. Hundreds of beggar children netted from the city roads were handed over to Child Protection Bureau (CPB). The anti-beggars squad of CTP and Rawalpindi district police was conducting raids at different roads and intersections. Directives had also been issued to the squad to register cases against beggars and the report in this regard should be sent to CTO office on daily basis, he said. The beggary was a social menace as professional beggars had become a social nuisance everywhere. The CTP were making efforts to net professional beggars and their handlers to combat the menace of begging mafia, he added. To a question he said that due to these professional beggars the real deserving poor people remains deprived so the citizens should play a role and discourage those not deserving and begging is their profession. — APP



## Afghan registration

THE government of Pakistan's announcement to give Afghan refugees new Proof of Registration (PoR) cards is a laudable step. Under this joint programme of the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), those Afghans whose PoR cards expired on December 31, 2015, will get new identity cards. The initiative is a great step and shows Pakistan's seriousness to address the issues of refugees. It also shows our commitment to protect human, economic and social rights of the Afghan citizens in Pakistan. Furthermore, the exercise will benefit the government as well as the refugees alike. The updated database will enable the government to keep track of foreign nationals and help enhance their protection. Besides, the government will also improve its security with the new registration drive of around 1.4 million Afghan refugees. Though border control is not a complete possibility, a database of foreign nationals and registration with the authorities of the host countries is a common practice the world over to prevent crime, terror and abuse of refugees' rights. Similarly, the new PoR cardholders will be in a better position to move within Pakistan. Law enforcement agencies (LEAs) will not stop them unnecessarily, as new documents will help facilitate identity authentication easily. Likewise, they will be able to access social services swiftly. Islamabad alone cannot bear the economic and infrastructural costs of providing refuge and social services that Afghans need for leading a better life. It is worth noting that the Afghans in Pakistan make the second-largest refugee population in the world. Considering the uncertainty in Afghanistan, it is hard to predict a timeline by which the last Afghan will repatriate to Afghanistan. And given the economic outlook of Pakistan that the pandemic has worsened, the donor countries and aid agencies need to provide financial assistance to Pakistan more than ever today.



Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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ABC CERTIFIED

Vol: 01 Issue: 292

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## A heated affair

WITH a heated political atmosphere, the Senate elections on Wednesday took place amid the now customary back and forth between the government and opposition benches in all assemblies. However, leaked videos, a scuffle and allegations of kidnapping in the Sindh Assembly led to both sides crying foul once the polling was completed. The victory of former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani from Islamabad will likely become a key sticking point going forward. The problem however, is that currently there is a lack of agreement on how this vote for senate elections should have been cast by each provincial and national representative. The proponents of the secret ballot would argue that the whole reason for not disclosing the vote is so that voters can choose the candidate they feel is best for the Senate, and go against the party line if need be. This is what they will claim happened in Islamabad yesterday. The government however, has raised arguments on how consciences can be bought and sold, with horse trading and corruption remaining endemic problems in the Senate electoral system. It is understandably hard to verify that a vote against one's own party members is one driven by free choice, or the lure of a bribe. The initial response has been that the ruling party will challenge this outcome. This is expected. But it is also interesting to note that PTI's candidate on the reserved seat in Islamabad Fouzia Arshad, won where Hafeez Shaikh lost. There are questions that political parties must address internally as well. How is it that parliamentarians of the highest order made basic mistakes that led to seven votes getting cancelled? Is it really necessary to open up the ballot to more scrutiny, or a need for parties to properly vet its own workers? Will there be an internal investigation for why results did not go as expected? The government has been dealt a blow. There might be more sparks in the days to come.

# Property rights – a fundamental value for Uzbekistan

Sardor Mannonov

The Govt of Uzbekistan has adopted the Resolution “On the procedure for land acquisition and compensation of owners of real estate located on the seized land” on Nov 16, 2019 No 911 in order to eliminate such kinds of problems

IN recent years, a number of positive reforms have been carried out in the field of protection of private property rights in Uzbekistan. These positive changes serve to improve the investment and business environment, thereby further increasing the investment attractiveness of the country. In this regard, if we pay attention to the historical evolution of the development of property rights in the territory of Uzbekistan, the emergence of these relations has its long history. Evolution of the formation of property rights on the territory of Uzbekistan. In particular, the first forms of property rights in Uzbekistan were mentioned in the sacred book of Zoroastrianism “Avesto”, according to which property rights were classified into three types: private, public and state property. All these forms of ownership were protected by the state in accordance with the established rules. After that, the further development of ownership forms was associated with the penetration of Islam in the territory of Uzbekistan. Muslim law clearly defined the forms of property rights, the legal status of movable and immovable property, and the protection of property owners by the state. The process of initial codification of property rights in the territory of Uzbekistan was carried out in the 1920s, which mainly reflected the forms of state ownership. Property rights in independent Uzbekistan. The inviolability of pri-

private property in independent Uzbekistan and its state protection are first of all enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The main goal of all reforms since independence is to protect the personal, social, economic and political rights and freedoms of the people. Article 36 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which is the legal, economic and moral basis for the implementation of reforms, states that everyone has the right to own property, and Article 44 states that Everyone shall be entitled to legally defend his rights and freedoms, and shall have the right to appeal any unlawful action of state bodies, officials and public associations. This is the encyclopedic recognition of the desire to live a decent life and enjoy results of his abilities and labor as an owner. The adoption of the Civil Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as the laws “On property in the Republic of Uzbekistan” in 1990 and “On protection of private property and guarantees of property rights” in 2012 has played a historic role in ensuring and guaranteeing the protection of property rights. The fact that the article 166 of Civil Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan provides for the inviolability and judicial protection of property, and the article 1921 of Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan defines the protection of private property from encroachment as one of the most important objects, is a clear confirmation of the existence of a solid legal basis for property protection in Uzbekistan. Enhancing protection of private property in new Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan's Development Strategy on five priority areas for 2017-2021, adopted by the President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, identifies strengthening the guarantees of citizens' rights to private property as one of the important tasks. Besides that, new legal acts have recently been adopted in order to strengthen the protection of property rights in Uzbekistan, including the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated July 27, 2018 No. 5490 “On measures to further improve the system of protection of the rights and legitimate interests of business entities”, the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated August 3, 2019 No. 5491 “On additional measures to ensure the unconditional guarantee of property rights of citizens and businesses”, as well as the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers dated November 16, 2019 No-911 “Additional measures on ensuring guarantees of property rights of individuals and legal entities and improving the procedure for withdrawal and compensation of land plots”. Additionally, New Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On amendments and additions to some legislative acts of the Republic of Uzbekistan in connection with further strengthening

the guarantees of property rights and legitimate interests” was adopted on 23 December, 2020. This Law has made relevant amendments to the laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On denationalization and privatization”, “On local government”, “On protection of private property and guarantees of property rights” and the Land Code, which are designed to ensure protection of private property rights in Uzbekistan. The main essence and purpose of such measures is to ensure the guarantee of property rights and improve the legal framework in this regard, but also to form citizens' legal ability and awareness to know how to protect their rights as owners. The role of legal literacy in property relations. The scale and effectiveness of the work, directed to improve people's legal awareness and culture, in particular, legal literacy in property relations, is growing day by day. The exercise of a property rights can cause some conflicts between actors of this process, because it is mainly connected with conflict of interests. In this case, the protection of the rights of honest and conscientious participants in property relations is largely due to their strict adherence to the legal norms, governing this process. Indeed, property relations play a key role between individuals in our life and such relations are, of course, encountered with someone every day, in one form or another. Naturally, there are sometimes misunderstandings, disputes and various conflicts between the participants when entering into such relationships. If we pay attention to the causes of these disputes, there are some following common cases: – parties are not fully familiar with the legislation on property issues; – indifferent attitude to the performance of contractual obligations; – parties do not fully understand their rights and obligations under the law or contract. Especially, people or legal entities are more likely to make mistakes in the field of privatization, sale, lease, gift, bequest, mortgaging, distribution or separation of joint property because procedures are relatively complicated. The relevant legislation also provides for specific procedures and procedural actions in the consideration of applications to the courts on this category of disputes, which, if the parties are not sufficiently aware of them, may face certain difficulties in protecting their property rights in court. However, in spite of complexity of these procedures, it is the responsibility of the participants in this process to know and follow the requirements of the law, which first and foremost, will serve the interests of these individuals to protect their rights.

Measures to put end land acquisition for public needs without court decisions and fair, full and prompt compensation. In addition, as it was already mentioned that currently a number of laws are being adopted or the existing legislation is being developed by amendments and additions which are directed to the improvement of property relations, further strengthening of contract discipline. However, land acquisition for public needs, as well as the demolition of facilities located on the confiscated land plot, has become a topical issue in many countries including Uzbekistan too. It should be mentioned that inadequate legal regulation of these issues often leads to protests among the population. The Government of Uzbekistan has adopted the Resolution “On the procedure for land acquisition and compensation of owners of real estate located on the seized land” on November 16, 2019 No 911 in order to eliminate such kinds of problems. As a result, a new procedure has been established to regulate this process and ensure compensation for real estate owners. This regulation came into force on January 1, 2020 and regulates a number of issues related to land acquisition for public needs. However, these aforementioned issues still need to be addressed at the legislative level to strengthen the property rights of individuals and legal entities in the seizure of land for public needs in Uzbekistan. Taking into account this facts, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan has started to work out the draft law of Uzbekistan to reinforce strong regulation of procedures on land acquisition for public needs to be paid fair, full and prompt compensation. Main objective of this draft law is to establish exact payment of fair, full and prompt compensation for land acquisition for public needs to individuals and legal entities as an owner or permanent or temporary user of this land. As a result of its adoption, it is expected to regulate all procedures in this sphere by a single law, which will be designed to prevent conflicts and effectively resolve disputes in this area, to strengthen the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of landowners. In conclusion, we think that it would not be an exaggeration to say that property rights on the territory of Uzbekistan have been formed for many centuries, and today it has become a fundamental value. Because all ongoing fundamental and democratic reforms are mainly directed to enhance the protection of human rights, ensure the inevitability of private property, in short, to provide prosperity of a rule of law in the country on the basis of democratic principles. – The writer is Lawyer, Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan

# India – Pakistan ceasefire: What next?

Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai

“The Secretary-General of the UN is encouraged by the joint statement and he hopes that this positive step will provide an opportunity for further dialogue,” the spokesperson said. Vokan Bozkir, the President of the UNGA tweeted that he wholeheartedly welcomes the ceasefire agreement between India and Pak. We appreciate the deep interest taken by the US, EU, UN and others to support the dialogue process between India-Pak to resolve the Kashmir dispute

INDIA and Pakistan reached to the ceasefire arrangement at the Line of Control (LoC) and all the sectors with effect from midnight February 24/25, 2021. It is happy augury to know that India and Pakistan finally agreed for a ceasefire. We welcome it. The ceasefire announcement offers hope for peace in South Asia if the course of justice is followed and parties concerned undertake to abide by its commitments. Lot more can be achieved from this ceasefire announcement if a focus is put on concrete proposals and those proposals are so framed as to admit alterations in the negotiating process without detracting from the principle involved. We believe that talks between civilian government and armed forces of India and Pakistan are the only way to resolve the Kashmir issue that has dominated the South Asian region

for the last 73 years. We are maintaining this constructive position, despite the outrage caused, and the indescribable suffering inflicted on our people by 900,000 Indian occupation forces. Much ink has been spilled over the maneuvering of DGMO's that resulted in such an unexpected development. I do not believe that such speculations are edifying. More enduring motivations must be explored to grasp the nettle of what the future may hold for peace and justice in Kashmir. The people of Kashmir share a vision of peace and stability between India and Pakistan and of progress and prosperity in Kashmir. They want the people of India and Pakistan to live in peace, prosperity and happiness. That is why they believe that the Kashmir conflict has to be resolved through peaceful negotiations between India, Pakistan and Kashmiri leadership and not through military means. They agree that lasting peace, harmonious relations and friendly cooperation will serve the vital interests of the peoples of the two countries, enabling them to devote their energies to a better future. Ambassador M.K. Bhadrakumar, retired Indian Foreign Service Officer said on March 1, 2021, “India's past experience has been that the best means to push back at western pressure on Kashmir is by highlighting that we have a direct, bilateral line of communication with Pakistan and there is no need of gratuitous interference by third parties. Therefore, the sky is the limit, so to say, to build on the DGMO's statement – provided, of course, there is political will.” I agree with the ambassador that India's sabre-rattling at this delicate moment might be indicative of its design to reap as much advantage as it can towards diverting international attention from the realities of the Kashmir dispute and the principles of a healthy and viable international order which are involved in it. In the past, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India and General Pervez Musharraf, the President of Pakistan agreed at the United Nations on September 24, 2004 “to explore all the possible options to settle the issue of Kashmir.” Then exactly one year later, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said at the United Nations on September 16, 2005, “What I do believe, I have also said that borders cannot be redrawn but we must work together to make borders irrelevant.” Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Pakistani Foreign Minister welcomed the agreement saying “It could be a good start for the future. India will have to abide by this ceasefire agreement with sincerity. How can we make progress on the issue of occupied Kashmir unless the environment is conducive.” Indian Ministry of External Affairs, however, in its reaction, said on February 26, 2021: “India desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan. We have always maintained that we are committed to addressing issues, if any, in a peaceful bilateral manner.” And four days later, on March 2, 2021, Pawan Kumar Badhe, on behalf of the Permanent Mission of India said at UN Human Rights Council

in Geneva that Jammu & Kashmir was an integral and inalienable part of India. We believe that ceasefire can be useful if it reflects a sense of urgency and prepare the ground for an earnest effort at the forthcoming SAARC meeting to frame a step-by-step plan of settlement. Mere announcement of ceasefire will in no way defuse the situation permanently. Unintentionally though, it will mock the agony of the ceasefire rather than assuage it. It is a matter of record that during the 73 years history of the dispute, India has merely used the façade of ceasefires and even talks to evade settlement and ease internal and foreign pressure. Therefore, we believe that the ceasefire between New Delhi and Islamabad can be meaningful if it is accompanied by practical measures to restore an environment of non-violence in Indian occupied Kashmir. This can be done by: a). The immediate and complete cessation of military and Para-military actions against the civilian population; b). Withdrawal of the military presence from towns and villages; c). Dismantling of bunkers, watchtowers and barricades; d). Releasing of political prisoners; e). Annuling various special repressive laws; f). Restoring the rights of peaceful association, assembly and demonstrations; g). Permitting to travel abroad without hindrance, Kashmiri leadership who favor a negotiated resolution; and h). Issuing visas to the Diaspora Kashmiri leadership to visit Jammu and Kashmir to help sustain the peace process, if and when it takes place. A. S. Dulat, Former RAW Chief, has an interesting take on ceasefire announcement. He wrote in Tribune on March 1, 2021. “The news from across the border is that Pakistan is working on a consensus for a settlement on the Line of Control, to which Manmohan Singh and General Pervez Musharraf had come close. It is not surprising, therefore, that Pakistan, which was undoubtedly shocked by the abrogation of Article 370, may now be reconciled to Articles 370 and 35A being internal matters of India.” We know that there exist apprehensions that, whether on account of its present internal weakness or under external pressure, the Government of Pakistan has been forced to dilute its stand on Kashmir. If that is true, it will not end the dispute because the people of Kashmir will not consent to rule by a power that has visited death and destruction on them to brutalize them into submission. An indication of misplaced focus is the wrong-headed talk about the Musharraf's formula as suggested by A. S. Dulat. Musharraf's formula amounts to completely giving up Pakistan's stand and according legitimacy to what was achieved by the use of force. Musharraf formula talks about self-governance. It is problematic because under this plan, the people of Kashmir will be given self-governance without independence. Will people have a hand in the politics and influence who has the mandate to rule? Will they pass new laws which infringe on the limited self-rule the Kashmiris possess? Will they be able to revoke Article 35 A, Domicile Law, etc.?

Where does self-rule begin and where does it end, if Kashmir does not possess sovereignty over its land? The idea of self-governance is a deceptive and misleading term that gives an appearance of sovereignty without any substance. It is purely a mask. It prohibits further discussion on the subject of independence and promotes internalization of the Kashmir dispute. Without actual sovereignty for Kashmir, under the Musharraf formula, the people of Kashmir will have to accept the supremacy and rule of India over their lives, and the possibility of that being eroded by whatever whim, fancy or circumstance may intervene in the future. The US state department spokesman Ted Price said, “When it comes to the U.S. role, we continue to support direct dialogue between India and Pakistan on Kashmir and other issues of concern. We certainly welcome the arrangement that was announced that will take place – go into effect, I should say, on February 25.” “The Secretary-General of the United Nations is encouraged by the joint statement and he hopes that this positive step will provide an opportunity for further dialogue,” the spokesperson said. Vokan Bozkir, the President of the United Nations General Assembly tweeted that he wholeheartedly welcomes the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan. We appreciate the deep interest taken by the United States, EU, United Nations, and others to support the dialogue process between India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute. We want to emphasize the point, however, that as the dispute involves three parties – India, Pakistan and the people of Kashmir who are the most directly affected – any attempt to strike a deal between two without the association of the third, will fail to yield a credible settlement. The contemporary history of South Asia is abundantly clear that bilateral efforts have never met with success. Every arrangement that has not provided for a concrete course of action toward determining Kashmir's status by the will of its people has only allowed the dispute to fester. We urge the Secretary General of the United Nations and world powers to maintain and intensify their watch over the situation in Kashmir and not be lulled into the belief that ceasefire arrangement between India and Pakistan will soften the conflict or lessen the urgent need for mediatory initiatives. The policy that aims at merely defusing the situation, whatever that may mean, and not encouraging credible settlement has not paid in the past. It is likely to do even less now. Let it be known that no settlement of the status of Jammu & Kashmir will hold unless it is explicitly based on the principle of self-determination that was agreed upon by both India and Pakistan and supported by the UN Security Council. – Dr. Fai is the Secretary General, Washington-based World Kashmir Awareness Forum. He can be reached at: 1-202-607-6435 or gnfai2003@yahoo.com



## Briefs

## Punjab PA speaker keen to expand

From Page 01

It was decided in a meeting between Ambassador of Indonesia, Adam Mulawarman Tugio who along with a trade delegation visited Punjab Board of Investment and Trade. A broad-based discussion was held with the senior officials of PBIT on enhancement of bilateral trade and investment opportunities in Punjab. PBIT CEO Dr Erfia Iqbal briefed the delegation on various sectors and availability of numerous potential opportunities for investors in Punjab. She pointed out that Special Economic Zones (SEZs) were being set up in all the provinces and regions of Pakistan. The immense potential for collaboration existed in the areas of food and agriculture business, tourism, food processing, automobile, textile, IT and construction sectors. The Ambassador thanked PBIT team for welcoming them and highlighting the prospective opportunities present in Punjab. The delegation showed keen interest in Halal food, tourism, value addition of food items and automobiles. They focused on creating linkages between the investors from both sides for further collaboration, considering it a concrete step towards building a trade relation between Pakistan and Indonesia to promote economic cooperation that are looking to explore the international markets.

## Japan confers award upon

From Page 08

standards of the Kalasha at the grassroots level such as provision of basic facilities including furniture and electricity system as well as scholarships to local students graduated from high school. MATSUDA Kuninori, while speaking on the occasion, congratulated Ms. WADA on receiving this prestigious commendation by the Government of Japan. H.E. appreciated her dedicated efforts to promote mutual understanding of respective culture and traditions. The ambassador said that the Japanese Government would continue to support the people of Pakistan at the grassroots level and hoped that this contribution will further deepen the existing friendly relationship between Japan and Pakistan.

## PM vows to continue struggle for rule of law

From Page 01

"The sanctions mean that our rupee will fall and then inflation rises [...] anything that is imported becomes expensive," he said, counting fuel, electricity, pulses, ghee, and wheat as the commodities most affected. The premier went on to say that the parliament together had to bring about legislation as per FATF's requirement but the Opposition refused to do so, instead subjecting it to their condition of a concession under the National Reconciliation Ordinance. "What does NAB have to do with any of this? They have a one point agenda to pressure me to get an NRO," he said. PM Imran Khan said they planned to "use money" to "break our party apart" and bring PTI lawmakers over to their side. "When Hafeez Sheikh was sought by them to lose, it was so the government loses majority and to paint the perception that party members walked over to their side, so a no confidence motion could be moved," he said. "The real objective was to hang the sword of a vote of confidence over my head and blackmail me so I give them [a concession under] an NRO," he added. He said that justice and rule of law is the only difference in the world why some countries around the world prosper while others, despite having plenty resources, fail to progress. "My struggle was meant to make the powerful accountable," the premier explained. "Pakistan is not a poor country, but no country can progress when the corrupt powerful launder money," he said, adding that a country's downfall comes when a country's prime minister himself engages in corruption.



MINSK: Ambassador of Pakistan to Belarus Sajjad Haider Khan presenting portrait gift to Natalya Karchevskaya, rector of Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts in her office. - DNA

## Cultural cooperation between Pakistan and Belarus discussed

However, a brilliant half-century from captain Sarfaraz Ahmed helped the side in posting a respectable total of 156 for the loss of seven wickets in their allotted 20 overs. Sarfaraz finished the innings with the top score of 54 off 41 balls with the help of three fours and four sixes

DNA

MINSK: On 4 March 2021, Ambassador of Pakistan to Belarus Mr. Sajjad Haider Khan held a meeting with Ms Natalya Karchevskaya, Rector of Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts in her office. The meeting was also attended by Mr. Vadim Samatya, Head of the International Cooperation department of the university. The Ambassador briefed Ms Natalya on the cultural and religious diversity, arts and crafts of Pakistan, which also boast being home to the oldest civilisations of



the world "Mehrgarh and Indus Valley civilisations". The two sides discussed possibilities of cultural collaboration between the two countries including establishing institutional linkages, holding cultural programmes and seminars for creating greater awareness amongst the students, faculty members and general public. Welcoming the idea of furthering cultural cooperation, Ms Natalya Karchevskaya, who has earlier also served as First Deputy Minister of Culture of Belarus assured to provide full support in this endeavour.

## US House democrats pass major election law overhaul

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: Democrats in the House of Representatives passed a bill on Wednesday that could become a major overhaul of the US election law. For the People Act, also known as House Resolution 1, was passed with a 220-210 vote with one Democrat joining unanimous Republican opposition. It is now sent to the Senate where it is expected to be strongly

opposed by GOP members. The resolution includes restricting partisan gerrymandering of congressional districts, ending hurdles to voting rights restrictions, bringing transparency to the campaign finance system, increasing oversight of political lobbying and campaign finance, and requiring presidents to make their tax returns public. Viewed as a modernization of the US voting system, it also aims to expand early voting, and increase access to the ballot box by creating automatic

voter registration across the country. "The 2020 election underscored the need for comprehensive, structural democracy reform," Rep. John Sarbanes, a Democrat from Maryland who first introduced the legislation, said in a statement. "Americans across the country were forced to overcome rampant voter suppression, gerrymandering and a torrent of special-interest dark money just to exercise their vote and their voice in our democracy," he added.

## Pollard hits six sixes in an over



SPORTS DESK

BARBUDA: West Indies captain Kieron Pollard on Wednesday became only the third man to hit six sixes in an international over in his team's four-wicket Twenty20 victory over Sri Lanka. The feat came in the sixth over of a bizarre West Indies innings, bowled by off-spinner Akila Dananjaya who moments earlier in his previous over had been celebrating taking a hat-trick. Pollard followed in the footsteps of South Africa's Herschelle Gibbs against the Netherlands in the 2007 World Cup and India's Yuvraj Singh, who also achieved the feat in the 2007 Twenty20 World Cup against England. Pollard was eventually out for 38 off 11 balls as the West Indies chased 132 to win at the Coolidge Cricket Ground, reaching their target in the 14th over when Jason Holder clobbered his side's 13th six. "I felt I could hit six sixes after the third one," said 33-year-old Pollard. "Once I had five sixes I knew I had the bowler on the back foot. He was going around the wicket and it was difficult for him. I just told myself: 'Go for it!'"

## Imad Wasim blessed with a baby girl

SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: Karachi Kings' captain Imad Wasim and Sana Ashfaq was blessed with a baby girl on Thursday, the cricketer himself revealed on Twitter. The 32-year-old shared his joy and revealed the name of his first daughter. "Alhumdu'lillah by the grace of Allah SWT we have

been blessed with a beautiful bundle of joy. Welcome to the world baby Syeda Inaya Imad." Congratulatory messages poured in immediately by his fans, teammates, and former cricketers. It must be noted Imad has represented Pakistan in 55 ODIs and 49 T20Is. He is the captain of Karachi Kings in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) and led them to first title in 2020.

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## PSL postponed after 7

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Addressing a press conference later in the day, PCB Chief Executive Wasim Khan said today was a "very challenging day" for the PCB, stakeholders and fans of cricket. He said the SOPs for PSL 6 were decided after the successful staging of two Test series, a national T20 tournament, as well as the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy. "It was a great disappointment for us that we found ourselves in a situation where neither us nor others are able to provide what we need to provide and that is the full protection for players," he added. Khan said the Board and franchise owners had also considered the option of halting the matches for five days "until we were able to make sense of what was going on and see whether we could move forward". But "there was a strong consensus that it was untenable to continue and based on the fact that it was outside of ours and others' reasonable areas, because of what had taken place," he added.

## Qureshi briefs Norwegian

From Page 01

On Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Qureshi underscored that there was no military solution to the conflict. The Foreign Minister briefed his Norwegian counterpart on Pakistan's positive contribution to the Afghan peace process and expressed the hope that the Afghan leaders would seize this historic opportunity to secure an inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political settlement. Pakistan highly values its relations with Norway which is home to one of the largest Pakistani diasporas in Europe. The telephone call between the two Foreign Ministers was part of the regular high-level exchanges between the two sides.

## Patel, Ashwin spin England out for 205 in final Test

AHMEDABAD: Indian spinners Axar Patel and Ravichandran Ashwin took seven wickets between them as England were dismissed for 205 on the first day of the fourth and final Test on Thursday. India, leading the series 2-1, were 24 for one at stumps after England fast bowler James Anderson trapped Shubman Gill lbw for nought on the third ball of the innings. Rohit Sharma (8) and Cheteshwar Pujara (15) were batting. Joe Root again won the toss and chose to bat at the world's biggest cricket venue in Ahmedabad, where India won the spin-dominated third Test inside two days. Wickets again fell thick and fast and Ben Stokes' 55 held England's score together. - APP



KABUL: Pakistan ambassador to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmad Khan calls on Sayed Sadat Mansoor Naderi Afghan state minister of peace and exchanged views on peace process and reaffirmed Pakistan's supports for lasting peace & stability in Afghanistan. - DNA

## Reviving 'Silk Road' to increase interaction: Erdogan

The summit was virtually held with the participation of leaders from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan

DNA

ANKARA: Turkey's president on Thursday stressed the importance of revitalization of the historic Silk Road, telling it would increase interaction between the East and West. Speaking at the 14th Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Leaders Summit, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey's leadership in the revitalization of the historic Silk Road aiming at the Trans-Caspian East-West-Middle Corridor Initiative will increase the interaction between the East and West. "We welcome this corridor through launching regular flights to China and from China to Turkey," he said, adding that work on the resumption of Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad freight train expeditions has reached its final stage.

Underlining the importance of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Erdogan said Turkey supports this initiative on a "win-win" basis. China's BRI is an ambitious program to connect Asia with Africa and Europe via land and maritime networks along six corridors for improving regional integration, boosting trade, and stimulating economic growth. Erdogan also drew attention to the significance of "strong" regional and global cooperation in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. He said the "mandatory restrictive measures" were "undoubtedly accurate" for joint trade relations. The summit was virtually held with the participation of leaders from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmeni-



stan, and Uzbekistan. ECO is a political and economic intergovernmental organization founded in 1985 in Tehran by Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey with a goal of sustainable economic development of member states, and the region as a whole. Afghanistan and former Soviet republics also joined the organization in 1992, forming one of the

biggest regional blocs in Asia and beyond. The Turkish president called on the ECO members to enhance relations in all areas with Northern Cyprus and support the Turkish Cypriots against the injustices they face. The island of Cyprus has been divided into the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in the north and the Greek Cypriot administration in the south since 1974, when a Greek Cypriot coup aimed at Greece's annexation of the island was followed by violence against the island's Turks and Ankara's intervention as a guarantor power. On sanctions against Iran, Erdogan noted that all parties must return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and reassume their obligations under the plan.

He said the end of the unilateral sanctions will contribute to the economic prosperity and stability of the region. During his term, former US President Donald Trump embarked on what he called a "maximum pressure" campaign that included unilaterally withdrawing the US from the 2015 nuclear deal world powers struck with Iran, and imposing biting economic sanctions that have hobbled the Iranian economy. In retaliation for the US move to reimpose sanctions, Tehran has taken successive steps away from its agreements under the JCPOA that it maintains are reversible, but vows it will not take such action until Washington lifts the sanctions imposed during the Trump administration.



## Briefs

SpaceX  
rocket goes  
up in flames  
after landing

## FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The third time appeared to be the charm for Elon Musk's Starship prototype rocket, until it wasn't. The rocket soared into the sky in a high-altitude test on Wednesday from Boca Chica in Texas, then flew itself back to Earth and manoeuvred into its first – successful – upright landing. But the triumph was short-lived.

"A beautiful soft landing," a SpaceX commentator said during a live broadcast of the test flight, as an automated fire-suppression system trained a stream of water on flames still burning at the base of the rocket.

About eight minutes later it blew itself to pieces, lurching into the air and crashing back to the ground. There was no immediate explanation for what went wrong.

SN10 was the third Starship to be destroyed in a fireball although it came far closer to achieving a safe, vertical touchdown than two previous models – SN8 in December and SN9 in February. The rocket is being developed by SpaceX to carry people and cargo on future missions to the Moon and Mars. For Elon Musk, the billionaire SpaceX founder who also heads the electric carmaker, Tesla, the outcome was mixed news.

Brazil reports  
new single-  
day record for  
deaths

## FOREIGN DESK

SAO PAULO: Brazil's Sao Paulo state has announced new "code red" COVID-19 restrictions, as the country registered a record number of coronavirus-related deaths for the second straight day. The country's health ministry said on Wednesday that 1,910 additional deaths and 71,704 new cases of COVID-19 had been reported in the past 24 hours. It was the second consecutive day that Brazil registered a record high number of deaths.

"For the first time since the pandemic began, we are seeing a deterioration across the entire country," public health institute Fiocruz said before the latest figures were published. "The situation is alarming." Brazil has recorded more than 257,000 coronavirus-related deaths – the second-highest in the world after the United States – as well as more than 10.6 million COVID-19 cases, according to Johns Hopkins University. Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has faced widespread criticism and protests against his handling of the pandemic, as the far-right leader has downplayed the threat of the virus and eschewed public health measures.

The government has also struggled to secure, distribute and administer COVID-19 vaccines.

HK denies  
bail to 32 pro-  
democracy  
activists

## WEB DESK

HONG KONG: A Hong Kong court has denied bail to 32 out of 47 pro-democracy activists charged under a Beijing-imposed national security law, ending a four-day marathon court hearing.

The group of activists was charged with conspiracy to commit subversion under the law and detained on Sunday over their involvement in an unofficial primary election last year that authorities said was a plot to paralyse Hong Kong's government.

The mass charges against the activists were the most sweeping action taken against the city's pro-democracy camp since the national security law was implemented last June. On Thursday evening, after hours of legal arguments from prosecutors and defence, chief magistrate Victor So ordered 32 members of the group to be returned to custody.

"The court does not find it has sufficient ground to believe that you will not continue to commit acts that endanger national security," he told the court.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland Benedict Cerjat in a meeting with Abdul Razzaq Dawood Prime Minister Adviser of Commence. – DNA

Protests, mourning as world  
condemns Myanmar crackdown

Protesters gathered elsewhere, including in the historic temple town of Bagan where hundreds marched carrying pictures of Aung San Suu Kyi and a banner saying: "Free our leader", a witness said

## FOREIGN DESK

YANGON: Security forces in Myanmar fired live ammunition, rubber bullets and tear gas to break up anti-coup protests on Thursday, as demonstrators returned to streets a day after the United Nations said 38 people had been killed in the bloodiest crackdown since last month's military takeover. The rallies in Yangon, Mandalay, Myingon and other cities and towns came as thousands of mourners attended a funeral for a 19-year-old woman who was killed in the previous day's violence. The UN human rights chief,

Michelle Bachelet, called on the security forces to halt what she called their "vicious crackdown on peaceful protesters". At least 54 people had been killed in total but the actual toll could be much higher, she said. More than 1,700 people had been arrested, including 29 journalists. "Myanmar's military must stop murdering and jailing protesters," Bachelet said in a statement. Protesters said they refused to accept the February 1 military coup and were determined to press for the release of elected government leader Aung San Suu Kyi and recognition of her victory in an election last

November. "We know that we can always get shot and killed with live bullets," activist Maung Saungkhla told Reuters news agency. "But there is no meaning to staying alive under the junta."

In Sachaung, a residential neighbourhood transformed with barricades built out of sandbags, tyres, bricks and barbed wire, Thinzar Shunlei Yi described Wednesday's killings as "horrific".

"It was devastating to learn the military in Myanmar has never changed since 1962," she told AFP. But "resistance is now our duty," she said, pledging to protest every day. In some parts of Yangon, protesters hung sheets and sa-

rangs across the street to obscure the police's line of sight and uncoiled barbed wire to reinforce barricades. Police later opened fire and used tear gas to break up protests in the city as well as in the central town of Monywa, witnesses said. Police also fired in the town of Pathen, to the west of Yangon, media reported. There were no immediate reports of casualties. Protesters gathered elsewhere, including in the historic temple town of Bagan where hundreds marched carrying pictures of Aung San Suu Kyi and a banner saying: "Free our leader",

a witness said. Five fighter jets made several low passes in formation over the second city of Mandalay early on Thursday, residents said, in what appeared to be a show of military might. The military action came as concern over Wednesday's killings grew, with French President Emmanuel Macron joining the United States and the European Union in condemning the violence. "France calls for an immediate end to the repression in Myanmar, for the liberation of people who have been held and for the respect of the democratic choice of the Myanmar people as expressed

during the recent elections. We are at your side," he wrote in a Twitter post.

The ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights, a group of Southeast Asian legislators, also expressed "revulsion" at the violence, saying the "scenes emerging from Myanmar are sickening".

Charles Santiago, chair of the group, added: "The world cannot stand idly by as the military guns down its people, and attempts to return the country to full-scale isolationist rule. We cannot allow another generation of Myanmar youths to lose their lives, and their hope for the future, to this military."

Tourism could help Pakistan to  
overcome poverty: Huang Xihua

## DNA

BEIJING: Tourism could help Pakistan to achieve its poverty alleviation targets, said General Manager of Guangdong Provincial Tourism Holding Co. Huang Xihua, who is also a representative of the National People's Congress. A report published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday stated that poverty alleviation and tourism development are two major focuses for Pakistan this year. Huang Xihua believes that the development of tourism can become important assistance in poverty alleviation. During the upcoming Two sessions in China, Huang Xihua will submit the

proposal on making full use of rural tourism in rural revitalization. He said, tourism is the most environmentally friendly method for a rural place to develop. Also, we often call tourism mobile wallet, which can attract consumers and promote local agricultural products.

"He used to work on poverty alleviation in Linzhi, Tibet. We prioritized tourism and built a Tibetan-style town with a visitor center, hotels, commercial streets, etc." According to Huang Xihua, that project boosted the local economy. The environment, infrastructure, and public services are improved a lot. "It has also driven the development of local B&B and increased

the local employment." She said. "Internet+Tourism" is the keyword of Huang Xihua's last year's work. "During the epidemic, our hotels tried room pre-sale through live-broadcasting and started food delivery service. We also opened our online store. These measures effectively helped relieve our loss caused by the epidemic." After experience sharing, Huang Xihua also gave some suggestions for the development of Pakistan tourism. "Roads building is the priority, it is also the access to prosperity," she emphasized. "Outdoor tourism facilities also need to be improved. In outdoor parks in Hong Kong, there are rest stops for visitors to get some water and recharge."

EMA starts reviewing  
Russian vaccine

## FOREIGN DESK

BRUSSELS: The European Medicines Agency (EMA) started evaluating Russia's Sputnik V novel coronavirus vaccine, the regulatory body announced on Thursday. The EMA started the review based on "results from laboratory studies and clinical studies in adults" which "indicate that Sputnik V triggers the production of antibodies and immune cells that target the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus and may help

protect against COVID-19," a press statement.

The EMA will assess whether the Russian vaccine is "compatible with the usual EU standards for effectiveness, safety, and quality," the statement added.

The review will take as long as the EMA gathers enough evidence to issue a conditional marketing authorization. If approved, it will be produced by a German company since the bloc requires manufacture to take place in an EU member state.

UBL selects  
PTCL for hosting  
primary site

KARACHI: Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) and United Bank Limited (UBL) signed an agreement, for the hosting of UBL's primary site at PTCL's purpose-built Tier-3 certified Data Center facility in Karachi. The signing ceremony was attended by Mr. Nadeem Khan, Acting CEO & Group Chief Financial Officer, PTCL Group and Mr. Shazad G Dada, President & CEO, UBL, along with senior officials from both companies, at the UBL Head Office in Karachi. PTCL is providing UBL a state-of-the-art purpose built data center with precise and control environment, which is equipped with latest technology of networks and IT fabric architecture. With this partnership, PTCL will enable UBL to have the highest levels of security, resilience and flexibility for its infrastructure. On the occasion, Mr. Nadeem Khan, Acting CEO & Group Chief Financial Officer, PTCL Group, said, "We are glad to be a trusted partner of choice for UBL in providing them with a modern, safe and reliable facility to meet their business and IT needs. PTCL endeavours to provide innovative solutions to its corporate customers that enables them to be agile and dependable for their customers. Being a national carrier, our focus is to empower our customers for meeting their objectives and further support them in their business growth." Mr. Shazad G Dada, President & CEO UBL, added, "As the 'Best Digital Bank' of Pakistan, UBL has always pioneered the use of state-of-the-art technologies. We continue to provide our customers the best in class solutions, in a secure and reliable environment." – Nazir Siyal



LAHORE: Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus to Pakistan, Andrei Metelitsa, posing for photo after meeting with Pakistani businessmen. Both sides exchange views for improving trade relations with Belarus in the dairy sector, and establishing joint ventures via technology transfer. – DNA

## Relations with UK 'at freezing point': Russia

"Regardless of their membership in the EU, the British authorities consistently take absolutely unjustified attacks against us, using harsh anti-Russian rhetoric in the public space. As a result, bilateral interaction is largely terminated, trust is lost, and the degree of relations is at a freezing point," he said

## FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: The relations between Moscow and London are "at a freezing point," Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Thursday. Speaking in an interview with *Russkaya Mysl* (Russian Thought) magazine, Lavrov said the British authorities have pursued "a tough anti-Russian course" in recent years, accompanied by a consistent increase in sanctions pressure. This policy was preserved after Brexit, giving up the EU membership did not stimulate London to normalize ties with Russia, the minister added.

"Regardless of their membership in the EU, the British authorities consistently take absolutely unjustified attacks against us, using harsh anti-Russian rhetoric in the public space. As a result, bilateral interaction is largely terminated, trust is lost, and the degree of relations is at a freezing point," he said.

But Moscow is ready to resume bilateral economic mechanisms with London and remain open to developing cooperation with the UK, Lavrov noted. Asked about the situation around the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or Iran nuclear deal, Lavrov said the US has to send a signal to Iran, confirming



the seriousness of its intentions to return to the agreement. "The window of opportunity to save the Iran nuclear deal isn't closed yet, but much depends on the Biden administration," the diplomat said. Lavrov said he expected that the situation around the JCPOA would

be reversed for the better, and that Moscow is ready to contribute to the achievement of agreements. As for the Russia-US relations, Moscow does not believe it will see any changes under the Biden administration, he said.

"We are always open to an honest, mutually respectful dialogue based on a balance of interests and aimed at finding compromises. Unfortunately, in recent years, the US has followed a different path, regardless of the domestic political situation and who is at the head of the White House," he said. Russia shared with the US its vision on the future of arms control, but it is too early to speak about details, Lavrov added.

"Any negotiations can be fruitful only if the US is ready to really take into account Russian interests, ensuring movement 'in both directions' to achieve equal, mutually acceptable agreements," the minister said.

On Feb. 3, Russia and the US announced the extension of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) for five years until Feb. 5, 2026. Once part of a larger group of agreements on arms control between the US and the USSR, and later Russia, the New Start is the last pillar that prevents the two countries from relapsing to a new Cold War and unleashing a full-fledged arms race.

US opposes  
ICC war  
crimes probe

## FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The United States "firmly opposes and is deeply disappointed" by the International Criminal Court's (ICC) decision to open a war crimes investigation in the occupied Palestinian territories, Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said. The investigation, which was announced on Wednesday, comes after a February ICC determination that the occupied Palestinian territories fall under its jurisdiction, paving the way for an investigation of war crimes committed by both Palestinians and Israelis. "The ICC has no jurisdiction over this matter. Israel is not a party to the ICC and has not consented to the Court's jurisdiction, and we have serious concerns about the ICC's attempts to exercise its jurisdiction over Israeli personnel," Blinken said in a statement.

"The Palestinians do not qualify as a sovereign state and therefore, are not qualified to obtain membership as a state in, or delegate jurisdiction to the ICC," he said. A resolution passed by the United Nations in 2012 changed the occupied Palestinian territories from an "observer entity" to a "non-member observer state", a de facto recognition of sovereignty that opened the door for the ICC's ruling on jurisdiction.

Dozens of  
migrants heading  
to Yemen thrown  
overboard

## WEB DESK

RIYADH: The International Organization for Migration has said that at least 20 migrants and refugees are dead after smugglers threw 80 people overboard during a voyage from Djibouti in East Africa to Yemen.

A statement says "smugglers started shouting there were too many on board" after the boat with 200 migrants, including children under 18 years old, set off on Wednesday.

The IOM said five bodies have been recovered, and survivors are being treated in Djibouti. It is not immediately clear what countries the migrants in this latest journey were from.

Drownings in the waters off Djibouti, typically involving migrants and refugees from Ethiopia or Somalia trying to escape poverty and war at home by finding work in Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates, have become common.

In October, at least eight migrants drowned after smugglers forced them off a boat near Djibouti.

In 2017, up to 50 migrants from Somalia and Ethiopia were "deliberately drowned" when a smuggler forced them into the sea off Yemen's coast.

And in 2018, at least 30 migrants died when a boat capsized off Yemen, with survivors reporting gunfire.

German  
warship  
to cross S  
China Sea

## MONITORING DESK

BERLIN: A German frigate will set sail for Asia in August and, on its return journey, become the first German warship to cross the South China Sea since 2002, senior government officials said on Wednesday. The ship will not pass within what officials called the "12-nautical-mile", officials in the foreign and defence ministries added, in a reference to contested areas of the sea, which China claims almost in its entirety.

The United Kingdom is also sending its navy to the region, announcing on Saturday that HMS Queen Elizabeth will set sail on its maiden voyage in May this year and is expected to reach eastern Asia by the late northern hemisphere summer. China has established military outposts on artificial islands across the South China Sea, which is also claimed by Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, Taiwan and the Philippines, which took China to the international court over its claims. In 2016, the Court of Arbitration at the Hague ruled there was no legal basis for China's claim. China refused to participate in the case and later dismissed the ruling as "null and void".



**Briefs**

**Pakistan slams India at UNHCR on HR abuses**

**RAJA PERVAIZ**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has slammed India at the UNHCR for its bleak human rights record, deteriorating human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and for emerging as the largest extremist country where minorities live under constant threat.

Pakistan during the ongoing 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council has decried India's massive disinformation campaign against Pakistan and drew its attention on New Delhi's failure to respond to the widely reported Indian grave rights abuses in Occupied Kashmir that evoked international condemnation.

The Council is meeting in Geneva from 22 February to 19 March at the United Nations Office, an event where Pakistan showed the world the real face of India of stifling the voice of Kashmiris. India has also unleashed a reign of terror against Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Dalits - the low caste Hindus, and the list goes on.

"India has failed and will continue to fail in hiding its brutal repression of Kashmiri people behind the self-serving smokescreen of terrorism," Junaid Suleman, a Pakistani diplomat, told the Geneva-based Council in the exercise of his right of reply after an Indian representative made off-repeated allegations about Pakistan's involvement in terrorism.

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**Pak Army conducts 'Zarb-e-Hadeed' drills**

**DNA**

RAWALPINDI: Annual collective training Zarb-e-Hadeed exercise underway in Bahawalpur, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) reported Thursday.

According to the ISPR, the corps-level exercise is aimed at enhancing operational preparedness and synergy amongst various components of forces. Troops of Bahawalpur Corps are practicing drills and procedures as part of the training.

The exercise areas cover a vast expanse of desert and plains where the participating units are rehearsing various response measures under testing weather conditions, challenging terrain and actual battlefield environment.

The participating units displayed high level of synergy and professionalism during the assembly, move, tactical combat and firepower demonstration phases of the exercise. Earlier in the month of February, Pakistan Army troops took part in tactical drills aimed at improving skills in deserts as part of Exercise "Jidar-ul-Hadeed" in Thar Desert.

PM bars PTI MNAs from leaving Islamabad

**PM bars PTI MNAs from leaving Islamabad**

**KHAYAM ABBASI**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has barred members of National Assembly (MNAs) of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from leaving Islamabad.

As per details, PM Imran has directed all members to ensure their attendance in next session of the National Assembly. Chief Whip Aamir Dogar has conveyed directions of the premier to all lawmakers of the ruling party. During a meeting chaired by Imran Khan, it was also decided to summon a special session of National Assembly on Saturday at 1600 hours in which the premier will take vote of confidence. Sources have further said that Prime Minister has also summoned a meeting of his legal team to discuss the vote.

It is pertinent to mention here that after an upset win at the hands of PDM in Senate election on Islamabad seat, Prime Minister Imran Khan has made the decision to take vote of confidence from the parliament.



**ISLAMABAD: Dr Muhammad Azeem Khan, Chairman PARC is presenting a PARC-Shield to Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, His Excellency Ibrahim Almadani the Ambassador of Jordan to Pakistan on his visit at NARC Islamabad. - DNA**

**Punjab PA speaker keen to expand ties with Indonesia**

Indonesian ambassador meets Ch. Pervez Elahi in Lahore; both sides discuss further strengthening of bilateral cooperation

**STAFF REPORT**

LAHORE: Ambassador of Indonesia Adam Mulawarman Tugjo along with delegation called on Speaker Punjab Assembly Chaudhry Parvez Elahi at his residence here. Issues of mutual interest, including political situation in the country and measures to prevent corona were discussed during the meeting.

The delegation included Ahmad Firman Sejati, Syarif Shahabuddin and Mr. Maludi. Speaker Ch Parvez Elahi said that keeping in

view the growing demand of Punjab industry, he, as the chief minister, had set up industrial estates in Faisalabad under the name of Garments City and Fiedmc while Sundar Industrial Estate was set up in Lahore which provided business facilities to industrialists.

He told the Indonesian ambassador that investors from his country were welcome to invest here as the government will provide all sorts of cooperation. Parvez Elahi also said that Overseas Pakistanis were playing an important role in development of Indonesia. "The two countries are bound in



the line of Islamic brotherhood, but there is a need to increase the public relations campaign between the two countries," he said. Parvez Elahi said that he was grateful to the Indonesian government for taking care of the overseas Pakistanis during the Corona epidemic, adding that friendly relations between the two countries had always been strong and growing stronger day by day. He said that timely steps were being taken to control the corona epidemic in Pakistan which was why the situation in Pakistan was slightly better than other countries.

Thanking Ch Parvez Elahi, the

Indonesian ambassador said, "A lot of work was done in Punjab during your tenure which is commendable." He said: "Pakistan has always expressed its love for Indonesia and the people of Pakistan also love our country which is why trade and other issues between the two countries are improving".

Meanwhile Punjab Board of Investment and Trade (PBIT) and Indonesian Embassy in Pakistan agreed to establish a Joint Working Group to enhance the economic and trade ties between Pakistan and Indonesia.

**Continued on Page 06**

**Sanjrani vs Gillani for Senate crown**

**SHAHEEN HANIF**

ISLAMABAD: The ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has nominated incumbent Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani for the top slot in the Upper House of the Parliament and he would face Pakistan Democratic Movement's newly-elected senator Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani. The PDM candidate Yousaf Raza Gillani is likely to become Senate Chairman after opposition alliance secured a six member lead over in-

current ruling coalition. The opposition's PDM has gained an upper hand in the 100-member upper house of the parliament as the number of members of the opposition alliance rose to 53. PDM members include 20 from the PPP, 18 from the PML-N, five from the JUI-F, three from BNP-Mengal, two each from ANP, PkMAP and National Party and one independent. On the other hand, the number of ruling coalition stands at 47 including 26 from PTI, 12 from BAP, three from MQMP, one

each from PML-Q and Muslim League Functional and four independent Senators. Federal Information Minister Senator Shibli Faraz said that Prime Minister Imran Khan has nominated Sadiq Sanjrani for the Senate chairmanship. The PTI is impressed with the way Sadiq Sanjrani has run the Senate during the last three years, he added. In a tweet uploaded on Thursday, Shibli Faraz said, "Prime Minister Imran Khan has announced Sadiq Sanjrani (name) for Senate chairmanship."

**Japan confers award upon Wada Akiko**

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan Awards "the Foreign Minister's Commendations for FY 2020" to Ms. WADA Akiko, for Promoting Mutual Understanding between Japan and Pakistan. According to details, the Government of Japan has awarded the Foreign Minister's Commendations for FY 2020 to Ms. WADA Akiko, representative of Rumbur Development Welfare & Conservation Society, in recognition of her significant contribution towards the promotion of mutual understanding between Japan and Pakistan. MATSUDA Kuninori, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, on

March 4, 2021, awarded the Foreign Minister's Commendations for FY 2020 to Ms. WADA Akiko. The commendation ceremony was held at Ambassador's official residence in Islamabad. Ms. WADA Akiko dedicated her sincere efforts to working as local representative under Grant Assistance of the Japanese Government in 1994 and 2004 to construct small hydraulic power plants at the valleys of Rumbur and Birir. In addition, she established a local NGO, Rumbur Development Welfare & Conservation Society, and she has been fully working to improve living

**Continued on Page 06**

**FM Qureshi interacts with European ambassadors**

**SHUJAAT HAMZA**

ISLAMABAD: As part of Government's efforts to promote Economic Diplomacy, Foreign Minister Qureshi held a meeting with European Envoys based in Islamabad. The meeting was attended by Envoys from EU, Italy, Germany, France, Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Norway, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Russia, Ukraine, Spain, Greece, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Portugal, Belgium and The UK.

In his remarks, the Foreign Minister stated that the purpose of the meeting was to review Pakistan's economic engagement with European countries, identify impediments to fulfilling its true potential, and chart a way forward. In this regard, he shared with the Envoys the outcome of his two recent virtual meetings with Pakistani Heads of Mission in Europe. Highlighting Europe's position as Pakistan's largest trading partner, Foreign Minister Qureshi underscored the importance of consolidating and expanding

Pakistan's economic outreach with the Continent. The Foreign Minister noted that, under the GSP Plus scheme, Pakistan's bilateral trade with EU had doubled over the past eight years. There, however, was still room to realize the full potential. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Pakistan's exports to and investments from many European countries had increased. The Foreign Minister underlined the importance of addressing bottlenecks that could hamper mutually beneficial economic collaboration.

**Zardari thanks Nawaz, Fazl**

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Former president and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday telephoned Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman and thanked them for their support for the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) candidate for Senate elections from Islamabad Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani which led to his victory against PTI's candidate Finance Minister Dr Hafeez Shaikh.

Asif Zardari said that a well-thought-out strategy was chalked out to defeat the government candidate Abdul Hafeez Shaikh. "PTI own members are in touch with us since they want to quit the party," the former president claimed in the phone call to the PML-N Quaid.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that Gilani's success was PDM's success. "The same alliance of the opposition parties would send the PTI government home," he expressed the hope. Sources say that the three leaders asked Prime Minister Imran Khan to resign immediately and hold fresh elections.

**Covid cases rising in Europe**

**DNA**

COPENHAGEN: The number of new coronavirus cases has risen in Europe after six weeks of decline, the World Health Organization said on Thursday. "Last week, new cases of Covid-19 in Europe grew nine percent to touch a little over one million. This ends a promising six-week decline in new cases with over half our region showing an increase in new infections," WHO Europe's regional director Hans Kluge told a news conference.

**Asian WOK**

**DELIGHT IN Every Bite**

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