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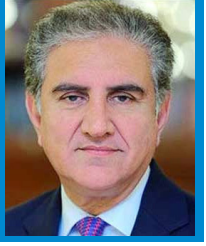
Detailed News On Page-07

Kim Jong sacks officials over Covid handling

Detailed News On Page-07

Pak wants good relations with neighbors: FM

Detailed News On Page-01



Briefs

Fawad for judicial reforms

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry has lashed out at the Sindh High Court's (SHC) verdict banning TikTok across Pakistan till July 8, terming it "judicial activism". Taking to Twitter, Chaudhry warned of consequences Pakistan will face in case it did not carry out judicial reforms. "Pakistan will never come out of its economic crisis if judicial reforms are not undertaken," he tweeted. "I'm baffled after reading yesterday's verdicts on suspension of TikTok and the removal of the NBP president."

Bilawal's statement childish

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: PML-N General Secretary Ahsan Iqbal termed the statement of PPP chairperson Bilawal Bhutto Zardari about the absence of opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif from the National Assembly "childish" on Wednesday. Talking to the media outside the Parliament House, the PML-N leader said that it was the job of the opposition to point out the shortcomings of the government's budget. Iqbal said Bilawal's statement was appropriate for his age, but not appropriate for a party leader. Shehbaz was unable to attend the NA session a day earlier due to the demise of his brother-in-law.

Harmony among citizens PM's priority

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Special Assistant on Religious Harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi says the constitution of Pakistan accords protection to all religions. Talking to media in Islamabad on Wednesday, he said it is vision of the Prime Minister to create harmony among all schools of thought. He said Pakistan wants peace in Afghanistan as peace in that country is directly linked with Pakistan's peace.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan addressing the session of national assembly. - DNA

Bilawal slams PM Imran's policies

"The masses do not want to listen to the prime minister delivering a lecture," he said

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Following Prime Minister Imran's budget speech in the National Assembly on Wednesday, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said that the PTI-led government has made life a living hell for the masses in the name of "Naya Pakistan." Bilawal said that the premier is trying to make a fool out of people because all the measures his government has taken are in favour of the rich instead of the poor. "The masses do not want to listen to the prime minister delivering a lecture," he said. "What sort of a hypocrisy is that?" The PPP chairman asked the prime minister to give an account of his performance in the last three years because there has been a "historical increase" in poverty and unemployment. Bilawal said that the government did not

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Bilawal, Qureshi hold fiery debate

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Wednesday indulged into a war of words during National Assembly (NA) session. While speaking in the House, Bilawal Bhutto alleged that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government had rigged the yesterday's votes to get federal budget 2021-22 approved. As per the rules, the NA speaker was required to count when a voice vote was challenged, he said. He said that the budget presented by the federal government will cause economic disaster. It's our right that all the members of the assembly should listen to the reforms of opposition parties. The entire nation had seen how the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government struggled to show its 172 members to approve the budget, he stated. Meanwhile, in his address, the FM strongly bashed PPP chairman for alleging PTI of violating parliamentary tradition.



Continued on Page 06

PPP to boycott opposition meeting

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) announced on Wednesday boycotting the joint meeting of the opposition. According to media, the party reached the decision after witnessing the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's 'lack of seriousness' during yesterday's budget session in the National Assembly. Earlier it was reported that the Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif delivered a thundering speech on the assembly floor, claiming the opposition would work together.

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Partners in peace, not war; PM tells US

Prime Minister delivers speech in the National Assembly; says Pakistan genuinely wants peace in Afghanistan; withdrawal of troops a welcome move

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Wednesday that Pakistan will only be partner in peace; not partner in conflict adding Pakistan genuinely wants peace in Afghanistan. He added, withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan a welcome move and his country will extend all possible support in this regard. He said Pakistan had been vouching for a negotiated settlement of the Afghan issue. He said it is next to impossible to conquer Afghanistan by force. The world forces finally realized this reality and decided to leave the area. The prime minister categorically stated that Pakistan will never its bases to the United States. He said, Pakistan gave immense sacrifices for peace but even then our sacrifices were not recognized. Prime Minister Imran Khan also thanked the friendly countries including the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and China for their financial support to Pakistan in difficult situation, which saved the country from default. He further said that initially his government had been striving to avoid going to IMF, but later it had to go to IMF to fulfill the country's fiscal needs. The prime minister also mentioned his government's successful strategy of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

- invites opposition for negotiations on electoral reforms

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has invited the opposition parties for talks on electoral reforms. Speaking at the National Assembly budget session, a day after the government passed the budget for the fiscal year 2021-22, the PM said that the electronic voting machines (EVM) were the only way to make the election process transparent. He said, "We have to take this step today to prevent further allegations of fraud. I urge the opposition that elections are a problem for Pakistan and the government is ready to listen if the opposition has proposals for electoral reforms." He said the opposition had not, so far, responded to the reforms proposed by the government and also stressed that the use of EVM was important to check the irregularities that take place at the close of the voting process. He, however, said that if the opposition has some other suggestions on electoral reforms, we are ready to listen to them.

Two soldiers martyred in cross-border attack



NEHAL MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: Two soldiers of the Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom when terrorists from across the border, inside Afghanistan, attacked a military post in



Dwatoi, North Waziristan, the military's media wing said Wednesday.

"Own troops responded in a befitting manner. During an exchange of fire, 2 soldiers, Havaladar Saleem, age 43 years, and Lance Naik Pervaiz, age 35 years,

embraced shahadat," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. The statement said Pakistan has consistently been asking Afghanistan to ensure effective border control on its side. "Pakistan strongly condemns the continuous use of Afghan soil for terrorist activities against Pakistan," it added. On Monday, The Foreign Office had refuted Afghanistan's claims that the Tehriki-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) does not operate on its soil and said that evidence suggests otherwise as there are over 5,000 TTP members in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: US 'days away' from completing pull-out

The reports came as a top US commander warned the country risked sliding into civil war as the last US troops leave

AGENCIES

KABUL: The US military could complete its withdrawal from Afghanistan within days, reports say, amid increasing Taliban battlefield gains. US officials told that some US forces were expected to stay to protect the US embassy and Kabul airport. The reports came as a top US commander warned the country risked sliding into civil war as the last US troops leave. Fighting has surged since the US began withdrawing last month, with the Taliban

Germany completes withdrawal

News on Page 7

seizing swathes of territory. CNN quoted US officials corroborating the Reuters report. "This week could be a critical week in the withdrawal and end of the retrograde process," an unnamed defence official told the network. About 650 US troops are expected to remain to help secure the US embassy in Kabul, and several hundred

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Thank You



Sarmad Ali
President / Jang Group



Nazafreen Saigol
Secretary General/Dawn Group



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Germany completes troop pull-out from Afghanistan - Page 07

Istiaq Baig hosts reception for Amb. Hamid Asghar - Page 08

Briefs

'Khuli Katchery' held

PESHAWAR: The district administration on Wednesday held 'Khuli Katchery' at Government College of Technology, Tehsil City Kohat road to address public grievances at their doorstep. Deputy Commissioner, Khalid Mehmood, Additional Deputy Commissioner (relief) Muhammad Imran Khan, Assistant Commissioner DrEhtesham-ul-Haq, Additional Assistant Commissioner Adil Wasim, Additional Assistant Commissioner Muhammad Jawad, Tehsildar Muhammad Taj and officers of subordinate departments, Revenue, Staff, public representatives and large number of people of area attended the 'Khuli Katchery'. On this occasion, the people informed the district administration about their problems. The people complained about long hours load shedding, low gas pressure, encroachment mafia on Kohat road due to which traffic jams were routine problem. They requested the district administration to take up their issues with concerned departments. They also demanded action against hoarders, price hike and bakers for selling low weight bread. People complained about sanitation and cleanliness issues and demanded monitoring of utility stores for easy availability of food items. On this occasion, they discussed personal issues with the Deputy Commissioner and handed over written applications for early addressal of their problems. The district administration team resolved many issues of people on the spot and directed concerned officials to give time-frame to resolve other issues. - APP

7 illegal colonies sealed

DNA

FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Development Authority sealed seven illegal housing colonies and demolished offices and other infrastructure on Wednesday. According to the FDA spokesperson, the enforcement team sealed Al-Noor Valley, additional locality 100JB, Bholewal Town, Universal Town, Sadiq Town in Tandlianwala, Lyallpur City and Gulberg City. The offices and other constructions in the aforementioned colonies were demolished by applying heavy machinery. 80 kanals government land retrieved

80 kanals of government land worth Rs.40 million has been retrieved from land mafia at 31 R.B Jaranwala. According to detail Assistant Commissioner Muhammad Zubair went to the site after got information and found that land grabbers set up charagah on govt. land and the structures of which were demolished with heavy machinery and the lands were handed over to the concerned lumberdar.

532,861 persons get vaccination

FAISALABAD: As many as 532,861 people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in Faisalabad district. District Health Officer Dr. AtaulMun'im said on Wednesday that 417,525 citizens had been given the first dose while 75,769 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He further said that 25,527 health workers were also given the first dose while 14,040 received the second dose of vaccine.

He said that sufficient stock of anti-coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As many as 15,635 first doses and 10,423 second doses were in the stock at Faisalabad. He said that 34 vaccination centers were operational in Faisalabad where registered persons were also getting anti-coronavirus vaccine doses. To facilitate the people these centers had been established in various areas of the city including Allied Hospital, District Headquarters Hospital, Government General Hospital, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital, Samanabad, Children Hospital, Sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Jaranwala and Samundri, he added.

President FCCI stresses industry-academia linkages

"The lawn manufacturers have to face a major deficit but hopefully next year, they will try to overcome this deficiency and manufacture their products according to the actual market demand"

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Inherent skills of technologists must be harnessed in addition to restoring their social prestige in order to cope with the speedy pace of industrialization in Faisalabad. Addressing a meeting of the Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers (IEEE), President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham-Javed said that Faisalabad has emerged as a focal point of the industrialization and very soon it will have almost 80% of industrial units of Pakistan in Faisalabad and the direct beneficiaries of it would be our technologists. Underlining the importance of industry-academia linkages, he said that trust-deficit is the main cause of lack of innovation and hence our industrial sector is facing stagnation which is being run by bor-



rowed technology. He said that in developed countries educational and research institutes regularly conduct market studies but in Pakistan academia has no readily available solutions for the industrial sector. He said that due to environmental changes, the summer-wear market experienced a 40-50% crash as hot weather was neither intense nor in-time. "The lawn manufacturers have to face a major deficit

but hopefully next year, they will try to overcome this deficiency and manufacture their products according to the actual market demand. About the trust deficit between industry and academia, he said that no industrialist is ready to invest without any hope of sizable profit. He said that all stakeholders must stand united to bridge this trust deficit and revive the true spirit of entrepreneurship in our local market. He said that India

earned 110 billion dollars from the export of Information Technology (IT) this year while Pakistan gained only Rs.60 billion through formal and 150 billion through informal sector. President FCCI urged the need to revisit and upgrade the curriculum of technologists and said that we are totally dependent on imported technology and we must have qualified technologists to handle rampant cases of troubleshooting and use the

new technologies efficiently. He said that TEVTA has billions of rupees but it failed to restore the social status of technologists. He said that FCCI is ready to join hands with concerned quarters to restore the respect and dignity of this profession. He further said that China is relocating its industries but they have to face acute shortage of skilled manpower. "China had floated an idea to bring at least 50% human

resource from her country but we have convinced them that they must train our workers and fully trained Pakistani staff could be ensured within next three years", he said and added that it will help us to create maximum job opportunities for our burgeoning population of productive age. Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham-Javed said that he will provide full support and help to produce skilled manpower which will certainly play a major role in achieving the targets of industrialization. He said that the IT sector must be clubbed with IEEE to gear up the pace of national uplift. President FCCI welcomed a proposal to set up a joint desk of FCCI and IEEE in FCCI complex to help and guide the relevant people. In this connection, he also nominated Engineer Nawaz Alvi and Engineer Babar Shehzad while IEEE will also give two persons to extend maximum facilitation to the needy persons.

KP CM lays foundation stone of Turkish Beverage Company's unit

BUREAU REPORT

HARIPUR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mahmood Khan Wednesday laid the foundation stone of the industrial unit of Turkish multinational beverage company (Coca Cola Icecek) in Hattar Special Economic Zones, Haripur. The bottling plant will be spread over an area of 29 acres and the company was expected to invest US \$ 50 million and create job opportunity for 700 persons. It is seventh plant of CCI in Pakistan and first in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The KP Chief Minister also inaugurated a new steel plant in Hattar Special Economic Zone with investment of US\$ 50 million. The unit spread over 20 acres of land has annual steel production capacity of 0.5 million ton. Provincial Minister for Finance, Taimur Saleem Khan Jhagra, Minister for Local Governments, Akbar Ayub Khan and Special Assistant to KP CM on Industries, Abdul Karim Khan also accompanied the chief minister during his visit to Haripur.



The Ambassador of Turkey to Pakistan, Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul and Pakistan based management of the Turkish multinational CCI were also present on the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Mahmood Khan said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has conducive environment for both domestic and foreign investors, saying a good beginning in this regard has been started in the province. He attributed the interest of domestic and foreign

investment in KP to business-friendly policies of the provincial government. He said that beside, tax exemption to private sectors, the provincial government is also providing other required facilities to investors. He said that local industries are also being provided subsidized electricity and termed provision of facilities to investors through one-window operation a crucial step towards promotion of investment. The chief minister said

that beside industrial sector, the province also offers huge potentials in tourism and energy sectors. He said that through promotion of investment in these sectors, the provincial government has put the province on the track of progress and development. Mahmood Khan added that the provincial government has presented an historic people-friendly budget wherein private investors have been granted relief in taxes and other incentives.

PRCS launches awareness campaign for vaccination

DNA

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa launched its awareness campaign to mobilize communities for COVID vaccination. Under the campaign, PRCS has begun awareness sessions, establishing COVID-19 Vaccination points in different districts of the province besides initiating distribution of 5300 hand sanitizing bottles for students and officials in schools of Peshawar and Swat. In this regard, Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent society Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Lt. Gen Rtd Muhammad Hamid Khan said the Government of Pakistan is fully engaged across the country in campaign for COVID-19 vaccination, while Pakistan Red Crescent society is playing its role as an auxiliary body by launching this campaign. The public is requested to get vaccinated against the coronavirus so that the pandemic can be controlled as soon as possible. On the other hand, Secretary Pakistan Red Crescent

society Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Syed Ali Hassan told media representatives that the PRCS Manshara Branch is currently regularly supporting the district administration in the run-up to the awareness campaign. Our volunteers are working on awareness sessions at mosques, bus stations and other public places, he added. PRCS teams are also carrying the people to the vaccination centres, while the same process will soon be launched in other districts, including Peshawar. He added that Pakistan Red Crescent society currently distributing sanitiser bottles in Peshawar and swat schools and other health facilities, the total no of sanitiser bottles are 5300 while each bottle contains 250ml sanitiser. Thanks to, European Commission for Humanitarian Aid for their extensive support for this activity. Meanwhile, soon, 64 public latrines, sanitiser booths and hand washing stations will be installed in public places and primary health centres in Peshawar and Swat.

Postings, transfers of various officers

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Wednesday issued notification of transfers and postings of several officers. Arshid Khan Afridi, Director Transport Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been transferred to establishment department, Abdul Ghafoor Shah, Deputy Commissioner Karak to establishment department, Hameed Ullah Shah, Deputy Commissioner Hangu to establishment department, Abdula Hameed Khan, Deputy Commissioner Batagram to establishment department, Capt (Rtd) Abdur Rehman, Deputy Commissioner Kohat to establishment department, Shahid Mahmood, Deputy Commissioner Swabi to establishment department, Abdul Hasseb, Deputy Commissioner Lakki Marwat to establishment department, Shah Saud, Deputy Commissioner Upper Chitral to establishment department, Tanveer-ur Rehman, Deputy Commissioner Torgarh posted as Deputy Commissioner Karak, Captain (Rtd) Sarmad Saleem, awaiting post in establishment department posted as Deputy Commissioner Hangu, Ashfaq Khan, Additional Deputy Commissioner Peshawar posted as Deputy Commissioner Battagram, Mohammad Roshan, Additional Secretary 1, Administrative Department posted as Deputy Commissioner Kohat, Capt (Rtd) Sanaullah Khan, Deputy Secretary-cum-PSO to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Secretary posted as Deputy Commissioner Swabi, Iqbal Hussain, Additional Secretary Energy and Power Dept posted as Deputy Commissioner Lakki Marwat, Muhammad Ali, posted in PDA posted as Deputy Commissioner Upper Chitral, Muhammad Fawad, Corrdinator PMR Office of Chief Secretary posted as Deputy Commissioner Torgarh and Fahad Ikram Qazi, Director Civil Defense posted as Director Transport Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. - APP

50,000 trout fishing released in Kumrat river

PESHAWAR: The Livestock and Fisheries Department Dir Upper Wednesday released 50,000 trout fishing in Kumrat river, the most suitable habitat for trout as part of efforts to improve and conserve the trout fish population. Deputy Director, Livestock and Fisheries Department, Wari, Dir Upper, under the supervision of Amir Hamza, organized a prestigious function at Kumrat, wherein Deputy Commissioner, Dir Upper, Muhammad Shoaib Khan, District Police Officer, Tariq Iqbal, Assistant Commissioner Sheringal, AD Local Government Haji Badshahzada and fisheries officials besides elders of the area were present.

Speaking on the occasion Deputy Commissioner Dir Upper Shoaib Khan said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has launched a series of awareness programs in different parts of the province to promote fisheries and conserve fish in natural waters. He said that the protection of trout fishing is the joint responsibility of Fisheries Department and the elders of the area, adding the department has banned poaching and taking stern action against poachers. The Deputy Director Fisheries said that every year the department releases thousands of trout fishing in Kohistan River for breeding due to which the population of trout is increasing. In addition, fish farms are being set up under the development plan in Kumrat so that fisheries can be promoted along with employment and income. - APP

Public Notice

I, Muhammad Bashir s/o Muhammad Inayat (CNIC 61101-1949097-3), resident of Nazakat Market, Nai Abadi, P/O Sohan Islamabad, do hereby irrevocably, unconditionally and irreversibly declare and state that I have disowned and disinherited my elder son, Muhammad Waqas due to his disobedience and misconduct. Further, I am not responsible for any of his actions.

Automation of food delivery system started in KP: Minister

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Food and Science and Information Technology Atif Khan Wednesday said the department is working on automation of food delivery system in the province for transparent wheat delivery. Talking to a delegation of World Food Program (WFP) here at his office, he said that the process of automation was aimed to make the food delivery system free from human interference, adding that with the financial and technical support of WFP the delivery system, computerization of warehouses, training of staff and practical work on food testing labs were also starting soon.

The meeting with the WFP delegation discussed in detail the financial and technical aspects of increasing the efficiency of the food laboratory, including delivery of wheat in the province, computerization of warehouses and training of staff. The meeting was attended by Secretary Food Department Khushal Khan and Director General Food Safety Authority Shah Rukh Ali Khan along with representatives of WFP. The meeting discussed in detail the existing system of the Food Department with regard to the supply of wheat and various proposals for modernizing the supply chain. The provincial minister said that delivery to wheat warehouses and access to consumers in the province would be further improved. - DNA

SME sector, backbone of national economy, says Talat Mahmood



BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: SME (Small and Medium Enterprises) sector is the backbone of the national economy and Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) in collaboration with The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) will make all out efforts to fa-

cilitate this segment of the economy by giving them much needed awareness about our prevailing taxation system and resolve issues relating to the accountancy, said Chaudhary Talat Mahmood Senior Vice President FCCI. Talking to a delegation of ACCA, he said that the changed economic scenario has further enhanced the importance of the SME

sector hence we must give them awareness about related issues in collaboration with ACCA. He assured the delegation that FCCI will develop close and workable liaison with ACCA to further enhance the skills of the SME sector and in this connection a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two organizations was also under consideration. He said that

both institutions should also invite each other in their important events which will help them to develop liaison and grow and groom. The delegation of ACCA was composed of Mr. Mohammad Shahid, Business Development Manager and Mr. Fahad Saeed Business Development Executive. Office bearers of other trade bodies were also present.

Ehsaas opening Ehsaas Centers in 154 districts

A person in need of financial assistance for health can find out about Sehat Sahulat and, if not entitled in Sehat Sahulat or not in an empaneled hospital can be channeled to Ehsaas Tahafuz or PBM's health related financial assistance systems

BUREAU REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Sania Nishtar held an open house with print and electronic media at the One Window Ehsaas Center in Sitara Market Islamabad. Media guests were briefed about the recently opened first One Window Ehsaas Center, which is aimed at ensuring access to all the facilities and services of Ehsaas in one place. "Similar One Stop Shop Ehsaas Centers will be opened in 154 districts to serve Ehsaas beneficiaries", said Dr. Sania while briefing media. Giving an interactive demonstration, Dr. Sania informed that under the Ehsaas umbrella, there are many programs for 14 different target groups. But often, a poor family is not aware of the benefits they are entitled to and, if they are aware, they need to go to multiple offices to seek help. With One

Window Ehsaas, the aim is to deliver services through a single window, a one-stop shop. One Window of Ehsaas has six pillars: firstly, a one stop shop, the Ehsaas Center; secondly, back office digital interface; thirdly, a public facing digital information and services platform; the fourth component is a mobile app; the fifth component is cognitive API architecture—the integrated database; and finally, the Ehsaas One-Window Beneficiary Selection and Targeting Policy. Prime Minister had inaugurated this first

One Window Ehsaas on June 9, 2021. In the center, all Ehsaas services can be accessed in one place. To facilitate Ehsaas Kafaalat beneficiaries, whose families receive stipends, both Point of Sales machines as well as cash machines or ATMs have been placed in the One Window Center. Partner banks have opened their branches in the center, and NADRA office has been set up as well. Having all these services in one center can significantly facilitate an Ehsaas Kafaalat beneficiary, who often previously needed to go to many offices to get complaints resolved. Ehsaas stipends for chil-

dren can be accessed at the center also. The digital system, which has recently been put in place does real time verifications from three data sources before the child is enrolled in the program and if the child doesn't have a Birth registration form—which is a prerequisite for enrolment—the mother can just walk the courtyard to get it made in the NADRA center rather than taking tax to go to another site. Ehsaas Nasonuma services are also available in the center. Children at risk of stunting and pregnant mothers can get specialized nutritional food from the office and cash stipends from the ATM. They get awareness session as well on health and nutrition. Antenatal services and immunization services are available at the center. Students can walk into the center and get information about Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarship, and they don't have to pay in an internet café to fill their application.



Briefs

Athletics course concludes

ISLAMABAD: The Level One Athletics Coaching Course concluded here at the Pakistan Sports Complex on Wednesday. President, Athletics Federation of Pakistan (AFP), Major General (R) Muhammad Akram Sahi who was the chief guest distributed certificates among the participants.

A total of 24 coaches from all over the country took part in the course including Sub Ashraf Ali, Naib Sub Muhammad Imran, Asim Ejaz, Shams Ul Haq, Akram Khan, Adnan Akbar, Mehraban Shah, Aamir Shahzad, Masood Mahfooz, Muhammad Alam, Anwar Ali Chandio, Ibrar Hussain, Dowah Mehmood, Zohaib Khan, Sajjad Haider, Shafaqat Ali (Isb), Muhammad Anees Ahmed, Asif Mahmood, Sajid Imran Bhatti, Irfan Ali Rana, Muhammad Imran Khan, Shafaqat Ali, Majid Fahsi and Tasawar Hussain. The level two coaches of Pakistan Rafiq Ahmed and Lt Col Ghulam Shabbir Anjum delivered lectures to the coaches while Mumtaz ul Haq was the Organizing Secretary of the course. - APP

Police, local admin officials hold E-kutcheri

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The top officials of Islamabad police and local administration on Wednesday held an e-kutcheri on FM radio to address public grievances. During a two hour long session over 100 residents put their issues before SSP (Operations) Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanweer and ADC (G) Rana Waqas via phone call or SMS. Most of the complaints were related to district administration, CDA, traffic and land. The officers directed the concerned authorities to resolve the problems at earliest. Both the officials assured the residents that civil administration was striving for early disposal of their complaints. The Capital police was holding both E-kutcheris and open kutcheri on the directions of Inspector-General Police Islamabad, Qazi Jamil ur Rehman, providing direct access to the complainant to high officials of the department. All the zonal SPs and SDPOs were also replicating the same practice in their respective areas for the convenience of the locals.

NAB rejects remarks attributed to SAPM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Wednesday vehemently rejected the remarks attributed to Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Power Tabish Gauhar, terming the allegations contrary to the facts, fabricated and baseless. A NAB spokesman said in a statement that the bureau has asked PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) to submit transcript of the speech of SAPM delivered in Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Karachi last day to NAB. The speech was apparently an attempt to create negative image of NAB among business community and effort to influence the sub judge LNG reference and benefit the accused involved in the reference. He said the transcript of the speech would help analyzing the speech in light of clause (a) of the NAB ordinance afterwards the law will take its course. Out rightly denying the baseless allegations leveled against NAB by accusing it that the bureau has taken notice of recent agreements inked with Qatar and CPEC (China Pakistan Economic Corridor) projects, he said the bureau was a human friendly institute which believes in zero corruption and hundred percent progress.

CPC plays vital role in China's development: Amb. Nong Rong

Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Mr. Nong Rong stressed upon more interaction to learn from each other experiences and appreciate work on sister cities relationship which will further understand China in Pakistan and Pakistan in China

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Communist Party of China (CPC) play very vital role in China's socio economic development and world should learn lesson from CPC work and initiative this was stated by Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Mr. Nong Rong at the Cake Cutting ceremony organized by Pakistan China Friendship Association (PCFA) Khyber chapter at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House, Islamabad this afternoon. Ambassador Nong Rong mentioned that Pakistan is my second home and I feel myself at my home especially when I was received warmly and very cordially and while lauding the services of PCFA-Khyber. Ambassador recall his visit to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in April 2021.

Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Mr. Nong Rong stressed upon more interaction to learn from each other experiences and appreciate work on sister cities relationship which will further understand China in Pakistan and Pakistan in China.

Mr. Nong Rong appreciate the gesture of good will from peoples of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province and joining us in celebrations.



Ambassador Nong Rong also distribute Friendship Awards among Peoples from various walks of life from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province for the services rendered for promotion & strengthening of Pakistan China Relations during 7 decades. Earlier Mirza Muhammad Afridi Deputy Chairman Senate of Pakistan greet the Ambassador Nong Rong and Chinese Leaders & Peoples on successful 100th Years of

CPC and lauded its role in China's development. Mirza Muhammad Afridi appreciate the idea of more winning to learn from the Chinese development in all walks of life and share his experiences to visit China over the period of many years.

Deputy Chairman Senate also proposed the Parliamentary delegations exchanges and invited IDCPC exchange delegation to visit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Mr. Yousaf Ayub Khan President

PCFA Khyber while welcoming said that it is excellent opportunity that while celebrating 100 successful years of CPC & 70th Anniversary of establishment of Sino-Pak Diplomatic Relation we should further understand each and take the advantages of Chinese visionary leader President Xi Jinping's land mark BRI and CPEC which will change the economic conditions of the not only region but whole globe. PCFA Khyber

President Yousaf Ayub Khan mentioned that we will also play our due role in establishment of sister city relationship of Swat & Haripur and lauded the role of Minister of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan and Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) in this connectivity which will alternatively improve and strengthen the Sino-Pak Relations.

Earlier while speaking on the occasion host organization PCFA Khyber Secretary General Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani mentioned about the early days of PCFA which was established in 1970 as Pak-China Student Friendship Association and was distributing the Red Book of Great Chinese Leader Mao Zhoatong which was very popular among young generation.

Gilani also mentioned about the PCFA Khyber English Urdu Essay Writing Competition with the support of Cultural Office of the Embassy of China in Pakistan.

Later souvenir were exchanged and Friendship Awards were distributed among People's from various walks of life. (Comment by: Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani, Email: s.yeed.gilani@gmail.com).

ICT police "Raabta Campaign" continues

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The officials of Islamabad police are visiting various residential sectors, markets, religious worship places with an aim to interact with citizens and enhance public trust in police. Following directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman, Raabta Campaign has been launched by Islamabad police to improve relations with the citizens and boost their trust in the police, a police spokesman said.

During this campaign, all zonal police officials patrolled on foot in their respective areas and also visited various markets and worship places where they met with citizens, shopkeepers, traders and administration and listened to their problems as well as issues. The officials also briefed them about the initiative taken by the Islamabad Police for safety and security of the citizens.

DIG (Operations) said that such interactions would help improve level of public confidence in police and check crime through citizens' cooperation. He said that Islamabad Police is organizing Khuli Kacheris to resolve the public problems at their door steps.

Police held 13 accused

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested 13 accused from different areas of the city during last 24 hours. According to a news release, a team under the supervision of SHO Koral Shoukat Abbasi, comprising ASI Jafar Ali arrested a wanted member of a burglar gang identified as Abdul Aziz resident of Afghanistan and recovered cash, gold ornaments and weapons from him. The police also held six accused involved in aerial-firing and threatening citizens namely Saffdar, Abdul Saboor, Najeib Ullah, Abdul Razaq, Inzamam and Asif, also recovered arm ammunition from their possession. Similarly, Nilore police arrested four accused Asar Mehmood, Majid Hussain, Amir Shahzad and Mehboob and recovered one Kalashnikov, one 12 bore and two 30 bore pistols along with ammunition. Shahzad Town police arrested Nadeem and recovered one 30 bore pistol from him. Ramna police arrested accused Abdul Rehman and recovered one 30 bore pistol from him. Cases have been registered against the nabbed persons and further investigation is underway.

Qandeel School offering free education to Blind

ISLAMABAD: The Pindi region's first educational institute for visually impaired children has opened admissions for completely and partially blind children where almost all facilities are for free with a monthly stipend for the students.

The Government Qandeel Secondary School is established in the largest Kalyan Das Hindu temple of the garrison city that offers numerous facilities for free with quality education, Pervaiz Akhter Principal Qandeel Secondary School told APP while announcing that admissions were opened for visually impaired children.

Akhter said the people bearing visually impaired wards were requested and encouraged to send their children to Qandeel School to acquire education. He said the school was for boys as a separate school for girls was established in Shamsabad. The Principal informed that the School offered free education, books, uniform, school transport, hostel, food, vocational training, low vision facility with magnifying glasses for partially blind children, recreational tours, sports facilities along with mobility and orientation facility. Moreover, there was modern scientific method of teaching, computer labs, highly qualified teaching staff in the School, he said, adding, the students were also paid a monthly stipend of Rs 800. - APP



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing the inauguration ceremony of 1MW solar project under the Green Presidency Initiative, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - APP

Saudi-Iran détente is crucial for peace in Middle East



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Saudi-Iran rapprochement was essential for lasting peace in the region marred by an increased spate of tensions and proxies, said Prof. Dr. Qandil Abbas of QAU. 'Normalization between the two historical rivals can potentially bring the tensions in the Middle East to an ultimate end, he said adding that it will have a positive impact on Pakistan as well as on the entire Muslim world.'

He was speaking at a webinar organized by the Institute of Regional Studies, on 'Iran-Saudi Relations: Challenges and Opportunities'. To a question on nuclear as an issue between Saudi Arabia and

Iran, Dr. Abbas clarified that it was not a cause of concern, and a threat to normalization.

While speaking on the occasion, Lt. Col. (ret) Tariq Niaz Bhatti said that there was a will on both sides to mend their ties which led to the initiations of the normalization process.

The political will was stemmed from domestic compulsions, he said adding that since Iran's economy heavily suffered from the US sanctions, there was an urge to bridge the gap with Riyadh.

For Saudi Arabia, that rapprochement was equally beneficial as it would help materialize MBS's grand vision for his country, said Mr. Bhatti. He also stressed the need to grasp this opportunity to further

the process to a meaningful level. Responding to the question on Pakistan's role as mediator, Mr. Bhatti said that 'Pakistan highly appreciates the normalization efforts going on but we have not been asked for such role.'

Dr. Fouzia Amin of NDU was of the view that 'economy and security' were the key 'push factors' behind the impulse for easing tensions between the feuding powers.

She was critical of Trump's Iran strategy which she argued further aggravated the proxy wars in the region. 'Now there are encouraging signs as Iraqi mediation is very active, and the US, EU wants to salvage the nuclear deal', she said. Nevertheless, 'normalization is still challenging' and efforts are required to keep up the momentum for not letting this opportunity go, she emphasized.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Syed Imran Sardar, from IRS, said that 'good relationship' is not only important but crucial given the deteriorating situation in the Middle East.

No untested milk to enter into big cities: SAPM

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Food Security, Jamsheer Iqbal Cheema Wednesday said under the new mechanism, to be introduced by the government, no impure milk would be allowed to enter in big cities of the country.

"We are going to make milk pure. Milk will not enter in any big city without testing," Cheema said while addressing a press conference here. The SAPM said that despite per capita milk consumption of Rs20,000 compared to just Rs6500 per capita flour consumption, no attention was being given toward this important food product, urging media to highlight the issues of impure milk as it had been doing in case of flour.

He said that it was for the first time that the government was giving special attention to improve quality of milk and ensure that citizens get pure milk. He said that people had sacred relations with milk and honey but unfortunately both these commodities were being contaminated.

Skilled aviation professionals in Pak stressed

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Integrated Aviation Solutions (IAS) has forged collaboration with a Polish firm ALLAJETS for training highly skilled professionals to meet future needs of the country's aviation industry. ALLAJETS is an internationally acknowledged and approved organization, while IAS is committed to develop a well-trained and skilled human resource through a world class training and examination centers in Pakistan, an IAS official said here on Wednesday.

"A well-qualified, trained and skilled human resource is backbone of aviation industry worldwide," he told APP. The IAS is in business for the development of variety of solutions and personnel for the national aviation industry, he said and added, "We expect growth in aviation sector post pandemic (Covid-19) in view of economic progress and stability pursued by this government." Moreover, the National Aviation Policy-2019 also envisages the role of aviation in growth of trade, tourism and economy, while confronting the challenges, aviation industry is facing on safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environment, he said.

Considering fast changing technology, training, skills requirements and development of personnel to serve the national aviation sector is the most important to meet the emerging challenges for sustainable growth, the official said. With the growth, expansion and futuristic need of national aviation industry IAS is fulfilling its responsibility as an established and internationally acknowledged e-learning centre for the development of aviation professionals, he added. IAS is an international consulting group for aviation, located in Islamabad. It was launched in 2017 by its founder and CEO Syed Hamid Ali with its vision and mission to serve the national aviation industry. It has association with Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC), Kamra for the establishment and development of Maintenance Repair and Overhauls (MRO).

Parking problems in Islamabad will be solved

Create temporary and permanent parking areas in Markaz, says Zafar Bakhtawari

DNA

ISLAMABAD: SSP Traffic Islamabad Syed Qarar Hussain has said that the traffic police of Islamabad will work to solve the issue of parking. He will visit all the markets in turn. He expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of the business community in Islamabad at his office here today. He said that he has always tried to bring local citizens and traders along. Gone and now he will work with the citizens of Islamabad to solve Islamabad's traffic problems. We will start touring the centers together with the officials of all the markets.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former president of the Islamabad Chamber and secretary general of the UBG,

said on the occasion that the problem of parking in Islamabad has become serious in the last few

years, which requires special attention from the traffic police. He said that temporary and per-

manent parking areas should be set up in the Markaz and temporary parking should be reserved

only for customers.

All the vacant areas around the markets should be converted into parking lots. Saif-ur-Rehman, Chairman, Police Committee, Islamabad Chamber He introduced the officials of the business community of Islamabad and requested them to cooperate with the business community of Islamabad to solve the traffic problems and make Islamabad an ideal city in terms of traffic. A delegation of business community comprising Zafar Bakhtawari, Saif-ur-Rehman, Tahir Abbasi, Malik Shabbir, Abdul Rehman Sidiqui, Ahmad Khan, Chaudhry Nadeem-ud-din, Muhammad Hussain, Malik Mohsin Khalid, Noah Adnan, Naem Iqbal, and Ali Akram visited Syed Qarar Hussain SSP Traffic Islamabad, Sarfaraz wrik SP traffic police are also present.



Briefs

PAL organizes consultation meeting with scholars

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) on Wednesday organized a consultation meeting with eminent scholars regarding a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with China Writers Association (CWA). The meeting unanimously decided that equal representations would be given to all the provinces and regional languages of the country. They said that the Pakistani literature would be translated in Chinese language while the Chinese literary master pieces in Pakistani languages, said a news release. They also asked for displaying literature of both the countries in Pak-China center.

The consultation meeting was attended by eminent writers including Chairman PAL Yousaf Khushk, Prof. Fateh Mohammad Malik, Ifkhar Arif, Kishwar Naheed, Dr. Rauf Parikh, Ha-feez Khan, Haris Khaliq, Dr. Abdullah Jan Abid, Dr. Hakim Ali Barro, Dr. Wahid Bakhs Buzdar, Mohammad Asim Butt and Akhtar Raza Saleemi.

Parliament committed to resolve PWDs challenges

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser Wednesday said the parliament was committed to resolve the challenges being faced by people with disabilities (PWDs) in the country.

During the budget session 2021-2022, he placed the first Braille copy of 1973 Constitution in the House and briefed about the historic milestones achieved to make the parliament friendly for PWDs. He said Pakistan's parliament was the first parliament in the region to convert its Constitution into Braille system besides making the official website of National Assembly accessible for visually impaired people.

He said the Parliament House had become the first building to complete disability audit for the first time in the history and making it accessible to PWDs. Asad Qaiser remarked about the importance of parliamentary diplomacy to enhance regional prosperity and development.

He informed the house that the successful occurrence of second general conference of Parliamentary Assembly of Economic Cooperation Organization (PAECO) indicated the success of incumbent parliament to enhance the parliamentary diplomacy. — APP

Workshop on 'Child Domestic Workers' held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Human Rights held an awareness and sensitization workshop on laws related to 'Child Domestic Workers', 'Child Abuse' & 'Transgender Persons' for Islamabad Police. Almost 36 police officials from different offices of Islamabad Police participated in the workshop.

Addressing the workshop, the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Human Rights, Dr. Akhtar Abbas said that the HR ministry has taken several legislative and institutional measures to ensure the protection of Human Rights in the country. Last year, Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Act was passed by the parliament and through an amendment child domestic labour was categorized as a "hazardous occupation" under Schedule 1 of the Employment of Children Act 1991.

He reiterated ministry's commitment to prevent Human Rights violations in the country. "Earlier in June, Shaheed Aitzaz Hasan Child Protection Institute was inaugurated in Islamabad to protect vulnerable and at-risk children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, neglect, maltreatment, exploitation and abuse under the ICT Child Protection Act 2018", he said.

Chinese envoy Nong Rong visits CDA Headquarters

Ambassador of China appreciated commitment of CDA to develop Islamabad and simultaneously preserve the environmental balance

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: A meeting was held at CDA HQ between Nong Rong ambassador of China and Amer Ali Ahmed Chairman CDA. The chairman CDA welcomed the honorable guest and briefed him about the working of the organization. The chairman acknowledged the cooperation received from China from time to time for the residents of Islamabad. The ambassador thanked the chairman CDA for the briefing and assured of continued cooperation from China the same was reciprocated by Pakistan.

Ambassador of China appreciated commitment of CDA to develop Islamabad and simultaneously preserve the environmental balance. The ambassador agreed/offered to explore the initiative to transform Islamabad into a smart city with introduction of automation, in supervision as well as management.

The Ambassador of China and chairman CDA also visited the park China friendship centre which is a landmark of co-operation of friendship between the two countries.



TikTok removes 6.5m videos

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: TikTok, the global platform for creating and sharing short videos, had released its quarterly transparency report which indicated Pakistan as the second largest market to have videos removed that violated TikTok's Community Guidelines, Terms of Service and those promoting COVID-19 misinformation.

During the three-month period from January till March 2021, 61,951,327 videos were removed globally, which was less than one percent of all videos uploaded on TikTok. Of those videos, TikTok identified and removed 91.3 percent before a user reported them, 81.8 percent before they received any views, and 93.1 percent within 24 hours of being posted. In the Pakistani market, TikTok removed 6,495,992 videos making it the second market to get most videos removed after the USA where 8,540,088 videos were removed during this period.

Being a responsible platform, TikTok continued to work with public health experts to help the community stay safe and informed on COVID-19 and vaccines. In the first quarter of 2021, TikTok's COVID-19 information hub was viewed 1,535,114,921 times globally. Banners directing people to the hub were added to 1,002,100 videos and were viewed 11,846,566,486 times. "We also continued to add public service announcements (PSAs) to relevant COVID-19 and vaccine hashtags that direct users to the WHO and local public health resources, and these PSAs were viewed 19,660,517,152 times.

COMSTECH organizes webinar on health care challenges

DNA

ISLAMABAD: South Asia only spends 2 percent of GDP on healthcare, lagging behind any other region in the world. Current health expenditure is inappropriate to meet the current and future challenges of health in the region. To become more viable country in health sector, we must have state-of-the-art health education, healthcare professionals, and proper research with adequate infrastructure, said Dr. Mobashir Ahmed Bhatti, while addressing COMSTECH webinar on "South Asia's Health Care Challenges" held online on Wednesday. Dr. Bhatti said a combination of genetic, physiological, lifestyle, and environmental factors can cause non-communicable diseases.

He said, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease causing disease burden in south Asia. He said, shifts in leading risk factors like dietary habits, tobacco use and high blood pressure are causing these diseases. He mentioned that industrialization, westernization of lifestyles and aging are health influencing factors.

Dr. Bhatti emphasized regional specific research and individualized healthcare. He said, personalized medicine is an emerging practice of medicine that uses an individual's genetic profile to guide decisions made in regard to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease. He said, that poorly controlled diabetes puts us at higher risk of certain infections, including some fungal ones. He said that in Pakistan after 50 years of age, people start facing blood pressure issues. He suggested to improve the lifestyle and remove the causes of blood pressure which are not right food, oil and specifically the way we cook our foods. He recommended a committee of experts formed by the government with the mandate to ensure healthy food provision to the masses. Dr. Mobashir Ahmed Bhatti is a medical doctor. He is founding president of Paki-



stan Association of Integrative Medicine and executive coaching lead for South Asian Academy of Physicians and Surgeons. He has worked in over a dozen countries setting up leadership, product, research and alliance teams. As a leadership and team development expert, now he is focused specially on health care sector and devoted his efforts to the need of forming an international team of professionals to work as a research and development group in compiling evidence-based empirical data that irrefutably establishes and documents global health issues. This webinar was open to academicians, scientists, and general public from all the member OIC states. More than one hundred people attended this webinar online.

Federal Secy Nadeem Kayani visits Pakistan Academy of Sciences

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Nadeem Irshad Kayani, Federal Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Government of Pakistan visited the Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS) on June 30, 2021, to discuss the PAS's functions and constructive dialogue between the Ministry of Sciences and Technology and the Pakistan Academy of Sciences for Science, Technology and Innovation based development in the country.

Prof. Dr. Tasawar Hayat, Secretary General PAS welcomed the Federal Secretary MoST and his colleagues Mr. Zahir Shah (Joint Secretary MoST) and Dr. S. Zaheer Hussain (Dir. Policy Wing, MoST). Prof. Dr. Anwar ul Hasan Gilani (Fellow PAS & VC, Universi-



ty of Hariipur) was also present in the meeting. Dr. Rifat M. Qureshi (Director Administration PAS) gave an overview of the PAS scientific and academic activities. There was valuable discussion among participants to streamline the mechanism for S & T development and innovation. In the meeting, the follow-

ing recommendations were given; There is a need to groom the youth in Pakistani Schools and Colleges for awareness about scientific developments and innovative technology. In Pakistan the component of supply and demand is facing an issue, Students usually opt for conventional natural science subjects (such as Chemistry,

Biology, Physics, Maths). Similarly, engineering students opt for conventional engineering subjects (Such as Electrical, Mechanical, Chemical, Civil engineering, etc.) as a career. This practice is posing a dearth of human resources in other very important innovation disciplines such as Artificial Intelligence, aer-

ospace engineering, Cyber Security, and Robotics, etc. There is a need for technical education alongside Conventional education to acquire technology-based change to compete the world in scientific and industrial developments.

Venture capital is a big resource and to utilize maximum benefits, it should be invested properly at right time. In Pakistan, Institutions/Organizations have a tradition of doing similar work at different platforms such as practice is a waste of resources and must be optimized for maximum benefit. Secretary MoST appreciated PAS for the establishment of "Scientific Advice to Government Unit/Policy Unit" and the effort of its official/experts in reviewing and up-gradation of policy documents including S & T policy 2021.

Reforms in education system urged

ISLAMABAD: PML-Q Punjab Deputy Secretary Information Khawaja Rameez Hassan said in a press conference that the education system in Pakistan needs to be reformed. Implementing an educational emergency in the country for at least 20 years could change the country's destiny. Allocating funds on an emergency basis in the field of science and technology to provide employment opportunities to youth by making them technically skilled, is an important need of the hour. He said that eradication of unemployment would lead to eradication of crime. The illiterate youth are easily targeted by miscreants and foreign conspiratorial gangs due to lack of employment. Educated unemployed youth is easier target for the anti-state elements to provoke them against their state in modern ways likely Social war tactics. — DNA

Journey towards prosperity continues: Alvi

Tariff rationalization has resulted in increase in exports – Abdul Razzaq Daud

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamic Republic of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi was the Chief Guest at EFP Exporters Recognition Awards 2020 ceremony held. The President strongly endorsed that country's journey towards prosperity continued in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic. Exporters have played a pivotal role in economic growth and earning foreign exchange, the President said. Pakistan's smart lockdown strategy successfully combated CORONA Virus and, by the grace of Almighty, we became among Nations which were least affected by the pandemic. Dr. Arif Alvi said that there is a great potential in trade and tourism in the country. We need to further enhance our exports to create a trade balance. The Employers Federation can play the pivotal role in this regard, he said. Poverty alleviation, hospitality and tourism can be developed as a main stream industry. Gilgit Baltistan attracted 15 lac tourists the previous year in spite of CORONA Virus, the President apprised.

The President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan stressed the need of poverty alleviation and asked the private sector to come forward and address this major issue. "Look Africa" policy will help a lot, the

President said. Promotion of women entrepreneurship can be instrumental in this regard, he said. The private sector is encouraged to participate in women empowerment initiatives, the honourable President added. Abdul Razzaq Dawood, Advisor to Prime Minister for Commerce, Textile and Investment, who was the Guest of Honor at the occasion, said that tariff rationalization has resulted in increase in exports. Mr. Razzaq Dawood said that Industry is the main source of exports. Textile industry takes the lead in this regard along with rice and others.

Information Technology (IT) has a great export potential and need to be explored further, the Mr. Razzaq Daud said. Industry is the backbone for employment of people and enhancement of exports. Pakistan can achieve its goals in this regard by skilling people and providing good quality products and services for local market as well as exports. The Advisor for Commerce apprised that rationalizing tariffs has ensured ease of doing business in the country. He apprised that many of Industrial Raw Materials are being imported on zero-rated basis. Diversification in both, product

range and geographic perspective are needed. The Government is there to support any initiative from business community, he added. Mr. Ismail Suttar, President Employer's Federation of Pakistan, in his welcome address said that the Federation is representing all employers across the country and functional since 1950. He apprised that the EFP Export Recognition Awards were given purely on merit. The President Employer's Federation informed that the federation has provided the Economic Vision 2030 with short and long term goals and objectives accordingly.

Different Committees are working on different issues under the umbrella of Employer Federation. Committees on GSP, Hospitality & Tourism, raw material processing and fishery are worth mentioning, he said. Mr. Ismail Suttar thanked honourable president Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Federal Minister Mr. Abdul Razzaq Daud, award winners, diplomats and members of business community for their valuable participation. Mr. Zaki Ahmed Khan, Vice President EFP, also addressed at this occasion and thanked President, Federal Minister and honourable guests for gracing this memorable event. Textile, Garments, Rice and leather sectors have contributed massively in exports of the country, Mr. Zaki Ahmed said. Mian Akram Farid, Provincial Chief EFP Islamabad urged the need of establishing new industrial zones in Islamabad. He was informally talking to the Advisor to Prime Minister for Commerce and Investment. M. Akram Farid, Provincial Chief, EFP Islamabad and Northern Area, said that the government should work with the private sector and industry - the business community has an important role in tax revenue - the government should make laws to facilitate them. And try to create a tax system that builds new confidence in taxpayers and helps boost investment.



Police gets 2 days training on GBV

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A two-day training course for police personnel to enhance their capacity for combating Gender Based Violence has been concluded here on Wednesday.

Around 22 investigation officers of various police stations both male and female attended the training. The course was arranged by Capital police in collaboration with Rozan, an Islamabad based non-governmental organization (NGO), following directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP), Islamabad, Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman.

The experts sensitized the participants through conducting lectures on gender-based violence to handle such cases according to their sensitivity. Managing Director, Rozan, Babar Bashir while speaking at the closing ceremony lauded the efforts of capital police chief for establishing gender protection unit to provide assistance to the victims of Gender Based Violence (GBV).

He welcomed the police reforms introduced by the IGP and community policing to provide relief to the capital residents. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Headquarters, Kamran Adil apprised the participants over various programs initiated by the police for the convenience of the citizens.

'Entrepreneur Gala 2021' at Air varsity concludes

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Students from diverse disciplines exhibited their innovative business ideas at the 'Entrepreneurship Gala 2021' held at the Air University on Wednesday.

The event was presided over by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Malik Amin Aslam. In his inaugural speech, the SAPM appreciated the efforts and great ideas shown by students.

Amin Aslam asserted that this is need of the hour, whereby start-ups and novel entrepreneurial activities have become widely popular and in great demand the world over, especially in the backdrop of Covid-19 scenario.

"Entrepreneurship Gala 2021 aims to provide a platform to our talented students for demonstrating their business ideas and get useful insights from industrial experts to successfully transform their ideas into reality," said Dean, Air University School of Management, Dr. Mueen Zafar. In his closing remarks, Air Marshal (ret'd) Javid Ahmed offered the vote of thanks to the federal minister and organizers for such a timely and thoughtful event.

He admired unique ideas originated by the youth, and assured students of all his support in their future endeavors.

'Khidmat Aap Ki Dehleez Par' program launched

RAWALPINDI: Second phase of the government of Punjab's revolutionary program "Khidmat Aap Ki Dehleez Par" has been kicked off in Rawalpindi under which the government offices including district 'Kutchery' would be cleaned, public sectors schools to be whitewashed and the premises of the offices would be renovated.

According to a district administration spokesman, the Punjab government had issued a schedule for June 28 to first August, five weeks period for the program under which public sector water tanks would also be cleaned besides changing filters of water filtration plants in the district.

The authorities concerned have been directed to ensure that all the departments concerned to achieve the targets set in this regard in an efficient manner and the reports of the tasks would also be uploaded on the App developed by Punjab Information Board. The phase includes whitewashing of public offices, schools and other government buildings, beautification of parks, green belts, squares and roundabouts. The Basic Health Units, Rural Health Centers and the government offices would also be cleaned under this phase. — APP

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Opening up

AS Pakistan's positivity rate falls to 1.78 percent country-wide, the NCOC at a meeting on Monday further relaxed restrictions covering most sectors in the country. But it has imposed checks on activities based largely on vaccinated people and they will be allowed greater freedoms than those who are unvaccinated. This is a sensible policy in terms of safety, although there should also be a reminder to those who have received both doses of the vaccine or a single dose vaccine that even after vaccination it is possible to acquire Covid-19, though its effects are not as lethal. These are the guidelines that are being followed in other countries. We can also hope that the new guidelines laid out by the NCOC will encourage people to get vaccinated as quickly as possible and speed up what is a slow vaccination drive in the country, with only 1.6 percent of the population fully vaccinated. Pakistan at present is reporting a large stock of vaccines and it is essential that these be used and that people go in for vaccination. In this context, educating people from less privileged backgrounds on how to use the online registration process or even the process on their phones is essential.

The relaxation in restrictions allows indoor and outdoor dining till 12am each night. However, indoor dining will be permitted only to those who are vaccinated, and staff would be authorised and taught to check on vaccination certification. In the same way, staff themselves would need to be vaccinated. Gyms too are open only to those who are vaccinated as are indoor marriages, with a limit of 200 people at a single gathering. These restrictions are in many ways sensible and geared towards getting as many people vaccinated as possible, as quickly as possible. There are also some other matters that need to be sorted out. For the moment, though, Pakistan should also be proud of how it has dealt with its Covid crisis with over 900,000 people now recovered from the disease. But caution is still necessary. And we should remember that unless SOPs are followed, and unless greater vaccination is ensured leading to herd immunity, the next wave could lie just around the corner.



Gas crisis

A gas crisis has struck the country yet again, as two state-owned companies on Monday announced a complete closure of gas supply till July 5 to industries and CNG stations. Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) completely stopped gas supply to three sectors—cement, CNG (compressed natural gas) stations and the non-export industry. The country is set to see a shortage of gas availability, which if allowed to occur unregulated, will cause huge losses to the business community and the general public, as well as halt previously rising exports and production. Gas shortfalls affecting power supplies at the peak of summer is a recipe for disaster. This crisis however is not unexpected. The stopping of supply from SNGPL's side is because of the dry docking of the existing floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) Exquisite at the Engro LNG Terminal. The dry docking was inevitable—the government had been postponing it and was trying to delay it till August but all international and local legal experts advised against the deferment. The FSRU Exquisite has been operated 24 hours for the last six years and no dry docking has been done so far, even after knowing it was due from 2019.

Thus the preparation for the impact on the gas crisis should have been anticipated and prepared for. The government is scrambling now to ensure that the power supply is not too badly affected—with emergency meetings being held on how to facilitate the situation. Yet it is a little too late, with no long-term solution approach, either from the government, or the opposition's criticism.

The government right now is focusing on lowering demand and diverting supplies from the industries and CNG sector and diverting system gas to power plants. Yet the bitter pill to swallow here is to accept that CNG as a project has failed and must now die its inevitable natural death in Pakistan. As long as CNG continues to be used as a fuel on a large scale, such disasters will continue to occur due to its complete non-compatibility with Pakistan's natural gas reserve, environment and economy.

Israeli apartheid on campus

Somdeep Sen



After visiting several universities in Israel, I found the history and campus of Hebrew University on Mount Scopus (HUJI) in occupied Jerusalem to be a great example of how higher education institutions became complicit in the Israeli settler-colonial project

ON May 13, the United States-based online outlet Mondoweiss posted a video on Twitter that showed Palestinian students who were peacefully protesting at Ben Gurion University in Beersheba being attacked by Israeli police. The students were protesting against the forced expulsion of Palestinians from their homes in occupied East Jerusalem. As Palestinian students faced similar attacks at Israeli universities across the country, many of them fled campus and returned home.

Member of the Knesset Sami Abu Shehadeh and leader of Balad Party called on the Council of Higher Education and Minister of Education Yoav Galant to protect Palestinian students in Israeli universities. He said, "The protection of our students is a major and important demand for us due to the ongoing circumstances as they feel the loss of safety and security inside Israeli universities and school residences." It would be easy to describe the attacks on university

campuses as an exceptional occurrence, in a period of heightened political tensions, but Israeli universities have long been complicit in the victimisation of Palestinians by the Israeli occupation. In the research I conducted between 2013 and 2016 in Israel, I found that Israeli universities systematically discriminate against Palestinian students and communities, engage with the Israeli military industrial complex and fully support the state's apartheid policies.

'New Jerusalem upon the hill'

After visiting several universities in Israel, I found the history and campus of Hebrew University on Mount Scopus (HUJI) in occupied Jerusalem to be a great example of how higher education institutions became complicit in the Israeli settler-colonial project.

Founded in 1918, three decades before the establishment of Israel, the university was a marquee initiative of Zionist activists in Europe. It was a place of refuge for exiled Jewish academics and students from Europe. But the building of the university was also considered synonymous with the remaking of Jewish nationhood. This symbolism was written into the design of the campus.

Standing atop Jerusalem's Mount Scopus, the university has an unimpeded view of Haram al-Sharif or Temple Mount. In fact, during the planning phases, it was called the Third Temple, signifying the re-establishment of the severed connection between the Jewish people and what they perceive as their divinely ordained homeland.

Aesthetically, the buildings of the original campus were inspired by Arab architecture as a way of ensuring that they seem indigenous to the surrounding landscape. However, as was pointed out to me by an Israeli architect, the grand Arab architecture-inspired domes and arches were meant to also "symbolise the muscularity of Zionism and the Jewish nation".

The designers of the original master plan, Patrick Geddes and Frank Mears, chose to incorporate an Arab style of architecture, but they did so with a sense of contempt for the Palestinian population.

In a letter, Geddes wrote, "... any Western eye can see that the Arabs are dirty, untidy, in many ways degenerate, and is all too likely to overlook, or have difficulty in seeing, the qualities of their buildings". He then went on to claim that it was the responsibility of the Zionists and HUJI to build a campus atop Mount Scopus that would symbolise the "New Jerusalem upon the hill".

The contemporary campus is also dotted with Jewish nationalist iconography. A sign on a wall on campus dedicated by the American Friends of Hebrew University declares HUJI a "university of the Jewish people". Another sign says that research and teaching at the university is conducted for "the benefit of Israel [and] the Jewish people".

Expectedly, Palestinian students feel alienated by the campus and by what they consider an attempt to de-Pal-estianise a landscape that is integral to the Palestinian national territorial home.

A Palestinian alumnus said to me, "The university wants to show that this campus is only for Israelis. Part of the problem are all the Israeli flags, signs and statues on campus. It is also not allowed to do any political action or demonstrations supporting Palestinians."

Unmistakably, the well-maintained and carefully curated aesthetics of the campus stand in stark contrast to Issawiya's congested and garbage-filled alleyways that are neglected by Israel's Jerusalem municipality. For more than a decade, vehicles from Issawiya have also been unable to drive out of the village in the direction of Mount Scopus because of an army checkpoint. Palestinian students and the university-contracted workers from Issawiya are often frisked at this checkpoint before they are allowed to enter the campus.

Another student said, "I am lucky to be studying here but we are treated mostly as inferior to the Israeli students ... Most people [from Issawiya] work here as cleaners, serve the food on campus, do all the dirty work. So, of course, they live on top of the hill and we are at the bottom."

Contributions to Israeli militarism

During episodes of violent escalations, Israeli universities do not hesitate to openly side with the Israeli army. During the 2014 Israeli war on Gaza, for example, HUJI – along with other Israeli universities – chose to publicly support the brutal assault. In a letter to friends and alumni, the university announced that it was joining the war effort. It called for donations and encouraged donors to earmark their financial contributions "for the 'Protective Edge' fund", referring to the name the Israeli army gave to its operation in Gaza.

Yet, in response to a 2014 silent demonstration by Palestinian students on campus against the administrative detention of Palestinian activists, the university administration called campus security and the police.

But support for the Israeli army goes beyond slogans and letters. In fact, Israeli research and academic institutions play an active role in contributing to the Israeli state's militarism. A prime example of this is the development of the "Dahiya Doctrine" – that entails the use of disproportionate force and the targeting of civilian infrastructure and buildings – at the Tel Aviv University (TAU)-affiliated think-tank Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). This principle of warfare has been applied in the successive Israeli military campaigns against Gaza.

University campuses also serve as a training ground for future military personnel. In 2019, HUJI won a tender to host the Havatzalot programme – a three-year academic excellence programme for future intelligence officers – taking over from Haifa University.

There is also an intertwined relationship between the military-industrial complex and Israeli academia. Universities are often the sites of defence-related research and development, which in turn have contributed to Israel's high-tech industry and its status as a "startup nation". For example, Technion – Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa – makes the technology for detecting tunnels, developed the infamous "D9" bulldozer that is often used to destroy Palestinian homes and collaborates with Elbit Systems that produces surveillance technologies used for Israel's illegal apartheid wall in the occupied West Bank. Technion also developed a three-month programme titled "Defense Strategy for International Markets" that focuses on the global branding of Israel's defence industry. Similarly, Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan has also worked with the Israeli armed forces in order to devel-

op artificial intelligence technology for unmanned combat vehicles. And Ben Gurion University hosts BGN Technologies – a technology transfer company that develops unmanned ground vehicles as well as climbing robots for military use.

In the aftermath of Israel's war on Gaza in the summer of 2014, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS) gained significant ground globally and found mainstream resonance.

By then, the Israeli government had already assigned the Ministry of Strategic Affairs the responsibility for coordinating its anti-BDS initiatives, which over the next few years rapidly expanded. In 2015, a task force with a budget of \$25m was created to counter BDS. In 2017, some \$72m were allocated to anti-BDS efforts.

Following the Israeli government's lead, Israeli universities also got involved in an effort to counter the BDS campaign and enhance Israel's global standing.

In February 2015, INSS organised a panel called "BDS Campaign against Israel: Why, How, and What Can Be Done?". The panellist included Amir Ofek from Israel's foreign ministry, Ben-Dror Yemini from the daily newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth and Alan Johnson from the Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre (BICOM). In December 2015, the Truman Institute at HUJI organised a conference titled "BDS: Why Are They Boycotting Israel?" that, among other things, reflected on strategies for responding to the widening appeal of the BDS movement. The leadership at various universities have also begun explicitly addressing the threat of boycott. The 2015 "Report of the President" of Technion specifically addressed BDS and noted that Professor Zvi Ziegler of the Faculty of Mathematics was coordinating with the Committee of Heads of Israel's Universities in its efforts against BDS.

In 2016, TAU announced a \$1bn Global Campaign to fundraise for the university. Among the goals of the campaign was to "help counter the BDS movement". In the same year, the board of governors of the University of Haifa condemned the BDS campaign against Israeli universities, arguing that it "limits the progress of scientific growth and the exchange of ideas and knowledge, and it threatens the basic principles of academic freedom". The board encouraged the university leadership to continue its efforts against BDS.

In 2016, the University of Haifa's Division for External and Resource Development reported that faculty members were working towards strategic cooperation with the Israel Action Network against the boycott movement. By actively engaging in anti-BDS initiatives, supporting the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, and the victimisation of Palestinians by Israeli forces, Israeli universities have revealed themselves to be more than just institutions of higher learning. They are complicit in the affairs of the Israeli apartheid state.

As more and more academic institutions and scholars issue statements in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for liberation that explicitly state a commitment to BDS, an opportunity is arising to hold Israeli academic institutions accountable for their role in the upkeep of the apartheid regime.

—Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Why so much hue and cry on PM's remarks

Prof. Dr. Nusrat Ara Majeed



There are traditional rules of dress and behavior for both the sexes. Women are enjoined to cover their bodies (except face and hands) similarly men are enjoined to lower their eyes in front of women and be appropriately covered

PM has come under fire once again after his interview with Axios on HBO in which he said: "If a woman is wearing few clothes, it will have impact on the men unless they are robots. The concept of purdah prevents temptation in the society. We don't have discos or night clubs here, so if you raise temptation to a point – all the young men have nowhere to go. It has a consequence in the society".

It caused uproar on social media; TV talk shows and in the drawing rooms of the elite. Was he wrong in saying so? The answer is a big NO, because a woman's dress and modesty is important in the Islamic society. I think he was addressing the liberals, who believe in westernized liberty, ignoring the Islamic concept of modesty and morality.

It is true that the important factors in sex-related crimes are:

Lack of education; sexual frustration; poor implementation of law; illiteracy encourages patriarchal tendencies among men. As a consequence, innocent women have to bear the brunt of their masculine power.

Role of media in projecting women as an object is another very crucial factor in such crimes. Last but not the least, THE SMART PHONES – Oh God what nonsense, these illiterate people spend most of their time watching extremely vulgar and indecent movies. It acts as a stimulus; pollutes their minds.

MODESTY AND DRESS CODE IN ISLAM

There are traditional rules of dress and behavior for both the sexes. Women are enjoined to cover their

bodies (except face and hands) similarly men are enjoined to lower their eyes in front of women and be appropriately covered.

WHAT IS MODESTY?

It comes from a Latin word- KEEPING WITHIN MEASURE. Modesty is a mode of dress and deportment which intends to avoid the encouragement of sexual attraction. It may be considered inappropriate and immodest to reveal certain parts of the body. Very tight and revealing clothes are indecent, this is perhaps what PM meant by 'FEW CLOTHES'. Islam has strongly emphasized the concept of modesty and decency. In many authentic Hadiths it has been quoted: "modesty is a part of faith".

Modesty is verily required in the interaction between members of opposite sexes and, in some cases, between the members of the same sex as well. In Islam men and women share the responsibility of upholding modesty and controlling desires within society. While many may think that there is excessive emphasis on modesty of women; God's command for men to maintain modesty precedes the one for women.

God created men and women with unique physiological and psychological attributes. In Islam, these differences are embraced as vital components of healthy family and community structure, with each individual contributing their distinctive talent to society.

CONCEPTS IN THE WEST

A majority of men in the UK think a woman in reveal-

ing clothes is more likely to be sexually harassed. In an exclusive survey conducted for the INDEPENDENT, 55% men believed that while 41% women responded to the view that revealing clothes invite unwanted sexual advances.

Neoline Blackwell, head of Rape Crisis center said: "There is an assumption not borne out by evidence—that the way a woman dresses is likely to lead to rape or sexual assault. We know people are raped wearing a variety of clothing, even in school uniforms."

The idea that a woman with scanty clothes will be pounced on is the most common myth amongst generations. It may be as old as time. In the Bible first thing Adam said to God was: 'woman tempted me' . . . if society under estimates modesty, it results in violence against women.

Modesty is a feature of womanhood. When anyone causes annoyance or insult to a woman's sense of decency, both society and law takes a serious note of that situation. Violating the autonomy of a woman's body without her consent is a punishable crime. Nothing in Islam prevents a woman from accomplishing herself.

Societies may erect barriers but nothing in the spirit of Quran subjugates women to men. In time of course, social barriers will disappear —as they are disappearing now. And as a result it can only be expected that women will play an increasingly larger role in Islamic society and surpass the contributions of even the early Muslim women.

Briefs

Bilawal slams PM Imran's policies

FROM PAGE 01

take the Opposition on board when developing the budget, while he also censured the speech delivered by the premier and said that it was "nothing but a mere manipulation of words." He also said that the people of Pakistan want to talk about the issues of Karachi, Quetta, Peshawar, and Lahore instead of international issues. "The prime minister spoke of economic development but he is inviting immigrants to the country," Bilawal said. "The PM makes tall claims about the poor but his actions and policies do not correspond. He's making the rich richer and the poor poorer." Bilawal claimed owing to the rising inflation in the country, government employees are forced to commit suicide. "People want solutions to their problems. They are fed up with [the premier] constantly speaking about the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO)," he said, adding that the new budget will lead to a further decline of the country's economy. He said that the premier would "not be able to get any taxes from the masses" because, in order for people to contribute to the national exchequer, they must have confidence in the state as well as in the democracy.

Bilawal, Qureshi hold fiery debate

FROM PAGE 01

How can Bilawal challenge the legitimacy of the budget, he asked. He said that the opposition should also respect the vote instead of only raising slogans. No one can hurt the reputation of NA speaker, he went on to say. In a reaction, Bilawal Bhutto said that Qureshi criticized the party which had made him the FM and the president of the party's Punjab wing. "I have heard Qureshi saying jive Bhutto and agli bari, phir Zardari," he said. Bilawal said that when Qureshi was the foreign minister during the PPP government tenure, he used to campaign in the world asking to make him premier instead of Yousuf Raza Gilani." While responding to Bilawal's criticism, the FM said that he knows Bilawal Bhutto since childhood. The PPP chairman is on auto 'on' and 'off' mode as he is being dictated what to say, he went on to say.

25 new grounds to be constructed

BAHAWALPUR: Commissioner Bahawalpur Division Captain (retd) Muhammad Zafar Iqbal has said that sports facilities will be provided to youth in Bahawalpur Division and a road map has been prepared in this regard. Proposals have been prepared for the construction of 25 new sports grounds across the division. He said this while presiding over a meeting held in the Conference Room of his office on Wednesday. Secretary Schools, Secretary Higher Education Commission and Director General Sports, all the Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Divisional Sports Officers and District Sports Officers from all over Punjab participated in the meeting. Commissioner said that sports facilities will be provided in schools, colleges and government lands in the division so that the young generation can get maximum opportunities to participate in sports activities. - APP

Serena ruled out of Wimbledon

SPORTS DESK

NEW YORK: American professional tennis player and former world No. 1 in women's single tennis Serena Williams has been ruled out of the Wimbledon tennis championships after suffering an injury during the first round match. Serena Williams suffered an apparent ankle injury when the first set ended in a three-game tie.



ADDIS ABABA: Pakistan ambassador to Ethiopia Syed Shozab Abbas hosted a dinner at Pakistan House in honor of ambassador Yahya al-Eryani of Yemen, Mohamed Al-Rashedi of U.A.E, Hamad bin Mohammed Al-Dosar of Qatar and Saudi Arabia and Jordan ambassadors. - DNA

EURO 2020: Belgium vs Italy, title favorites to clash in last 8

They were in the same group with Italy as in the previous meeting Azzurri beat the Red Devils 2-0 in a Group E match in Lyon

SPORTS DESK

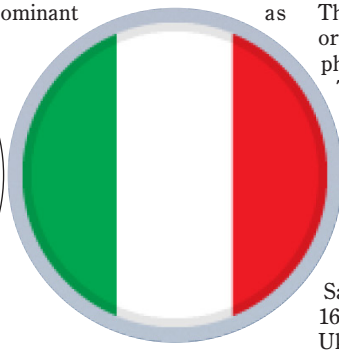
ANKARA: The UEFA EURO 2020 will see a fierce quarterfinal clash between Belgium and Italy on Friday as the circle tightens in the tournament. Belgium and Italy, the favorites for this year's title, each had a flawless run in the EURO 2020, winning all their matches so far. Called the Red Devils, Belgium won Group B with nine points, beating Russia 3-0, Denmark 2-1, and Finland 2-0. In the Round of 16, Belgium eliminated the EURO 2016 champions Portugal 1-0 in Seville. The Red Devils reached the quarterfinals in the EURO 2016 held in France. They were in the same group with Italy as in the previous meeting

Azzurri beat the Red Devils 2-0 in a Group E match in Lyon. Similar to Belgium, Italy won the EURO 2020 Group A after three wins out of three matches. The Italians beat Turkey 3-0, Switzerland 3-0, and Wales 1-0 in the group phase and did not concede any goal.

In the Round of 16, Italy barely beat Austria 2-1 in extra time to qualify for the EURO 2020 quarterfinals. Italy - the 2000 and 2012 runners-up in the European championships - were previously eliminated in the EURO 2016 quarterfinals. In the head-to-head comparison, Italy are dominant

Azzurri had 14 wins against Belgium in history. Meanwhile, Belgium bagged four victories. The rest four games ended as draw. Italy scored 43 goals but conceded 24 from Belgium. The Belgium vs. Italy showdown will be held at the Football Arena Munich in Germany at 1900GMT on Friday, July 2. The winning team will take on Switzerland or Spain on Tuesday, July 6. The last eight phase will kick off Friday.

The first match of the quarterfinals will be between Switzerland and Spain at Saint Petersburg Stadium in Russia. The quarterfinals' fixtures are as follows: Friday: Switzerland - Spain at 1600GMT in Saint Petersburg Belgium - Italy at 1900GMT in Munich Saturday: Czech Republic - Denmark at 1600GMT in Baku Ukraine - England at 1900GMT in Rome.



Pak envoy holds Khuli Katchery with expats in Austria and Slovakia



VIENNA: H.E. Aftab Ahmad Khokher, Ambassador of Pakistan in Austria, held E-Kachehri today for Pakistani community in Austria and Slovakia. Many Pakistanis residing in Austria attended the meeting. Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher, in his opening remarks, informed the participants about plan of the Embassy to organize Independence Day celebrations on 14 August 2021 and solicited their views in this regard. He also talked about announcement of relaxation in COVID-19 related measures by the Austrian government. He responded to some of the issues raised in the last meeting with the community. The community members expressed their appreciation for the initiative of E-Kachehri of the Embassy for their facilitation. They shared their problems for some consular matters like delay in attestation of documents from the Embassy of Austria in Islamabad which were addressed by Ambassador Khokher. He assured that he would continue his engagement with the community for addressing their issues and encouraged them to actively participate in E-Kachehri. - DNA

England focus turns to Ukraine for quarter-finals

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: England's footballers will travel to Rome for the Euro 2020 quarter-final against Ukraine on Saturday in a bid to reach the semi-finals of the tournament for the first time in 25 years. Gareth Southgate's side beat Germany 2-0 in front of 41,973 fans at Wembley. Fans have been warned not to travel to Italy because of Covid restrictions. The Football Association has said it won't be selling tickets because of coronavirus measures in place in Italy and the UK.

Myanmar to release 2,000 prisoners

FOREIGN DESK

YANGON: Myanmar's military authorities plan to release about 2,000 people from jails across the country, according to reports on Wednesday, as state television said the generals were dropping charges against actors and other celebrities who took part in the anti-coup pro-

tests. At least 700 of the prisoners will be released from Yangon's Insein jail, prison chief ZawZaw told the Reuters news agency. The prison chief, however, declined to specify who would be released from the country's vast prison complex where some of those who have taken part in the mass demonstrations have been taken. Rumours that prisoners would be released began on Saturday, as some family members of detainees gathered outside the prison. Hundreds of people were already waiting outside the prison on Wednesday morning in anticipation that some inmates would be freed. In April, the military rulers ordered

the release of more than 23,000 prisoners from jails across the country under a New Year amnesty, although few of those arrested after the February 1 coup were included. The news came a day after the country's military government dropped charges against 24 celebrities who had been declared wanted for incitement for their part in the mass rallies and civil disobedience against the generals' power grab. Actors, sportspeople, social media influencers, doctors and teachers have been among hundreds of people listed as wanted for opposing the military that seized power from the elected government of civilian leader Aung San SuuKy.



ISLAMABAD: DG PSB, Col. Muhammad Asif Zaman presented medals among the winners of 20th National Netball Championship 2021 Final Day being held at Rodham Hall, Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad. - DNA

Russia sees highest COVID-19 daily death toll yet

Russia in mid-June saw infections spike in a third wave driven by the highly transmissible Delta variant first identified in India, authorities have said, and worsened by a sluggish inoculation drive

AGENCIES

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday said he was opposed to mandatory coronavirus vaccinations for Russians but urged the job-sceptic population to get inoculated, as his country battles a deadly third wave. His comments came as Russia earlier Wednesday reported 669 coronavirus deaths over the past 24 hours, a pandemic high of fatalities for the second day in a row, according to a government tally. Russia in mid-June saw infections spike in a third wave driven by the highly transmissible Delta variant first identified in India, authorities have said, and worsened by a sluggish inoculation drive. Although free jabs have been available since early December, only

around 15 percent of Russia's population had received at least one dose as of Wednesday according to the Gogov website, which tallies Covid figures from the regions. The slow uptake prompted Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin earlier this month to order mandatory jabs for service sector employees, with more than a dozen regions in Russia since following suit. The widening policy has prompted concerns that all Russians eventually would be required to be vaccinated, which Putin shot down Wednesday while fielding questions in his annual phone-in session. "I do not support mandatory vaccinations," the Russian president said. Still, Putin - as he has done repeatedly in recent months - called on Russians to get vaccinated. "It is necessary to listen, not to people who understand little about

this and spread rumours, but to specialists," he told Russians, the majority of whom polls show oppose receiving coronavirus jabs. "If a person is sick without a vaccine, then the long-term consequences can be very serious," the 68-year-old Russian leader said. Surveys show that Russians are particularly sceptical of the country's homegrown jabs - Sputnik V, EpiVacCorona, CoviVac and the one-dose Sputnik Light. Putin said Wednesday that the four homegrown vaccines were better than foreign alternatives, naming AstraZeneca and Pfizer. He added that he himself had been vaccinated with Sputnik V. The president's plea for Russians to get inoculated came after the Kremlin Tuesday conceded that its target of vaccinating 60 percent of the population by autumn will not be

possible. Critics say the third wave has been spurred by the failure to lock down, a measure taken during the first wave last spring but avoided this time by Russian authorities to support a struggling economy. Asked Wednesday if he supported a new lockdown, Putin said regional authorities were instead promoting localised mandatory vaccinations and other measures to avoid introducing new quarantines. In Moscow, the epicentre of Russia's outbreak, Mayor Sobyanin has ordered businesses to send home at least 30 percent of unvaccinated employees and restaurateurs to only allow inside patrons who have been inoculated or were infected in the past six months. The country's second-worst hotspot Saint Petersburg has avoided imposing strict restrictions, however, and on Friday it is due

to host a Euro 2020 quarter-final drawing hundreds of supporters from abroad. Dozens of Finland supporters were infected in the city after they travelled there earlier this month for their team's loss to Belgium in the group stage. Nationwide, infections grew on Wednesday by 21,042, bringing Russia's caseload to more than 5.5 million - the fifth-highest worldwide, according to an AFP tally. With 135,214 deaths from the virus, Russia has the highest official toll from Covid-19 in Europe - even as authorities have been accused of downplaying the severity of the country's outbreak. Under a broader definition for deaths linked to coronavirus, statistics agency Rosstat at the end of April said that Russia has seen at least 270,000 fatalities.

Partners in peace, not war; PM tells US

FROM PAGE 01

which helped recover the country from the negative economic effects of the pandemic that impacted the whole world. He said despite the pressures and criticism from opposition and media, his government did not go for complete lockdown and adopted the policy of identifying hot-spots through "trace and track" and opted for smart lockdowns to protect daily-wagers and laborers from economic hardships. The prime minister appreciated the services of National Command and Control Center (NCOCC), Asad Umar, Dr Faisal Sultan and the personnel of armed forces involved in the whole process during the pandemic. He said that the government's decision of early opening the construction, agriculture and exports sectors also helped in realization of around 4% economic growth despite the challenge of COVID-19. Imran Khan said that the government provided financial support to 12 million families through Ehsaas Program, which ranked 4th in the world. He said that with the grace of Allah Almighty, the country despite the challenge of locust attack achieved record wheat, rice, maize and sugarcane production, which besides helping to achieve economic growth also led to economic prosperity in rural areas. The prime minister said that the government's measures to ensure the receipt of support prices by the growers of various crops also led to economic prosperity of the farmers, who then reinvested their incomes in the next crops.

Afghanistan: US 'days away' from completing pull-out

FROM PAGE 01

The warning from the commander of the US-led mission in Afghanistan came just days after the UN warned of "dire scenarios" as the Taliban took hold of many districts. It said insurgents had taken more than 50 of 370 districts since May, encircling many cities and closing in on the capital Kabul. "The security situation is not good right now," Gen Miller said in a rare news conference.

"Civil war is certainly a path that can be visualised if this continues on the trajectory it's on right now," he added. "That should be a concern to the world." Afghans knew this was coming. Warnings of "civil war" have become a visceral part of their own lives; they've lived, and seen loved ones die, in a steadily deteriorating situation long before this "day after" even starts.

Turkish minister meets Kyrgyz president

DNA

BISHKEK: Ankara is keen on enhancing cooperation with Kyrgyzstan in many fields, including security and defense, Turkey's defense minister told the Kyrgyz president in a meeting on Wednesday. During discussions with President SadyrJaparov in the capital Bishkek, National Defense Minister HulusiAkar also stressed the importance of collaboration in the fight against the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETO), the group behind the 2016 defeated coup in Turkey. Akar said the 5th meeting of the Turkey-Kyrgyzstan High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council - chaired by Japarov and President RecepTayyipErdogan in Ankara earlier this month - gave fresh impetus to bilateral relations and produced a roadmap for the future. The Turkish minister also visited the memorial of eminent Kyrgyz writer and diplomat ChingizAitmatov, where met his son EldarAitmatov, before departing for Tajikistan.

Briefs

US urges delay to EU digital tax plan

BRUSSELS: United States is urgently requesting the EU delay a bloc-wide digital tax, warning it could torpedo international talks to overhaul global taxation, according to a US diplomatic document seen by AFP on Wednesday.

The argument has been made over recent days in a discreet but strongly argued diplomatic outreach by Washington to a handful of EU capitals, diplomats said on condition of anonymity. The EU levy, due to be announced by the European Commission on July 14, "threatens the work being undertaken via the OECD/G20 process," said the US document. "We urge you to work with the European Council and the European Commission" to delay its release, the document added, referring to the European institutions that will carry through the EU's plan.

Its timing "would risk entirely derailing the negotiations at a sensitive juncture," the US added.

Negotiations involving 139 countries are currently under way at the OECD in Paris to strike an important preliminary deal on global taxation in time for a meeting of G20 finance ministers in Venice on July 9. — APP

Uzbek-Turkish incubation center opened

DNA

TASHKENT: An Uzbek-Turkish incubation center has been opened in Tashkent, the Ministry of Innovative Development of Uzbekistan said in a statement.

The capital hosted a meeting between the Minister of Innovative Development Ibrohim Abdurakhmonov and the President of the Office of the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Turkey for Human Resource Management Salim Atay.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the directions of joint activities within the framework of the investment project and signed the Charter of the Uzbek-Turkish Incubation Center in Tashkent, and the ceremonial opening of the Uzbek-Turkish Incubation Center was held in the building of the Ministry of Innovative Development.

The implementation of the project will create a platform that unites entrepreneurs and talented youth, implement incubation and educational programs, with the opportunity to undergo short-term internships in the Republic of Turkey and ensure the implementation of joint innovation and start-up projects between promising innovators of the two countries.

Dubai opens region's largest digital art gallery

ISLAMABAD: Dubai has opened the largest immersive digital art gallery in the region, representing a new era of modern art.

Chairperson of Dubai Culture and Arts Authority, Sheikha Latifa Bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum inaugurated the digital art gallery partnered with 'Infinity des Lumi res'.

Sheikha Latifa has termed the opening of the digital gallery an important step in enhancing the emirate's position as a destination of choice for the global creative movement and contemporary arts, besides enriching its knowledge-based economy, the Emirates News Agency (WAM) reported.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, she expressed confidence that the gallery would not only bring a unique art experience to the public in Dubai, but also attract digital creatives to establish their practice and thrive in the emirate.

The gallery, which will open to the public on July 1st, will offer a multi-sensory and vibrant journey presented through the art of Van Gogh's 'Starry Nights', DannyRose Studio's 'DREAMED JAPAN' 'The Images of the floating world', and Thomas Vanz's fully digital creation, Verse. — APP

Germany completes troop pull-out from Afghanistan

"A historic chapter comes to an end, an intensive deployment that challenged and shaped the Bundeswehr, in which the Bundeswehr proved itself in combat."

AGENCIES

KABUL: Germany has completed its troop pull-out from Afghanistan, started in May, the defence ministry announced Tuesday, ending a nearly 20-year deployment there alongside US and other international forces.

The announcement of the pull-out of German troops, whose presence there was second only to the US forces, came as the US aims to complete its own withdrawal by September 11.

"After nearly 20 years of deployment, the last soldiers of our Bundeswehr have left Afghanistan this evening," said German Defence Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer in a statement. "They are on the way back.

"A historic chapter comes to an end, an intensive deployment that challenged and shaped the

Bundeswehr, in which the Bundeswehr proved itself in combat," she added. On Twitter, the minister offered her thanks to all the 150,000 men and women who had served there since 2001, saying they could be proud of their service.

And she paid tribute to those killed and wounded in service there. "You will not be forgotten," she said. According to the army, 59 German soldiers have been killed since 2001 in the course of their service in Afghanistan.

The last of the troops were airlifted out of their base at Mazar-i-Sharif in northern Afghanistan on two German A400 Ms and two US C17s. Before the pull-out began, Germany still had 1,100 soldiers operating as part of the 9,600-strong NATO training and support mission — second only to the US military presence.

Britain, Italy and Turkey also have a significant military pres-

ence there, the five countries between supplying 6,000 members of the mission, called Resolute Support.

Smaller contributors to the force, such as Denmark, Estonia and Spain, have already pulled out their forces. Germany stepped up its pull-out after US President Joe Biden announced he was pulling US troops out of the country after 20 years there.

In April, Germany's defence ministry had announced it planned to pull out its troops by early July. Biden aims to have US troops out of Afghanistan by September 11, the 20th anniversary of the devastating Al-Qaeda attacks on the United States.

The pace of the US pull-out has led to speculation that he aims to have them all home before July 4: Independence Day in the United States.

Questioned by AFP about the timetable for the pull-out Tuesday,

a NATO spokesman would only say: "The withdrawal of forces is proceeding in an orderly and coordinated manner."

"While we reduce our military presence, we are continuing to support Afghanistan, by ensuring training and financial support for the security forces and the Afghan institutions, by maintaining a diplomatic presence in Kabul and by financing the functioning of the international airport," the sourced added. The Pentagon declined to comment on the German announcement.

The security situation in Afghanistan has been deteriorating for several weeks.

Fighting has surged since early May when the US military began its final withdrawal of troops, with the Taliban claiming to have recently captured more than 100 of the over 400 districts across Afghanistan.

On Tuesday, General Scott Mill-

er, the top US commander in Afghanistan did not rule out conducting air strikes against the Taliban if they pressed on with their campaign. Some observers fear the Taliban might once again seize the capital Kabul once the Western troops have left, and have expressed fears for the thousands of Afghans who worked alongside the international force. Washington has already announced it is preparing for the evacuation of their Afghan translators.

The international intervention in Afghanistan began on October 7, 2001, less than a month after the 9/11 attacks that killed around 3,000 people in the United States.

The country's Islamic fundamentalist Taliban regime had been sheltering Osama bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda movement, which carried out the attacks. Within weeks, US-led forces had overthrown them.

Twitter faces new case for child pornography

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Police in India have registered a new case against Twitter Inc for allegedly promoting child pornography, after previously lodging complaints it allegedly "hurt sentiments" in geopolitical matters, marking an escalation in the row between the United States-based firm and Indian authorities.

Police in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh named Twitter India chief Manish Maheshwari in complaints after the politically sensitive regions were depicted outside a map of India on its careers website.

Late on Tuesday, police in the capital, New Delhi, said in a statement they had registered another case against Twitter for "availability of child sexual abuse and child pornographic material" on its platform.

Twitter did not comment on cases related to India's map. On the New Delhi case, Twitter said it has a zero tolerance policy for child sexual exploitation. Top court asked to intervene. Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday challenged in the Supreme Court a bar on police action against Twitter's India head, after a lower court protected him against arrest over an accusation that the platform was used to spread hate. Maheshwari was summoned by the police in the northern state to answer allegations that include inciting "hate and enmity" between Hindu and Muslim communities in relation to a video that went viral on its platform.

Brazil to suspend vaccine deal with India

WEB DESK

BRASILIA: Brazil will suspend a \$324m Indian COVID-19 vaccine contract that has mired President Jair Bolsonaro in accusations of irregularities, the health minister said on Tuesday, following the guidance of the federal comptroller, the CGU.

The deal to buy 20 million doses of Bharat Biotech's Covaxin shot has become a headache for Bolsonaro after whistleblowers went public with alleged irregularities. One Health Ministry official said he alerted the president about his concerns.

Bolsonaro, whose popularity has faded as Brazil's COVID-19 death toll climbed past 500,000, has denied any wrongdoing, saying on Monday he was not aware of any irregularities. But thorny questions refuse to go away, and may pose problems for him ahead of next year's presidential vote. Brazil Health Minister Marcelo Queiroga said at a news conference his team would probe the allegations during the suspension.

"According to the preliminary analysis of the CGU, there are no irregularities in the contract but, for compliance, the Health Ministry chose to suspend the contract," the ministry said in a statement. Earlier on Thursday, CNN Brasil reported that the ministry had decided to cancel the contract.

Kim sacks officials over handling of Covid

NEWS DESK

PYONGYANG: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un replaced several senior officials after a "grave incident" in the country's efforts to defend itself against the coronavirus, state media reported Wednesday.

Pyongyang closed its borders in January last year to defend itself against the pandemic that first emerged in neighbouring China and has gone on to sweep the world.

It has not publicly confirmed any cases of the disease at any point, neither in state media nor in the test statistics it has disclosed to the World Health Organization. But officials had "caused a grave incident that poses a huge crisis to the safety of the nation and its people", Kim told a politburo meeting, according to the Korean Central News Agency.

It did not specify any details of what had happened.

But Kim added that the "incompetence and irresponsibility of the senior officials are a major factor that hampers the implementation of important tasks", adding that they were "captivated by selfishness and passivity".



KABUL: Pakistan ambassador to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmad Khan calls on Ahmad Zia Masood former Afghan Vice President. Both sides had detailed discussions on the need for pursuing a political approach for resolution of Afghan conflict. — DNA

Ethiopia rebels vow to continue fight

FOREIGN DESK

ADDIS ABABA: Tigrayan rebels vowed to hunt down Ethiopian and Eritrean troops on the run around the regional capital, Mekelle, on Wednesday after taking full control of the city in a sharp reversal of eight months of war.

People in Mekelle said the incoming Tigrayan fighters were greeted with cheers. There were similar scenes on video footage from the northern town of Shire, where residents said government-allied Eritrean forces pulled out and Tigrayan forces re-entered. The Ethiopian government declared a unilateral ceasefire on Monday after the Tigray People's Liberation Front's (TPLF) territorial gains.

However, Getachew Reda, a TPLF spokesman, said the ceasefire was a "joke" and hundreds had been killed in fighting near the border with the Afar region, information that could not be independently verified.

Getachew told Al Jazeera's Catherine Wambua on Wednesday that rebel forces would not stop fighting until the entire region was liberated.

"Getachew says even if [Tigray] forces are making good gains and pushing back opposing forces, the Ethiopian military — backed by Eritrean forces and Amhara fighters — still control large swaths of Tigrayan territory," Wambua said.

"The aim of the Tigrayan forces is to push back to make sure that every inch of Tigray is in their control."

Saudi Arabia plans new national airline

AGENCIES

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman announced plans on Tuesday to launch a second national airline as part of a broader strategy to turn the kingdom into a global logistics hub as it seeks to diversify from oil.

The creation of another flag carrier would catapult Saudi Arabia into the fifth rank globally in terms of air transit traffic, official state media reported, without giving details on when and how the airline would be created.

Crown Prince Mohammed has been spearheading a push for Saudi Arabia, the biggest Arab economy and the largest country in the Gulf geographically, to boost non-oil revenues to about 45 billion riyals (\$12bn) by 2030.

Making the kingdom a global logistics hub, which includes the development of ports, rail and road networks, would increase the transport and logistics sector's contribution to gross domestic product to 10 percent from six percent, state news agency SPA said. "The comprehensive strategy aims to position Saudi Arabia as a global logistics hub connecting the three continents," the crown prince was quoted as saying in the SPA report. "This will help other sectors like tourism, Hajj and Umrah to achieve their national targets." The addition of another airline would increase the number of international destinations from Saudi Arabia to more than 250 and double air cargo capacity to more than 4.5 million tonnes, the SPA report said.

With current flag bearer Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudia), the kingdom has one of the smallest airline networks in the region relative to its size. Saudia has struggled with losses for years and like global peers, has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic.

Azerbaijan offers Armenia dialogue on border delimitation

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan offers Armenia to start bilateral discussions on the delimitation and demarcation of borders, Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov has said.

Addressing the 43rd online meeting of the Council of BSEC foreign ministers on June 30, Bayramov also said that anti-Azerbaijani statements voiced in Armenia hamper the peace process.

"After the liberation of the state border with Armenia from 30 years of occupation, Azerbaijan is currently building a border control infrastructure along the state border. We offer Armenia to start bilateral discussions on border delimitation and demarcation. Azerbaijan expects a positive reaction from Armenia," he said.

The minister said that restoring its territorial integrity, Azerbaijan repeatedly expressed its determination to normalize relations with Armenia on the basis of mutual recognition and respect

for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and inviolability of internationally recognized borders. "There is no alternative to building good neighborly relations on this basis to ensure long-term peace and stability in the region. There is an unprecedented opportunity to build

such a relationship through the consistent implementation of the trilateral statement signed by the leaders of both sides," he said.

Furthermore, Bayramov said that the hatred against Azerbaijan, accompanied by revanchist rhetoric in Armenia, is a matter of serious concern. "The anti-Azerbaijani hate speech that unites the ruling and opposition politicians in Armenia threatens the fragile normalization process," he added.

The minister stressed that Armenia must finally live up to its obligations under international and regional documents and hand over the

whole region.

On June 26, President Ilham Aliyev said that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is over and Armenia must determine its borders with Azerbaijan.

"I have said this many times and I want to say again that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been resolved. Armenia must accept it and work with us to determine the borders. A working group on delimitation should be established. There must be preparations for a peace agreement," Aliyev said.

He added that there is only one way for Armenia to develop — to establish normal relations with its neighbors, give up its territorial claims, and not to use the word Nagorno-Karabakh at all. Azerbaijan and Armenia have failed to come to an agreement on the delimitation and demarcation of their state border following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The tension over border delimitation gained fresh momentum following the end of the Second Karabakh War in 2020.



mine maps to Azerbaijan. "Armenia must finally fulfill its obligations under international humanitarian law, as well as the tripartite declaration, and submit maps of mined areas to prevent further human suffering," he added. Bayramov noted that the restoration of communications will bring benefits to

Russia, Uzbekistan develop co-op in agriculture

DNA

TASHKENT: A round table "Russia - Uzbekistan: developing mutually beneficial cooperation in agriculture" was held in Tashkent, which was attended by representatives of Russian companies, Uzbek state and public structures, participants and visitors of the exhibition.

The Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Uzbekistan Oleg Malginov wished successful negotiations and achievement of the set goals to the Russian exhibitors, their Uzbek partners and all participants of the round table. He noted the great importance of Russian-Uzbek cooperation in the field of agriculture. Dmitry Dynnikov, Deputy Trade Representative of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Uzbekistan, presented information on the current state and future prospects of cooperation between Russia and Uzbekistan in the agricultural sector.

Pavel Bukhanov, the head of the representative office of the Russian Export Center JSC in Uzbekistan, spoke about the existing



measures of state support for the export of Russian agricultural machinery to Uzbekistan. He gave practical advice to exporting companies on how to operate in Central Asian markets.

Great interest was aroused by the speech of the chairman of the board of the leasing company "Uzagroleasing" Nodir Otajonov, dedicated to the established practice of working with foreign man-

ufacturers of agricultural machinery, as well as the requirements for purchased equipment and suppliers.

Botur Yusupov, Deputy General Director of Uzbek Leasing, who

spoke at the round table, presented his company's plans for the procurement of machinery and equipment for agriculture for the near future and gave a number of practical advice to potential suppliers. Andrei Kolesnikov, Director of the Sales Department for Asian Markets at Rostselmash, shared his experience of entering the Uzbek market and plans for further work. His speech raised many questions. Russian participants, in particular, were interested in the terms of cooperation of Uzbek dealers with foreign manufacturers of agricultural machinery, organization of service.

The head of the department for support of producers of medicinal plants and spices of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Holboyev spoke about measures to support small businesses in the agricultural sector. At the end of the round table, all participants thanked the speakers and organizers of the event - the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Russia and Expocentre AO - for the opportunity to get new important business contacts and useful first-hand information, to personally get acquainted with key figures in the Uzbek market.

Briefs

Pakistan wants good ties with neighbors

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi says our reconciliatory role in Afghanistan has made it clear to the world that Pakistan wants peace.

In a statement on Wednesday, he said Pakistan wants good relations with all its neighboring countries including India. Shah Mahmood Qureshi said unfortunately, in response to peace office from Pakistan, India acted unilateral and unconstitutional measures on August 5, 2019.

He said this Indian illegal action, which created tension in the region, had been rejected by the Pakistan and Kashmiris as well and India is responsible for the current deteriorating situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The Foreign Minister said that Prime Minister Imran Khan and the PTI government have a clear policy that we will not interfere in internal affairs of any country, including India. He said on the diplomatic front, our position on Kashmir is clear and his letters to the Security Council are on record.

China grants 200 mobile oxygen concentrators

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: China on Wednesday handed over 200 mobile oxygen concentrators to Pakistan in an effort to help the country's battle against COVID-19 pandemic.

In a ceremony held here, Chinese Ambassador, Nong Rong handed over the oxygen concentrators to National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Chairman Lieutenant General Akhter Nawaz Satti, said media release. The ceremony was attended by officials from Chinese embassy, health and foreign affairs ministries and NDMA. The NDMA chairman on behalf of people and the government of Pakistan thanked the Chinese side for donation of oxygen concentrators. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Nong Rong said China Pakistan relations were growing stronger with the passage of time.

Scholar Maulana Abdul Razzaq passes away

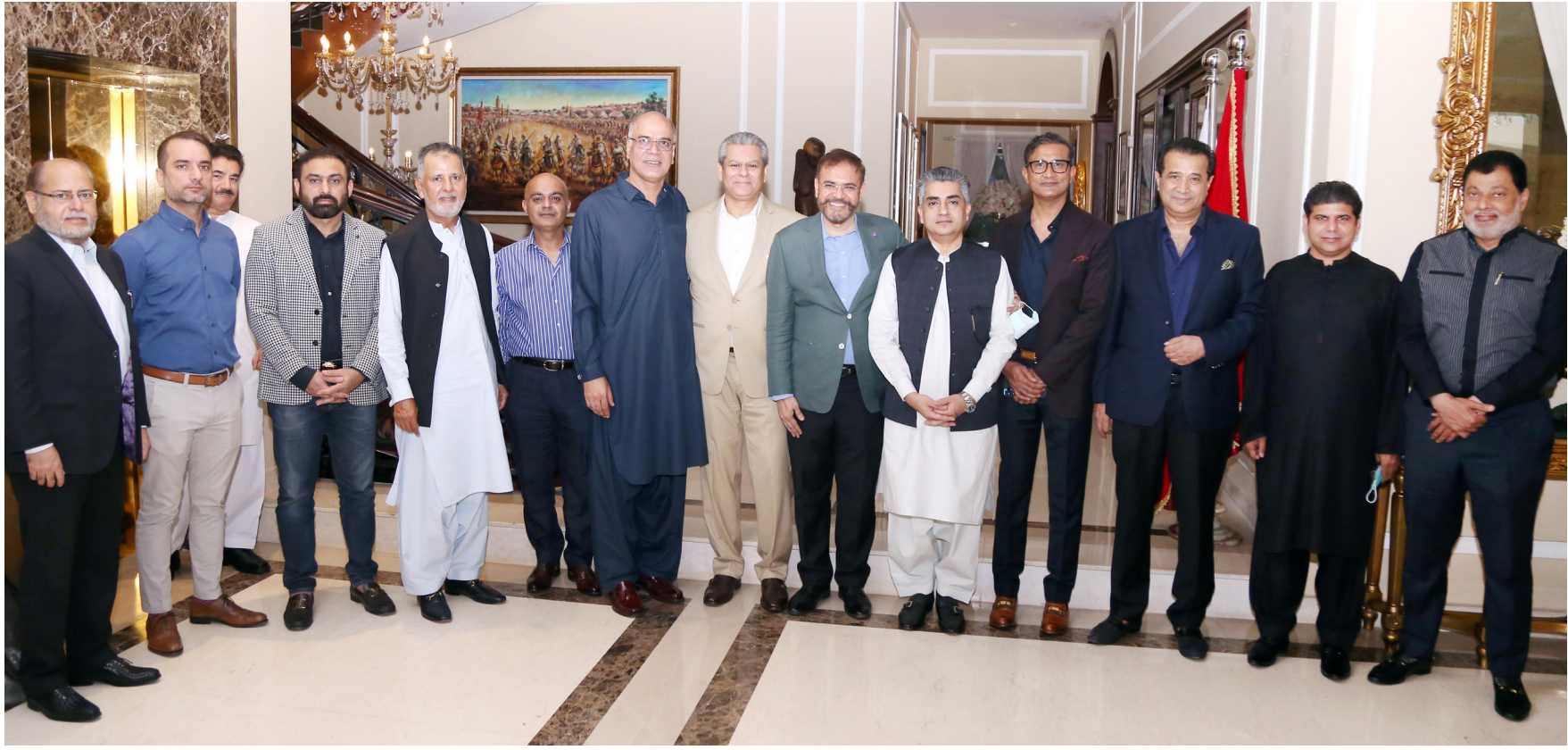
STAFF REPORT

KARACHI: Renowned Islamic scholar and the chancellor of Jamia Binoria Town Maulana Dr Abdul Razzaq Iskander passed away in Karachi on Wednesday after protracted illness. He was 86.

Sami Swati, a religious scholar and spokesperson of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam Sindh, told media that the long-time head of the famous Karachi seminary located near Guru Mandir was on a wheelchair for the last one-and-a-half years.

He was suffering from breathing problems and was admitted to the Indus Hospital, where he was put on ventilator a week ago and passed away. He left behind two sons who are both religious scholars.

Ishtiaq Baig hosts reception for Amb. Hamid Asghar



STAFF REPORT

KARACHI: Ishtiaq Baig Hon. Consul General of Morocco hosted a dinner in honor of Ambassador of Pakistan to Morocco Hamid Asghar Khan, attended

by Naveed Ahmed Shaikh Commissioner Karachi, Dr. Farid Iqbal Chief Collector Custom, Dr. Aftab Imam Chief Commissioner Income Tax, Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig Hon. Consul General of Yemen & Adil Rafi Siddiqui Director Military Land & Cantonment.

Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan is currently in Pakistan. He is scheduled to return to Morocco on Sunday. After Karachi, Ambassador Hamid Asghar had a busy schedule in Islamabad as well.

In Islamabad Ambassador Hamid held a briefing session with the senior journal-

ist as well, in which he briefed the media people about his efforts to promote bilateral relations between the two countries. Detailed account of his briefing shall be published separately.

(Detailed coverage in coming issue of CENTRELINE magazine)

Pakistan stands for peace all around: Army Chief

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) has said that Pakistan stands for peace within and all around, as it looks forward to acting as a bridge between regions. General Qamar Javed Bajwa was visiting National Defence University (NDU), Islamabad. COAS addressed participants of National Security and War Course (NSWC) - 21. Speaking on the occasion, COAS dilated upon the evolving strategic and re-

gional environment. Expounding on Pakistan's support to Afghan Peace Process, COAS said that spoilers of peace in Afghanistan risk regional instability. Expressing resolute support to the people of IIOJ&K, COAS stressed upon a peaceful and durable solution of Kashmir issue in line with relevant UN resolutions and aspirations of Kashmiri people. Sharing his vision of Pakistan Army, COAS underscored the need for continuous evaluation of existing doctrine and corresponding strategy to effective-

ly deal with the evolving threats in various domains. COAS termed professionalism, competence and devotion to duty as hall mark of Pakistan Army and emphasized on realistic and futuristic training for maintaining perpetual operational readiness. Force modernization and induction of advanced technologies are imperative for maintaining qualitative edge over adversary, COAS remarked. A well-equipped, well trained and motivated Army having unwavering support of its people can surmount any challenge,

COAS emphasised adding that the forces that wish to undermine the unbreakable bond between Armed Forces and the nation are bound to fail. Congratulating the participants on successful completion of their course, COAS advised them to stay focused on attaining professional excellence while remaining abreast with revolutionary advancements in warfare which are redefining national security. Earlier on arrival, COAS was received by Lieutenant General Muhammad Saeed; President NDU.

Putin's phone-in hit by 'cyberattacks'

MOSCOW :A televised phone-in with Russian President Vladimir Putin Wednesday was targeted by "powerful" cyberattacks, the state-run Rossiya 24 network which broadcast the event said. Shown on Kremlin-friendly media, the annual session with Putin sees the president field in real time queries submitted by Russians throughout the country. This year's phone-in on Wednesday, which lasted nearly four hours, repeat-

edly faced connection problems, particularly during calls from remote regions. "Our digital systems are right now facing attacks, powerful DDoS attacks," a Rossiya-24 presenter told Putin, after a caller from the Kuzbass region in southwestern Siberia experienced connection issues. "Are you joking? Seriously?" Putin responded. "Turns out we have hackers in Kuzbass," he quipped. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada in group photo with officials of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ambassadors of Central Asian countries, during his farewell visit to the Foreign Ministry. The Ambassadors of Turkey and Afghanistan are also in the picture. - DNA

UN chief urges US to remove Iran sanctions

FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appealed to US President Joe Biden's administration to lift or waive all sanctions on Iran as agreed under a 2015 deal aimed at stopping Tehran from developing a nuclear weapon. In a report to the United Nations Security Council, Guterres also urged the United States to "extend the waivers with regard to the trade-in oil with the Islamic Republic of Iran, and fully renew waivers for nuclear non-proliferation projects". The 15-member council will on Wednesday discuss the secretary-general's biannual report on the implementation of a 2015 resolution that enshrines

the nuclear deal between Iran, the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Russia, China and the European Union. Guterres' appeal to Washington comes amid talks to revive the deal - known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) - under which Iran accepted curbs on its nuclear programme in return for a lifting of many foreign sanctions against it. Former US President Donald Trump abandoned the pact in 2018 and reimposed harsh sanctions, prompting Tehran to start violating some of the nuclear limits in 2019. One of Iran's moves to reduce compliance was a decision to end extra monitoring of its nuclear sites by the IAEA in February. The inspections were extended twice by temporary deals, the last

of which ended last week. "I appeal to the United States to lift or waive its sanctions outlined in the plan," said Guterres, who also appealed to Iran to return to full implementation of the deal. Iran has refined uranium up to a purity of roughly 60 percent, far above the deal's limit of 3.67 percent and much closer to the 90 percent suitable for atom bomb cores, though it maintains that it seeks only civilian nuclear power and could quickly reverse its moves if Washington rescinded sanctions and returned to the 2015 deal. Some experts believe that Iran had been waiting for the election of Ebrahim Raisi, whose hardline approach is backed by Supreme Leader Ali Hosseini Khamenei, the ultimate arbiter of Iran's foreign policy.

Petrol price goes up by Rs2

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The price of petrol in Pakistan will go up by Rs2 per litre starting July 1, according to Special Assistant to Prime Minister of Pakistan on Political Communication Shahbaz Gill. Gill said that the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) had recommended an increase of Rs6.05, but Prime Minister Imran Khan rejected it, instead approving an increase of Rs2 per litre for petrol. The premier's aide said that the recommended increase by OGRA was in accordance with a rise in fuel prices in the international market. According to Gill, the recommendation also included an increase of Rs3.44 for the price of diesel but the prime minister approved an increase of Rs1.44. A notification issued by the Ministry of Finance said that kerosene oil would see an increase of Rs3.86, whereas light diesel oil would go up by Rs3.72.

Canada: Dozens dead as heat wave beats records

WEB DESK

VANCOUVER: Dozens of people have died in Canada amid an unprecedented heat wave that has smashed temperature records. Police in the Vancouver area have responded to more than 130 sudden deaths since Friday. Most were elderly or had underlying health conditions, with heat often a contributing factor. Canada broke its temperature record for a third straight day on Tuesday - 49.6C (121.3F) in Lytton, British Columbia. The US north-west has also seen record highs - and a number of fatalities. Experts say climate change is expected to increase the frequency of extreme weather events, such as heatwaves. However, linking any single event to global warming is complicated. The heat over western parts of Canada and the US has been caused by a dome of static high-pressure hot air stretching from California to the Arctic territories. Temperatures have been easing in coastal areas but there is not much respite for inland regions. Before Sunday, temperatures in Canada had never passed 45C.

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