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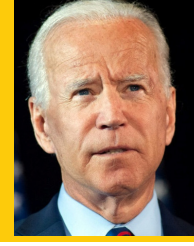
Price Rs. 20

Terrorists will not be allowed to wreck peace: Gen. Bajwa

Detailed News On Page-01

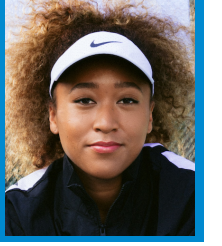
Joe Biden to 'narrow racial wealth gap'

Detailed News On Page-07



Naomi Osaka withdraws from French Open

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Tajik President arrives today

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: At the invitation of Prime Minister Imran Khan, President of Tajikistan, H.E. Emomali Rahmon, will pay a two-day visit to Pakistan on 2-3 June 2021. He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation. Pakistan and Tajikistan enjoy close brotherly relations underpinned by commonality of faith, shared history and cultural affinities. These ties are characterized by mutual respect, shared perceptions and a common desire to promote peace, stability and development in the region.

Pakistan's poverty rate is over 21%

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan People Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed concerns over the diminishing agriculture of the country. Calling out Prime Minister Imran Khan for the unfair distribution of water to crucial areas of Sindh, Chairman PPP pointed out that the ruling government was entirely responsible for placing Pakistan's agriculture at stake. While other politicians are in denial regarding Pakistan's future, the impact caused by the downfall of crops has painted a clear picture of the harsh conditions that will befall the country soon.

India must restore status of IIOJ&K

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said Pakistan is now recognized by the world as a part of solution and not a part of problem due to its successful foreign policy. In a statement on Tuesday, he said Modi government will have to restore the special status of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K). He said India is faced with immense pressure due to its internal deteriorating situation.

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G7 set to launch green alternative to China's BRI - Page 07

President for enhanced Pak-Turk cooperation - Page 08



ISLAMABAD: President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo with Speakers of Afghanistan, Turkey, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan on the occasion of Second General Conference of the Parliamentary Assembly of Economic Cooperation Organization (PAECO). (More coverage on the Back Page) - DNA

Terrorists will not be allowed to wreck peace

COAS said that Pak Army will make all possible efforts towards achievement of an enduring peace in Balouchistan

NEHAL MIRAZ

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa has said that terrorists won't be allowed to destabilise peace efforts. The COAS emphasised that all out efforts be made to assist provincial government in ensuring law and order. The Chief of Army Staff visited Corps HQ Quetta on Tuesday. On his arrival, Chief of Army Staff was received by Corps Commander Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali. Chief of Army Staff was given a detailed briefing on security situation, operational preparedness, border management including fencing along Pak-Afghan and Pak-Iran borders. Chief of

PM Imran condemns Quetta terrorist attack

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday strongly condemned the terrorist attack against the FC troops in Quetta and Turbat and reiterated the government's resolve to fight the terrorists and foil attempts against peace and development of Balochistan. In two separate attacks by the terrorists, an FC post near Pir Ismail Ziarat was targeted by terrorists on Monday night. According to the ISPR, around 4 to 5 terrorists were killed while 7 to 8 injured. "Four brave FC soldiers embraced shahadat while 6 soldiers got injured," in the exchange of fire, the ISPR said. In another incident, the terrorists targeted an FC vehicle with an Improvised Explosive Device at Turbat, injuring 2 FC soldiers. Prime Minister Imran Khan in a tweet expressed his condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the departed souls. He vowed to fight these terrorists and said no one would be allowed to sabotage peace and development in Balochistan.

Army Staff was also briefed on the socio-economic initiatives undertaken by Army in support of Govt of Balochistan and efforts underway for capacity enhancement of LEAs to ensure peace and stability. Chief of Army Staff said that Pakistan army will make all possible efforts towards achievement of an enduring peace for sustainable socio-economic development of the province. Chief of Army Staff lauded officers and men for their dedicated efforts, continued vigilance and high morale. A day earlier, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) visited Command & Staff College (CSC),

Continued on Page 06

Matsuda for enhanced think-thank activity

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Japan has welcomed that the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE/JETRO) in Japan and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in Pakistan held the first online workshop on May 26, 2021. Starting from the opening remarks and mutual introductions by FUKAO Kyoji, the President of IDE/JETRO and Abid Q Suleri, the Executive Director of SDPI, experts from both sides



made presentations and discussed about topics such as Labor Force Participation of Women, Geographical Simulation Model of IDE, Financial Inclusion in Pakistan, and Sustainable Recovery from COVID 19 and

Continued on Page 06

US to hand over Bagram base in 20 days

KABUL: The US military will hand over its main Bagram Air Base to Afghan forces in about 20 days, an official said Tuesday, as Washington presses on with withdrawing the last of its troops from the country. The vast base, built by the Soviets in the 1980s, is the biggest military facility used by US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, with tens of thousands of troops stationed there during the peak of America's military involvement in the violence-ravaged country.

Moroccan King directs to assist minor migrants

Morocco is ready to collaborate, as it has always done, with European countries and the European Union (EU), for the settlement of this issue

NEWS DESK

RABAT: King Mohammed VI, has reiterated his Instructions to the Ministers in charge of the Interior and of Foreign Affairs to definitively settle the issue of unaccompanied Moroccan minors in an illegal situation in certain European countries. The King had stressed, on several occasions, including to Heads of Foreign State, the clear and firm commitment of the Kingdom of Morocco to accept the return of duly identified unaccompanied minors. Cooperation mechanisms have been set up for this purpose with certain countries, in particular France and Spain, which have resulted in the returning of several dozen of minors to Morocco. The delays noted in the implementation of this cooperation are mainly linked to blockages caused by the complex procedures in some European countries. Morocco is the first country concerned by certain circles of civil society, or even criminal networks, which use the supposedly precarious conditions of minors as a pretext to exploit them. Morocco is ready to collaborate, as it has always done, with European countries and the European Union (EU), for the settlement of this issue. The Kingdom hopes that the EU and the countries concerned will be able to overcome the procedural constraints to facilitate this operation. Morocco once again regrets that the migration issue, including the issue of unaccompanied minors, is used as an alibi in order to circumvent the real causes of the current political crisis with Spain, whose origins and foundations are well known. The Moroccan authorities reserve the right to provide, at the right time, the appropriate responses to the unfounded accusations of the Spanish government.

Sanjrani meets Qatari team

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: An 11-member parliamentary delegation from Qatar led by Sheikh Ali Abdullah Thani Al Thani called on Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani in Islamabad on Tuesday. Both the sides expressed satisfaction on the progress of bilateral relations in the realm of trade and investment. Chairman Senate said that Pakistan is committed to transform its brotherly relations with Qatar into a strong political and economic partnership. He said Pakistan offers investment friendly atmosphere in the whole region and is known for its independent policies. He said every extend cooperation will be extended to Qatar Investment Authority to invest in Pakistan. Sheikh Ali Abdullah Sani Al Thani, who is also a member of the Qatari Royal family, recorded his impressions in visitors' book. Deputy Chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi hosted a luncheon in honor of the visiting delegation.

Salaried class to get big relief in budget



SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry on Tuesday disclosed that the upcoming budget will provide a big relief to the salaried class. In a tweet, Fawad said there has been an increase in inflation in Pakistan but it is welcome to see that there was also a surge with the same rate in the people's purchasing power. The minister expressed the hope that in the next two years Pakistan under the

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Somalia Khadija Mohamed Al-Makhzoum in a meeting with Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf Saeed Al Malikiy. - DNA

PM Imran Khan lauds armed forces' professionalism

Prime Minister said the country's economic growth rate would catch pace next year, as the government prepares to present the budget for the upcoming fiscal year - 2021-22

BUREAU REPORT

QUETTA: Prime Minister, Imran Khan visited Quetta today and addressed participants of staff course at Command and Staff College, Quetta. Addressing the officers, PM said that Pakistan Army has produced unmatched results when pitched against its adversaries and successfully deterred the nefarious designs of Pakistan's enemies. He added that country's defence is impregnable due to professionalism and battle hardened Armed Forces of Pakistan. PM deliberated at length upon his vision of future of Pakistan where Rule of law, across the board accountability and justice are order of the day. Establishment of a prosperous state in line with Islamic principles and ideology of our great leaders like Allama Iqbal and Quaid e Azam can be achieved only if we work hard consistently as



a nation, the PM stated. PM said that Govt has made all out efforts for progress in various sectors like agriculture, industry, technology and automation. PM advised participant officers to pursue their dreams without fear of failure to achieve their objectives. On his arrival at Command & Staff College Quetta, the Prime Minister was received by General Qamar Javed Bajwa - COAS, Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali - Commander Quetta Corps. Earlier, Prime Minister Imran Khan said the country's economic growth rate would catch pace next year, as the government prepares to present the budget for the upcoming fiscal year - 2021-22. The Premier, speaking during a ceremony at the Quaid-e-Azam House, Ziarat, said the country has come out of the bad times and is now moving towards economic progress.

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Briefs

'Green Pakistan campaign inspirational'

KARACHI: Prime Minister Imran Khan's envisioned Clean and Green Pakistan campaign has been inspirational for many public and private sector organizations to take practical measures for achieving the target of alleviating pollution, in the air ground and water.

These views were expressed by Sindh Governor Imran Ismail in his remarks on "Clean and Green Pakistan campaign", a spokesperson of the Sindh Governor's House told APP on Tuesday. The Governor Sindh noted that the urban forest project was launched at the Governor House in March, 2021 on the occasion of International Day of Forests.

He said that the work on the urban forest is underway which would be developed on an acre inside the Governor House using the famous Japanese Miyawaki technique. Saplings of 1,260 different plant and trees species would be planted under the project conceived to further the 10 billion tsunami tree plantation programme of the federal government. Imran Ismail recalled the project would create a favorable environment in just three years' time, and the forest would attract birds and insects of different species, including honeybees. The Miyawaki method was capable of growing trees 10 times faster than any other regular technique of increasing the green cover, the Governor added.

Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), and NED University of Engineering and Technology have also inked a Memorandum of Understanding in February 2021, for development of Miyawaki forest to increase beauty of Karachi, a spokesperson of KMC told APP. He said that the MoU envisaged that the NED University would plant 300 Miyawaki forest and the KMC is taking all-out measures to make Karachi green. — APP

LHC judge declines to hear Khawaja Asif bail plea

LAHORE: A Lahore High Court (LHC) bench, assigned hearing of a bail petition of Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) leader Khawaja Muhammad Asif in money laundering and assets beyond means case, was dissolved on Tuesday. The dissolution happened after a member of the bench, Justice Asjad Javaid Ghural, recused himself from hearing the petition. The bench referred the petition to LHC chief justice with a request for fixing it before another bench.

The bench consisted of Justice Aalia Neelum and Justice Asjad Javaid Ghural. Kh Asif had filed a petition, stating that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had launched investigation against him on the charges of amassing assets beyond means and money laundering. He submitted that all allegations were baseless. He pleaded with the court for grant of post-arrest bail. NAB had launched investigations against the PML-N leader under Clause 4 of the NAB Ordinance 1999, and Section 3 of the Anti-Money Laundering Act. It was alleged that assets of Kh Asif had increased substantially, which did not correspond to his income. The bureau also stated that Kh Asif claimed to receive Rs 130 million from a UAE firm, but he failed to present any solid evidence during investigations. The bureau also alleged that Kh Asif was running a benami company. — APP

Woman commits suicide

FAISALABAD, Jun 01 (APP): A young woman has committed suicide over a domestic dispute in the area of Jaranwala police station. Police spokesman said on Tuesday that Iqra Bibi quarreled with her husband Zafar over a domestic dispute and the man reprimanded the spouse. Over this issue, the woman got dejected and swallowed poisonous pills. As a result, she started feeling dilapidated condition and breathed her last on way to hospital. — APP

GCWUF intends to expand knowledge beyond boundaries

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Government College Women University holds a vision to develop its social outreach programs on strong footings. University intends to expand knowledge beyond boundaries of the university. In this connection, Media Cell GCWUF arranged a seminar entitled "Use of Social Media for Educational Purposes" for the faculty of the university. Ms. Amara Javed, Incharge Media Cell introduced the key speaker Mr. Rehan Allahwala and the guests of honour Mr. Shahzad Basra and Mr.

Sajid Iqbal Sandhu to the audience. The purpose of the event was to highlight the role of social media platforms such as YouTube and Facebook in digitizing the education system, and to consider ways to improve day-to-day teaching activities through them.

The key speaker of the seminar, Mr. Rehan Allahwala, is a Karachi-based successful entrepreneur in the field of Information Technology and founding leader of Insaan Party. He is a motivational speaker who encourages the people of Pakistan to start earning their livelihood through social media. He is recently



on a campaign to convince teachers of Pakistan to establish their YouTube channels to upload their recorded lectures. He said that Pakistan is a poor country just because access to education is not easy for all economically compromised classes. We, as a society, need to work for the welfare of our un-

educated underprivileged classes. Everyone now a days affords a mobile phone and internet connection but meeting the expenses of educational institutes is comparatively difficult for them. Our teachers can revolutionize the education sector to address the needs of this less privileged class of people. Digitization of knowledge is not only a social service, but it also provides alternate sources of income as well. Dr Shahzad Basra, Chairman Agronomy Department, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad shared his personal experience of running his YouTube channel. Mr. Sajid Iqbal Sandhu,

CEO Green Circle Pakistan also shared his experience of how social media supports him in conveying guidelines to his target audience within seconds. Both supporting speakers declared Allahwala's message practical to digitize our education system with little effort to bring large scale change in society. The registrar GCWUF, Dr. Zilli-Huma Nazli appreciated the efforts of Rehan Allahwala and thanked him for motivating the faculty of the university to work for common good of the society. At the end, Ms. Amara Javed, Incharge Media Cell thanked the guests for their arrival.

MTJ calls on CM Buzdar

LAHORE: Religious scholar Maulana Tariq Jamil called on Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar at his office on Tuesday and discussed matters of mutual interest.

The CM said the government was fully focused on welfare of the people and pointed out that no opponent was ever victimised. Serving the ailing humanity was a mission of the government, he said adding that the scope of Rescue-1122 was being expanded to tehsil level. The chief minister said that the role played by the religious scholars in intellectually confronting the menace of fanaticism was praiseworthy.

Maulana Tariq Jamil prayed for the success of CM Usman Buzdar and appreciated the steps taken for the ailing humanity. — APP



ISLAMABAD: A Qatari delegation, led by Sheikh Ali Abdullah Thani al-Thani, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. — DNA

DC listens to complaints at revenue public service court
Delay in public matters would not tolerated: DC

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: On the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar, under the Revenue Awami Khidmat Services the problems of public regarding revenue were listening on first working day of every month and in this regard the monthly services was held at DC office and Corona SoPs was implemented on this occasion. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali listen the public complaints regarding revenue matters and directed the revenue officers for speedy solution of the applicants. ADCR Fazal e Rabi, Assistant Commissioners Sadar and City Umar Maqbool, Syed Ayub Bukhari, Revenue Department officers, Assistant Director Land Re-



FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali listening the applicants at Revenue Awami Khidmat Services. — DNA

cord City and the Sadar, Tehsildar, Niab Tehsildar and Patwaris were also present. Deputy Commissioner said that the delay in the matters of public would not tolerated and responsible revenue officer and

staff would accountable. He said that the Department of Revenue was at the forefront of public service and holding Revenue Awami Public Service would not only solve the problems of the people

but also increase their confidence. Deputy Commissioner said that the problems of the people's under one roof are being addressed by listening to the problems related to the revenue department.

PTI govt taking bold steps for welfare of people: Dr Firdous

LAHORE: Special Assistant to Chief Minister (SACM) Punjab on Information Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan said on Tuesday that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government had taken bold steps, as a result of which the country was heading towards progress and prosperity. Addressing a press conference here along with Vice Chairman LDA SM Imran and Chairman Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA) Imran Amin, she said that Ravi River City project was a huge initiative which would pro-

vide job opportunities to hundreds of thousands of youth. She said the past government looted the national resources in the name of development and resources were wasted on some exhibitory projects.

The SACM said that Prime Minister Imran Khan was a custodian of resources and he was personally monitoring the affairs of RUDA.

Dr Firdous said that financial bid of RUDA had been opened a few days ago and was awarded to the successful bid-

ders after completing necessary formalities. The bidding process for the development of the first phase of 'Sapphire Bay' had been completed, she added. She said that the project was important for boosting the economy and attracting investment.

Responding to a question, Dr Firdous said that corruption of Shehbaz Sharif in transport sector would be exposed. She said that all workers of the PTI were standing with the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan. — APP

Country moving towards economic development: CM

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar has said the country is fast moving towards economic development and politics of agitation will be equal to enmity with the nation.

The opposition was misleading people about the economic development in the country, he regretted.

In a statement, the CM expressed satisfaction that improvement had been witnessed in the stock market and other sectors. A decrease in the prices of essential items had also been recorded, he said adding that the wheel of the industry was moving fast and the

agriculture sector had recorded phenomenal growth. However, the CM regretted that the opposition was busy in point scoring about the national economy. In fact, this gang was bent upon obstructing the economic development of the country, he added.

The CM reminded that the politics of long march, resignations and tall claims of now or never had already fizzled out.

The rapid economic development had unnerved them, he said adding that the dream of a new Pakistan was materialising now. Opponents' every conspiracy would be foiled and Pakistan would continue to move forward, added the CM.

KFUEIT achieves milestone for publishing article in ISI journal

RAHIM YAR KHAN: As per directions of the Federal and Provincial Governments to achieve the sustainable solution in Research and Development, the Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology (KFUEIT), Rahim Yar Khan has achieved another success of winning an opportunity of getting research articles published in internationally recognized ISI indexed research journals under the leadership of Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr.

Muhammad Suleman Tahir. In order to develop international linkage to promote research culture in KFUEIT, the selected research papers will be published in a Special Issue in internationally recognized ISI Journals including International Journal of Hydrogen Energy (Impact Factor: 4.939), Journal of Superconductivity and Novel Magnetism (Impact Factor: 1.244), and Environmental Science and Pollution Research (Impact Factor: 3.056). — APP

Fisheries Dep completes artificial breeding

SHAHEEN HANIF

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Fisheries Department has successfully completed the process of artificial breeding of pangasius fish in Pakistan in a significant development in the field of fish farming. Assistant Director Fisheries Miss Sana Urooj said that Assistant Director Fisheries Chaudhry Muhammad Ashraf after three years of continuous research with his team at the Fish Hatchery in Kasur District, has successfully completed the Pangasius Fish Farming experiments. She said that after successful experiments, the seed of this fish will be easily available in Pakistan. Dr. Sikandar Hayat Director General Fisheries Punjab said that this fish is found in Vietnam but the import of its seed would cost a lot. Therefore, after successful breeding experiments in Pakistan, Pangasius fish farming would become very beneficial due to nature and its ability to survive despite low oxygen content. Dr. Sikandar Hayat said that this fish is common in clean water. It is known all over the world for growing and producing four times more than other species. He said that farming this fish would be of great benefit to the farmers and would also help in providing protein to the country.

FWMC committed to fulfill its obligations

DNA

FAISALABAD: Khidmat Aap ki Dehleez Par program was under way and waste workers of FWMC remained on road on sixth day and cleared the garbage and debris from road sides besides resolved the 71 complaints received through APP and via District Control Room. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali informed that under the directions of Punjab Govt all relevant departments were on foot to make the cleanliness drive a success while the preparations have also started for second week cleanliness of Water and Sanitation. He said that street Lights were also making functional and wall chacking had also removed. He said that implementation was ongoing and District Administration and FWMC are committed to meet the expectations of citizens. Later CEO FWMC Kashif Raza Awan visited some points and inspected the process of cleanliness drive. He directed the Incharge Officers to remain present in the field and resolved the public complaints regarding garbage.

Masood terms forests conservation imperative

MIRPUR: AJK President Sardar Masood Khan on Tuesday urged people to cooperate with Forest Department to supplement its efforts for conservation of the forest to maintain natural ecosystems.

"The Department of Forests is doing a good job on its part to conserve the forest but their efforts will not produce desired results unless each of us contributes to the conservation of the existing forests and the growth of new forests," he underlined. The President made these remarks after a briefing given to him by Secretary Forest, Wildlife and Fisheries, Syed Zahoor-ul Hassan Gillani at Aiwan-e-Sadr in the State metropolis on Tuesday.

Mr. Khan highlighted that forests are not only important to maintain the climate and natural environment they are also a major source of abundant water resources we have. "The survival and sustainability of our water reservoirs are directly linked to the forests of the region," he added.

"Instead of relying on forest wood for cooking and heating, we need to focus on alternative sources of fuel, and for this purpose the forest department, government agencies, and social organizations can guide and help the people," he said. — APP

FPCCI demands extension in amnesty scheme

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) demanded the federal government to extend the amnesty scheme for the construction industry till December 31, 2021. The demand was raised in a meeting of FPCCI's Central Standing Committee on Tuesday, which was well-attended by the top realtors and builders. President FPCCI, Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo, also attended the meeting and assured his full support to real estate and construction industry of Pakistan as it generates the maximum number of employment opportunities for the workforce of Pakistan. "When construction activity boosts, it makes 50-60 other industries to grow as well through enhanced demand for construction materials and resultant accelerated pace of production," Mian Nasser Hyatt observed and advised FPCCI's Standing Committee on Real Estate to work with



KARACHI: Group photograph on the occasion of Central Standing Committee on Real Estate, FPCCI with Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo, President FPCCI at Federation House Karachi. Asif Sumsum, Convener Central Standing Committee on Real Estate, FPCCI, Junaid Makda and others are also seen in the picture. — DNA

construction industry in close association as this will enable them to make a greater impact on the growth of Pakistan's economy. He also suggested that the

standing committee needed to prepare a working paper on the issue of substantially decreased number of NOCs being issued to the builders in Sindh over the

past two years; so that, FPCCI could raise this issue with the Government of Sindh — backed by data. He urged that this trend needs to be reversed.

FPCCI president also apprised the audience of his meeting with PM Imran Khan, where he also raised the issues of construction and real estate sectors.

He said that banks have been advised to allot at least 5% quota of their housing-related financing to Naya Pakistan Housing Scheme or else they will face penalties. Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo termed this decision as the real-change and transformational in nature. Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo said that the federal government wants to induct one nominee of FPCCI into the top housing board of the country and a decision will soon be made on this.

Asif Sumsum, Convener, Central Standing Committee on Real Estate, FPCCI, said that the real estate sector welcomes Naya Pakistan Housing Schemes. Since the commencement of the program by PM Imran Khan cost of the construction materials have gone up substantially, he pointed out and asserted that it may hamper the program to attain its full potential.

Briefs**AAA associates holds first night golf match**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: AAA Associates organized a nine holes night golf match in collaboration with Garden City Golf and Country Club, Bahria Town. The successful event was attended by the notables from the military and different segments of the society, said a press release. Among participants, some well-known personalities like former COAS Ashfaq Parvez Kiani (R), Gen Zahirul Islam (R), Gen Hilal (R), Air Marshal Asim Zaheer (R) former VCAS PAF, Chairman AAA Associates Sheikh Fawad Bashir, MD Lt. Col Shahzad Ali Kiani (R) and Maj Gen Guftar Shah (R) were included. Around 100 local residents and players participated in this night tournament with the display of a magnificent lighting array making the event more attractive. AAA Associate has plans to organize similar tournaments in other cities of Pakistan to encourage the sport among the local community.

Golf is considered an expensive game and associated with the elite section of our society. AAA Associates organized this match to put an end to this stereotype by promoting golf sports among the middle-class community of the twin cities. Participants were offered discounted membership of the Club and inexpensive golf kits, enabling them to be part of the healthy game. After a fierce competition, the golfers with the top three scores were awarded with shields and prizes. On this occasion, Chairman AAA Associate said: "AAA Associate takes pride in organizing the first night golf tournament of twin cities with the aim to bring out the best talent from our local community to be recognized at the national level."

ALGC retrieves 52 Kanal land in last 100 days

ISLAMABAD: Anti-Land Grabbing Committee (ALGC) while taking strict action against land mafia has retrieved 52 Kanal of land during last two and half months. Chief Commissioner and IGP Islamabad have ensured several steps including constitution of Anti-Land Grabbing Committee comprising officials of Capital police and district administration to resolve land disputes of citizens and take effective action against land mafia. The committee includes Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Kamran Cheema and Additional Superintendent of Police Farhat Abbas Kazmi while police and Revenue officers also coordinate with the committee for timely assistance. During the last three and half months, the committee received 63 applications and it ordered to register 10 FIRs while five persons were arrested and four others had to face action on false complaints. A total of 52 kanal land was vacated from occupation of land mafia while disputes on 24 complaints were settled after agreements among parties. - APP

Ruet-e-Hilal for Zul Qad'ah moon sighting

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The meeting of Zonal/District Ruet-e-Hilal Committees would be held on June 10 for sighting the crescent of Zul Qad'ah 1442 AH at their respective headquarters. Chairman Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad will attend the meeting of Zonal Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, to be held in Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony, Islamabad. Whereas, the other members will join the meetings at their respective provincial / District Ruet-e-Hilal Committees on June 10.

Despite challenges, Govt ensured food security

SAPM on Food Security, Mr. Jamshed Iqbal Cheema, while highlighting various problems in livestock sector, said that the government was shifting its focus to new areas in Balochistan and Thar desert areas

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Syed Fakhar Imam, despite unprecedented challenges Pakistan has faced during the last two years, the threats to food security were responded with robust actions by the government at every level. During the time of Covid-19, locust attack was another major challenge. However, through collaborative efforts, we reduced the threat to minimum damage and are better prepared for future threats now.

He said this while speaking at the webinar 'Ensuring food security amid Covid-19 through ecosystem restoration' held by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

Syed Fakhar Imam added further that failure in correctly monitoring food pricing leads to inaccurate

predictions market price trends. Therefore, the government had purchased more wheat to mitigate any shortage.

"Despite Covid-19 and its impacts, we are having 6 bumper crops this year including wheat, rice and maize," he said and added further that the focus of the future efforts of the government would be on improving livestock sector, becoming self-reliant on edible oils and organic farming.

The challenges of climate change and expanding biodiversity, Pakistan needs to build up institutional mechanisms and make full use of its human resources. Therefore, the education to improve the agricultural sector and engage in more high-tech methods and set up our own silicon valleys is the need of hour, he concluded.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Food Security, Mr. Jamshed Iqbal Cheema, while highlighting various problems in livestock sector, said that the government was shifting its focus to new areas in

Balochistan and Thar Desert areas, especially for crops such as cotton which have higher chances of success in such areas.

Mr. Cheema added further that encouraging fruit tree plantation in urban areas through youth engagement, cultivation of medicinal plants and increasing production of crops such as ginger, cardamom, avocados, coffee is being focused.

These super foods will be grown locally and given upscale production with the help of nurseries, scientists. And farmers to enhance exports of these crops in future. He highlighted that the government plans to provide loans to farmers, food processing plants across the country and commercial activities to rural sector to stop rural to urban migration.

Senior Economist and Team Lead, FCDO, Pakistan, Mr. Richard Ough, explained that how the subject of the ecosystem, food security and diversity are linked. He was of view that that food pricing and

its monitoring provides valuable data that is important to ensure food security. He opined that the digital innovation could support the ambition of Pak's government. Besides, initiatives to transform arid dessert lands to arable with smart water irrigation could be explored, he added.

Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI, earlier presented a brief overview of the topic and highlighted the importance of ecosystem restoration. It is important not only to protect global flora and fauna, but also in terms of ensuring food security, he emphasized.

Kashif Majeed Salik, Associate Research Fellow, SDPI, with the help of his detailed presentation, highlighted the Covid-19's impact on agriculture and food system and explained that how transport restrictions, shortage of labour and machinery, increase in farm input prices and farmers' limited access to market, caused major disruptions in

food supply chain in Pakistan.

He informed the participants that the most affected crops during the pandemic were perishable items such as fruits and vegetables and dairy products. Covid-19 coupled with climate change factors and locust attack disturbed the supply chain and demand. He emphasized on the importance of data collection and said that a lot of important statistics were still missing.

Mr. Salik added further that the pandemic has highlighted the importance of cold storage, the dynamics of farm labour markets, importance of small-scale food processing for value addition, particularly partible commodities. He said that the ability of public departments and institutions to secure food supply chains during pandemic was particularly low. With a lack of data and information as most data collected based on self-reported assessments of a few distributors. His key recommendations were as follows.

564.82 tons of waste and debris collected

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Under the aim to keep the city clean initiative of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Bazar 'Khidmat Aapki Dahliz Par' Rawalpindi Solid Waste Management Company has collected 564.82 tons of construction waste and debris from different parts of the city. According to date released by the RWMC, the authority has been fully operational since the launch of the 'Service at Your Doorstep' program in Rawalpindi from May 27.

Giving the further detail on daily basis, on May 27, 69.36 tons of construction waste and debris were picked up, while on May 28, 94.76 tons, on May 29, 141.58 tons, on May 30, 170.71 tons and on May 31, 88.41 tons of construction waste and debris were picked up from different parts of the city. Special attention is being paid to the disposal of construction waste and building debris in Rawalpindi under the 'Service at Your Doorstep' program. Week long cleanliness program was launched on May 27 that would be completed till June 3.

SC rejects appeal of Forest Guard for pension

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday rejected the appeal of Forest Guard Fazal Mukhtar regarding payment of pension.

A three-member Supreme Court bench comprising Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed, Justice Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhal and Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi heard the case filed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Forest Department employee Fazal Mukhtar regarding payment of pension. During the course of proceedings, Advocate Hazrat Saeed counsel as Forest guard on project in 1989 and fired in 1994 and later, he was freshly appointed in the department. He pleaded that the years of his client's service which he did as a project employee had not been counted while paying his pension.

The Chief Justice while addressing Additional Advocate General KPK Qasim Wadood said the government departments in KPK were unable to pay salaries and pensions. He said the government was borrowing from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to give salaries and pension. This was a difficult way of paying the salaries of government employees through loans, he added. The Additional Advocate General said the province could not receive direct funds from the IMF and the World Bank.

Justice Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi said the biggest reason for the damage to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa economy was smuggling. Smuggling must be stopped to boost industry in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he added.

Pickpocket gang busted, 3 held

ISLAMABAD: Crime Investigation Agency (CIA) of Islamabad Police on Tuesday claimed to have arrested three members of a pickpocket gang and recovered, mobile phones from their possession.

DIG (Operations), Afzaal Ahmad Kausar had categorically directed all the police officers to accelerate their efforts against anti-social elements. Following these directions, SSP (Investigation) Atta ur-Rehman constituted a special police team under the supervision of DSP CIA, including Sub-Inspector Zafar Iqbal, ASIs Saifdar Hussain and Fayyaz and other personnel. The team nabbed three members of a pickpocket gang identified as Ali Shan, Atta ur-Rehman and Shahban Ali. Separate cases have been registered against them at Ramna, Karachi Company and Margalla police stations and further investigation is underway. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Kamran Abbasi Group Leader and Malik Zaheer Ahmed President Islamabad Chamber of small trade and small industry is Presenting flower bouquet along with Qazi Ilyas, Najeeb Abbasi, M Tahir Arain, M Shakeel, Syed Mehtab to Zafar Bakhtawari on his election as secretary general of United Business Group Pakistan at his residence. - DNA

Pakistan-EPA to rally floats highlighting sustainable solutions

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) on the occasion of World Environment Day (June 5) will rally floats highlighting sustainable solutions to serious environmental issues faced by the country in the federal capital. With Pakistan having the honor of hosting World Environment Day 2021, Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency, with its ingenuity and dedication towards its cause, plans to carry out an awareness campaign throughout the capital city of Islamabad, said a news release. World Environment Day is the United Nations day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action to protect our environment. It is celebrated every year on the 5th of June with the objective of raising awareness on leading environmental issues.

The objective of this campaign is to raise awareness on leading environmental issues faced by the country, including plastic pollution, deforestation, and melting of glaciers etc. For this purpose, floats demonstrating solutions to these problems such as sustainable construction, will cruise through the city, with the final destination of D-Chowk. Under the directions of the Director General, Farzana Altaf Shah, Officials of Pak-EPA and members of Pakistan Boy Scouts Association will lead the convoy. Ministry of Climate Change, IG Islamabad Police, Islamabad Traffic Police, District Administration and all the stakeholders of the environment in the capital are joining hands to celebrate this event. The public is encouraged to join the march, learn more about leading environmental issues and their solutions, and help spread awareness. The awareness campaigns are carried out based on a select theme each year, with this year's theme being ecosystem restoration. Reimagine. Recreate. - DNA

Dream to overthrow Punjab Govt to remain elusive

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Chief Minister's Special Assistant on Information Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan Tuesday said opposition's dream to overthrow provincial government would remain elusive.

Talking to a private news channel, she said those who were hatching conspiracies against Punjab government would be disappointed again. The special assistant said the opposition parties just wanted to create chaos to halt the ongoing corruption cases against them and country's development. Firdous said the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) had itself split in groups for their vested interests and now they were scared of each other's. She said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government would complete its mandate enshrined by the Constitution and people. She said (P) was out of PDM and now it was a "Dacoits Movement".

Govt for ease of doing business in energy sector

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Chairman, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), Mr. Tauseef H Farooqi, has said that the Renewable Energy (RE) portfolio of Pakistan can be improved by including Hydro power generation in renewable energy mix. The potential of RE in coastal areas of Karachi is lower as compared to Jhimpir and Gharo and adding RE projects based on lesser irradiance or wind speed will make them more expensive to be added to the national grid. He said this during the public private dialogue 'Prospects of clean energy transition along the coastal areas of Karachi: Key challenges, development strategies, and the way forward,' organized by sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), here on Tuesday. "NEPRA is trying to de-regulate the market and investor friendly wheeling," Mr. Fa-

rooqi said while explaining that NEPRA is trying to ensure ease of doing business for investors and exploring indigenous solutions for the energy in Pakistan.

Executive Director, Pakistan-China Institute, Islamabad, Mr. Mustafa Haider Sayed, emphasized that the national grid infrastructure needs to be upgraded before utilizing the potential of renewable energy. He suggested that there should be a joint coordination committee working on greening of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). To ensure the compliance of international standards, capacity building of enforcing agencies such as Environmental Protection Agencies (EPAs) need to take place, he added. Dr. Irfan Afzal Mirza, CEO, Resources Limited, was of opinion that since Pakistan is going through an energy transition period, we need to look for out of the box solutions. He added further that the current water crisis of Karachi can be solved through

desalination units that are integrated with wind power plants along the coastal areas of Karachi. However, Policy making should support and encourage the investments in new technologies.

Head of Energy Environment and Sustainability Research, UET Lahore, Dr. Muhammad Farooq, emphasized on the importance of involving academia and other relevant stakeholders in policy making. Mr. Saeed Ahmed, former Additional Secretary, Energy Department, Government of Sindh, (remarked that government's policies regarding new technologies should be supportive as the restricted policies such as closed tariffs have halted the growth of renewable energy in Pakistan. Mr. Arsalan Ahmed, Manager Projects, Power China, informed the participants that Power China is currently developing 1,250 MW wind projects in Jhimpir, Sindh and a Solar project of 100 MW in Punjab near Layyah.

CCP conducts search & inspection of PPA

Two different teams of CCP entered and searched the premises of PPA and the said undertaking, where the occupiers of the premises extended full cooperation and gave access to the print and electronic record

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: As part of an investigation into the alleged violation of Section 4 of the Competition Act, 2010 in the poultry sector, the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), exercising its power under Section 34 of the Act, today carried out search and inspection of Pakistan Poultry Association and an undertaking in the poultry business in Lahore, for their suspected involvement in cartelization and anti-competitive activities in the poultry sector.

Two different teams of CCP entered and searched the premises of PPA and the said undertaking, where the occupiers of the premises extended full cooperation

and gave access to the print and electronic record. Important information, i.e. minutes of the meetings of PPA and computer-stored information of the representatives of both PPA and the said undertaking, has been impounded, which may provide evidence about the price-fixing of day-old chick, broiler, and eggs. The CCP took notice of a drastic increase in the prices of various poultry products, including broiler chicken, table eggs, and day-old broiler chicks and started an enquiry. The CCP noted that from March 2020 to May 2021, chicken prices experienced a rise of 110 per cent, reaching Rs.325 per kg (live chicken rate). Similarly, egg prices too saw a rising trend from March 2020 to

May 2021, rising by 42 per cent, touching a peak of Rs.197.76 per dozen in December 2020.

It came to the CCP's knowledge that PPA has been involved in the communication of egg prices. Furthermore, the appearance of different posts on social media platforms regarding the collective rates of eggs and "mutahidda" plan of action with strict adherence indicated that PPA's platform is being used for price-fixing, which is a prima facie contravention of section 4 of the Act. Furthermore, CCP is also probing possible collusion in the determination of prices of day-old broiler chicks, which experienced a rise of 386 per cent between March 2020 and May 2021. In March 2020, a chick

was priced at Rs. 18.5, and in May 2021, the same chicks were being sold for Rs. 90 each.

The record and material impounded by the CCP teams may possibly provide evidence/proof of anti-competitive practices, including price-fixing of the day-old chicks, broiler chicken, and eggs. The impounded record may also provide evidence/proof of the possible role of the association and other undertakings in the recent hike in prices of poultry products. It is pertinent to mention that in another recent enquiry in the poultry sector, the CCP has issued show-cause notices to 19 feed companies for cartelization and a collective increase in feed prices, which resulted in an increase in the prices of chicken and eggs.

The focus of the National Price Monitoring Committee (NPMC) meetings on essential commodity prices held under the chairmanship of the Federal Finance Minister, and stringent notice taken by the provincial government, including Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, after the findings of CCP's enquiry report in feed mills cartelization has helped bring chicken broiler prices from Rs. 325 per kg to Rs. 233 per kg over the past two weeks. The CCP is mandated under the Act to ensure free competition in all spheres of commercial and economic activity, to enhance economic efficiency and to protect consumers from anti-competitive practices, including deceptive marketing practices.

Briefs

DHA
quarantines
1187 suspected
COVID patients

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The District Health Authority (DHA) in collaboration with departments concerned has quarantined 1187 suspected COVID-19 patients in the district. According to the data, shared by DHA here on Tuesday, The number of total positive cases has reached to 26,295 including 24,288 from Rawalpindi and 2007 from other districts after the addition of 39 more positive cases during the last 24 hours.

The report said 24,762 patients are discharged after recovery while three lost their battle of life during the last 24 hours.

"Presently, 96 confirmed patients were admitted to various city facilities including 22 in Holy Family Hospital, 14 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 34 in Institute of Urology, 22 in Fauji Foundation Hospital, three in Bilal Hospital and one in Hearts International Hospital," the health authority report said.

Govt for IT reforms in Agri sector

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Planning, Development and Reforms Kanwal Shauzab Tuesday said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government was working on a project to bring information technology (IT) based reforms in the agriculture sector.

Talking to PTV news, she said it would help farmers adopt modern techniques to enhance their products and exports.

Shauzab said the government was committed to empower the farmers through all possible means so that they could have their due share in the market.

She said after launching this new system, the role of middleman would be vanished permanently and farmers would have direct access to the market.

She said the government's prudent policies would bring huge inflow of investment through massive economic activities and employment opportunities in the country.

The parliamentary secretary lamented that over five million people were unemployed in textile sector during the previous government.

The PTI government had installed 32 new power looms which were working now, she said adding Roshan Digital account proved as a sign of relief for overseas Pakistanis. - APP

2021 as year to eliminate child labour

DNA

ISLAMABAD: International Labor Organization (ILO) has planned to old series of programs to celebrate 2021 as the International Year for Elimination of Child Labour.

According to an official, 2021 is the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, as declared by United Nation (UN) adding that the ILO was asked by UN to celebrate this year to create awareness among masses and to end this evil menace of child labour. A music competition with child labour theme and a cartoon competition on forced labor (with a special category on cartoons on forced labor of children) would be held in programmes.

She added that through this platform it would be an important opportunity to accelerate action towards the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) to end child labor by 2025, and to address the challenges posed by COVID-19 in this regard. It will also serve to build momentum towards the Global Conference on the Sustainable Eradication of Child Labor, which will be hosted by the Government of South Africa in 2022, she added. She also said that as part of the strategy to educate people throughout the year ILO will also engage artists.

Vaccination centres to be set up at ICCI, main markets

Dr. Muhammad Zaeem Zia said that DHO Islamabad was outreaching to other stakeholders for increasing the vaccination of people in Islamabad in order to minimize the spread of Covid-19 pandemic that would help in opening all businesses as well

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: The District Health Office, Islamabad would try to set up a Corona Vaccination Centre in collaboration with the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) in its premises and in main markets and shopping malls of Islamabad for the vaccination of business community and their employees as increased vaccination would help in lifting the restrictions on businesses and facilitate better growth of business activities. This was said by Dr. Muhammad Zaeem Zia, District Health Officer, Islamabad during his visit to ICCI along with Dr. Fawad Khalid Khan, Additional District Health Officer. He discussed the requirements and mechanism of establishing a vaccination center at ICCI.

Dr. Muhammad Zaeem Zia said that DHO Islamabad was outreaching to other stakeholders for increasing the vaccination of people in Islamabad in order to minimize the spread of Covid-19 pandemic that would help in opening all businesses as well. He said that 30 percent of the population of Islamabad has been vaccinated



so far and the target was to vaccinate 70 to 80 percent of the population to develop herd immunity and get rid of the need for restrictions and lockdowns. He said that vaccination has brought down the positivity rate in Islamabad from 19 percent to 1.6 percent making it the only Capital in the world with minimum positive cases. He said that vaccinated people were

least likely to transmit virus to others, therefore, maximum people should opt for vaccination to control the spread of coronavirus. He assured that ICCI proposal for increasing the business timings would be given due consideration. He nominated Dr. Fawad Khalid Khan, Additional DHO Islamabad as focal person to work with ICCI for setting up vaccination center

in its premises. Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry assured full support of ICCI in setting up vaccination center in its premises. He proposed that DHO in collaboration with ICCI should also open vaccination centers in main markets, Centaurus and Giga Mall, Islama-

bad as a large number of people daily visited these business areas and vaccination centers in them would help in rapid increase in vaccination of people. He said that ICCI has been making efforts for removal of all restrictions on businesses to normalize the business activities and would provide all possible support for vaccination of maximum people that would help in opening all businesses to normal operation. He said that ICCI would coordinate with market associations and industries to invite members of the business community and their employees for vaccination. He said that as the vaccination of people was increasing in Islamabad, therefore, business timings should be increased up to 12 am midnight so that the business community could recover some losses suffered due to restrictions and lockdowns.

Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi former President ICCI, Saif ur Rehman Khan, Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Khalid Chaudhry, Shaikat Hayat, Raja Abdul Majeed, Mian Arif Husain and others also spoke at the occasion and stressed for increasing the timings for businesses in order to revive the business activities.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Shibli Faraz chairing a briefing regarding Pakistan Council for Science and Technology. - DNA

VC AIOU calls on CJ Federal Shariat Court

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Prof Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, on Tuesday had a detailed meeting with Muhammad Noor Meskanzai, Chief Justice, Federal Shariat Court.

During the meeting, VC AIOU briefed him about the special measures AIOU is undertaking to expand its educational network across Pakistan and with particu-

lar reference to Baluchistan and distant regions of Sindh.

He apprised him that AIOU not only provided fee concession and scholarships to the underprivileged, marginalized, and lower socio-economic strata of the society but also provided free of cost education up to matriculation level to the people of the province of Baluchistan. - DNA

64 accidents occurred on railway network in 6 months

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: As many as 64 train accidents were taken place on railway network in six months due to manned and unmanned level crossings.

Pakistan Railways has taken various steps for the safety of Railway passengers, said a press release issued here on Tuesday. Resultantly, there is marked reduction in train accidents and tress passing incidents on the network.

On the directives of Railways Minister Azam Khan Swati and Railways Chairman Habib-ur-Rehman Gilani, important steps were taken regarding train safety, which reduced accidents 23%. The steps taken by Pakistan Railways to prevent accidents included closing 2,886 places in seven divisions of the country where tracks were made above the track and from where underpasses pass under the track. The vehicles with high roofs have been stopped so that only small vehicles can pass. Around 199 cases have been registered against tress passers for violating railway rules. In addition, 73 unmanned and level crossings have been identified and are being closed.

COMSTECH for advanced training on halal products lab

In view of the diversity of several products, including processed food and other items of daily use in the present day, authentication and confirmation of their Halal nature is a challenge

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH is organizing a 3-day advanced training course on "how to establish halal products testing laboratory", in collaboration with International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) Karachi, and Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC) during June 8 - 10, 2021, at COMSTECH Secretariat, Islamabad.

Federal Minister for Science & Technology, Mr. Shibli Faraz, will grace the occasion as the chief guest and Mr. Ihsan ÖVÜT, Secretary General, The Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC), Turkey, will address the inaugural session.

According to the global Islamic finance report, the global halal industry is estimated to be worth around USD2.3 trillion growing at an estimated annual rate of 20%, the industry is valued at about USD560 billion a year.

In view of the diversity of several products, including processed food and other items of daily use in the present day, authentication and confirmation of their Halal nature is a

growing challenge globally.

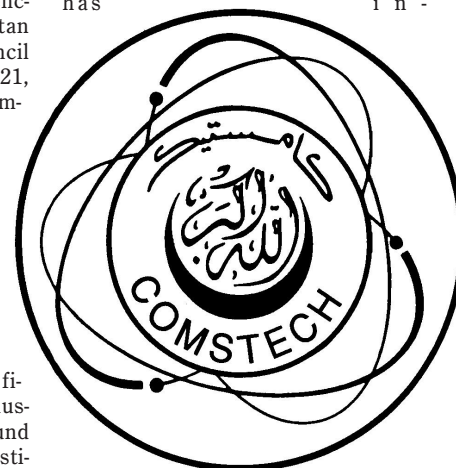
Beside the environmental contaminants, both biological and chemical, addition of non-halal ingredients, which is prohibited for Muslims, is a matter of concern. In recent years, awareness about Halal food and products has

injunctions are not observed. It is therefore, imperative for the Muslim countries to establish Halal testing laboratories which will ensure the Halal status of the consumer products.

The objectives of the training are to impart knowledge on how to establish a research and development laboratory for the investigation / analysis of non-halal ingredients in food, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals by providing hands-on training on instruments involved in non-halal ingredients testing.

To explain the procedure for the testing of most common non-halal ingredients such as detection of alcohol, pork meat, and pork fat (Lard) and genetically modified organisms (GMOs), along with learning the procedure for the laboratory accreditation for ISO 17025 and OIC/SMIIC 35:2020, and to have understanding of how to successfully participate in international proficiency testing.

The course is designed for scientists and research scholars and technicians from OIC member states, involved in food testing and research to participate and acquire state-of-the-art knowledge to establish halal products testing laboratories in their countries.



increased due to the cross contamination of several industrial products in our daily life. However, with increasing globalization, many Islamic countries import these products or ingredients from places where Islamic

MoHR create awareness for registration of complaints

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Human Rights has released a special video to create awareness for registration of complaints of any human right violations across the country.

The 1099 Helpline has been revamped and upgraded to a MIS-Database for more effective response.

Now it provides a discrete SMS and video service for victims of human right violations. MoHR helpline was upgraded to include WhatsApp helpline in seven regional languages, keeping in mind the needs of women and children during the COVID-19 lockdown.

A national helpline application has also been launched on Google Play store to streamline and strengthen grievance redressal mechanisms and enable vulnerable social groups to use alternate mechanisms of registering, reporting and tracking human rights violations. Response staff has also been increased to manage the helpline on for 24 hours, the data revealed.

Pak to vaccinate all above 18 aged population

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary, National Health Services Regulations and Coordination Dr. Nausheen Hamid on Tuesday said that Pakistan's health authorities were on track to administer COVID-19 vaccination to almost 70% of its targeted population by end of December 2021, over 20 million Pfizer vaccine doses will reach in the country soon.

"Government's strategy is to maintain balance between safety of our population and their social well-being and economic sustainability", she said while talking to a private news channel.

The Pfizer vaccine will only be utilized in limited areas of the country where ultra-cold chain would be available for its storage during the ongoing vaccination campaign, she said, adding that special refrigerators would be used to store the Pfizer BioNTech and other vaccines in future.

"Pfizer vaccine has to be kept at minus 70 degrees Celsius, which is a challenge for developing countries where we will have difficulties in maintaining a cold chain", she added.

Nausheen Hamid said now registration was open for the entire national population who are above 18-year of age, which is approved by health experts for COVID vaccination. The government is administering the Sinopharm, Cansino, Sinovac and AstraZeneca vaccines free of cost, she said.

She said now people were more aware of vaccine and vaccination centers were witnessing number of people who were visiting centers and registering themselves for vaccination.

Inflow in rivers jumps to 252,600 cusecs

ISLAMABAD: Water inflow in all major rivers further jumped to 252,600 cusecs from 229,100 cusecs on Tuesday due to shooting up of mercury in northern areas. The Spokesman said, a meeting held here with the Chairman IRSA Rao Irshad Ali in the chair to review water situation in the dams and rivers.

It was noted that the water inflow further enhanced to 23,500 cusecs. The Authority has increased water discharge from Tarbela dam to 100,000 cusecs from 90,000 cusecs while from Chashma to 110,000 cusecs from 100,000 cusecs respectively. The water shortage for Punjab and Sindh has further reduced to 13 per cent from 18 per cent, the Spokesman said. Meanwhile, IRSA has further increased water releases to both Punjab and Sindh provinces owing to improved inflow in the rivers and dams.

The share of Punjab was enhanced to 107,000 cusecs from 101,000 cusecs while Sindh to 115,000 cusecs to 109,000 cusecs. - APP

Drive against drug peddlers to be accelerated

Director General showed satisfaction on the overall performance of ANF. Progress on counternarcotic operations, international commitments, drug prevention and awareness programs

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Force Commanders Conference (FCC) of Anti-Narcotics Force was held at Headquarters ANF Rawalpindi under the chairmanship of Director General ANF Major General Muhammad Arif Malik HI (M) on 1st June 2021. Force Commanders of all ANF Regional Directorate and Senior Staff Officers attended the conference.

Director General showed satisfaction on the overall performance of ANF. Progress on counter narcotics operations, international commitments, drug prevention and awareness programs, and treatment of drug addicts at ANF drug treatment centres was com-



prehensively reviewed during the conference. Current drug situation and emerging tendency towards use of synthetic drug were

also analysed. During the Conference, stringent measures were recommended against drug use in educational in-

stitutions. Director General ANF directed to accelerate the ongoing nationwide drive for apprehension of elements involved in distribu-

tion of drug in educational institutions. DG ANF directed the force to deal with the smugglers of narcotics with iron hands. He also directed to come hard on absconders and proclaimed offenders in drug offences, and emphasized on taking proactive and innovative steps to curb the drug trafficking and disruption of drug supply.

Besides, aspects related to enforcement, intelligence, assets investigation, prosecution, mass awareness, discipline of force, best practices and infrastructure development were discussed at length, while futuristic goals were also set-forth with special focus on undertaking fresh initiatives and capacity building plans.

Banning plastic

AFTER struggling for years, the government of Punjab finally put forth the draft bill for the ban on plastic bans to the cabinet for approval. This was the need of the hour, especially considering the degree of plastic waste that the province produces on a daily basis. Plastic is one pollutant that is resistant to decay and if we do not limit use, environmental degradation will continue at an exponential pace.

According to sources, the provincial government has been ready to implement this initiative and has only been waiting for the procedural formalities to conclude. This delay was further exacerbated by the legal consultation required to ensure that a system that compels manufacturers and retailers to comply is created and imposed upon the province. One can hope and safely assume now, with the finalisation of the bill, that no loopholes will exist for the people to exploit within the framework of the policy.

In recognition of the irreversible effect that plastic has on the environment, Islamabad adopted a no-plastic policy that has been executed successfully. Taking their approach as a template of what needs to be done is advised if the objective is to inspire compliance immediately. Repercussions must follow for those who violate the rules and producers of plastic bags must be kept under constant surveillance. This environmental hazard must be eliminated and the public must be jolted awake to its long-term harms for our climate and health.

We have definitely made progress by finalising the bill and sending it for approval by the cabinet. However, these could just be surface-level victories if execution remains as slow as it has been previously. We must remember that after securing the approval of the cabinet, the provincial assembly also needs to sign off of the bill. We must not be distracted in the meantime and direct all efforts in ensuring that this bill comes into force immediately.

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Afghanistan in turmoil

THERE should be a great deal of international concern over the situation evolving in Afghanistan as the US begins a phase-by-phase exit of its troops posted in the country. The troops which invaded Afghanistan in 2001 have been unable to establish anything resembling peace and today Afghanistan appears to be in an even more unstable position than ever before. The Australian embassy has announced it would be closing down in the country due to the uncertainty of the situation and the fear of enhanced violence.

There has been a significant increase in violence over the past few days after the Eid ceasefire which was supposed to hold for three days and a truce which was announced between the Taliban and the government. Eleven Afghan civilians were killed in various attacks in parts of the country. This is a situation that cannot be allowed to continue. There is also the question of how Afghanistan would be managed once the US pulls out completely within the next few months. There have been periodic other attacks, killing scores of Afghans, mainly citizens. Pakistan is playing a part in the ongoing dialogue in Doha between representatives of Afghan government and the Taliban, but there is no real evidence that these talks are succeeding. Pakistan this time holds less control over the Taliban than was the case till 2001 when the militants ruled the country.

The Taliban have not been taking responsibility for all the attacks, but then they must come out clean by condemning these attacks.

The signs that the violence is again creeping up is deeply disturbing for everyone in the region, given that it can cause a great deal of instability, and lead to more deaths in a country, which already bears stains of blood almost all over. There is a need for all side to realize the importance of peace and to contribute their bit to the peace process.

The World Peace comes from SHUSHA

Asif Asgarli



Another interesting point was that the winner of the logo contest organized by us as part of the international campaign "Freedom to Shusha" was the head of a Georgian NGO, and this altruist really described the culture, cultural heritage and beautiful "Kharibulbul" and this unique Shusha in general, as if he was Azerbaijani and from Karabakh

WHILE for an indifferent foreigner, Shusha is just one of the cities on the world map, one of the settlements of Azerbaijan and the Karabakh region, for us, Shusha is exceptional and sacred, as well as unique (special) in the true sense of the word.

Unique (special) Shusha

Six years ago, when we launched the international public support campaign "Freedom for Shusha" with our partners from more than 30 foreign countries through the NGO I lead, this question was often addressed in both local and foreign arenas: "What is the importance and uniqueness of this city that you are conducting a separate large international campaign in its name; shouldn't you carry out this work within the framework of the Karabakh events?" Of course, we were ready to answer this question coherent-

ly and reasonably and in a way that aroused great interest, really attracting foreigners' attention to Shusha, its culture, cultural heritage, peace, tolerance and multicultural genetics.

As a result, on the eve of May 8, the day of the occupation, the heads of NGOs from 30 European countries issued an official statement on behalf of their organizations, condemning the occupation of Shusha by the Armenian armed forces.

They attended an important international meeting in Baku, announcing on the social media of their countries that Armenians vandalized the rich culture, cultural heritage and peaceful nature of this city.

Many, including ourselves, thought that this love of foreigners for Shusha would be a step taken to come to Baku, see here, and walk, and after a while, this interest would vanish. But to be honest, the name of Shusha, the activity of Shusha, the specificity of Shusha justified itself and made it sustainable.

Seriously, our foreign partners, who participated in the international event without any financial compensation, organized the "Freedom to Shusha" campaign in 11 European countries and called to protect the uniqueness of Shusha, its cultural values, and heritage.

Another interesting point was that the winner of the logo contest organized by us as part of the international campaign "Freedom to Shusha" was the head of a Georgian NGO, and this altruist really described the culture, cultural heritage and beautiful "Kharibulbul" and this unique Shusha in general, as if he was Azerbaijani and from Karabakh. This is the specialty of Shusha that this eternal specialty of ours has already passed to the universal scale.

Peaceful, coexistent and tolerant Shusha

Along with the beautiful and unique nature of Shusha, which was founded 270 years ago by Panahali Khan, the founder of the ancient Azerbaijani Karabakh Khanate, as a city-fortress in a high geographical area, cultural and peaceful genetics have left deep imprints on the Caucasus and the whole region.

As early as the beginning of the 19th century, during the Qajar Iran-Tsarist Russia war, Shusha called for peace, supported the immediate cessation of hostilities and the establishment of peaceful coexistence in the region.

Shusha embraced with its great kindness the tens of thousands of Armenian families displaced by the Qajar Iran and the Ottoman Empire in the 1920s and 1930s and focused on the tolerant and peaceful life of the aboriginal people of Karabakh (Azerbaijani Turks) with them.

Based on the guarantee of peace and coexistence, Shusha also recognized the right of the Armenian population to self-government (ownership) of small village and settlement communities in Karabakh, in the 19th century!

In the early 20th century, in 1919, during the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, the first democratic and secular republic in the East, Shusha once again hosted a peaceful and nonviolent settlement of the Dashnak-incited uprising and separatist protests of the Armenian population in Karabakh.

In the early years of the Bolshevik (Soviet) occupation of Azerbaijan, Shusha demonstrated its commitment to a policy of peace, coexistence and consensus and granted high self-government autonomy to the Armenian and Azerbaijani populations in Karabakh, and, as a concession, passed its administrative center to Khankendi.

Cultural Shusha with cultural heritage

The fact that Shusha is a center of culture, music, and cultural heritage is not only a local issue for Azerbaijan but

also a regional cultural system for the entire Caucasus.

Shusha is called the cradle of music in the Caucasus because the Azerbaijani Karabakh mugam and singing school, established and formed here, was the cultural ruler of the entire Caucasus region. Representatives of this school promoted the cultural heritage and values in all settlements of the Caucasus.

After the South Caucasus became part of the Russian Empire, any cultural innovation in the administrative center of Tbilisi manifested itself primarily in Shusha.

The establishment of the first classical theater in Shusha after Tbilisi was one of the factors that made it the cultural center of the Caucasus. The opening in Shusha of the first modern secondary school in Azerbaijan is also assessed as a city benchmark in the Caucasus.

Ahmad Bey Agaoglu, who received his first higher education in law and political science in Europe in the 19th century, kept alive the Western values and was fluent in five foreign languages, is also a representative of the Shusha cultural school and the founder of the first library in Karabakh.

The manifestation of progressive European and Western values the 19th and 20th centuries in the activity of Shusha and its intellectuals showed that the city was incomparable as the cultural center of the Caucasus.

The centuries-old coexistence of mosques, Islamic monuments, Orthodox and Gregorian churches and monuments confirms that Shusha is a multicultural Azerbaijani city that preserves this multi-religious cultural heritage, along with being the center of the cultural heritage in the Caucasus.

Shusha, which embodied national and human cultural values, led Azerbaijan during the Soviet era despite communist ideological pressures, maintained the status of the Caucasian cultural heritage center with the outstanding services of National leader Heydar Aliyev, and even spread it throughout the post-Soviet space.

The music festival held in Shusha in 1990-1991 gained international status and became a cultural event globally, surpassing the Soviet Union.

Capital of cultures - Shusha

The people, the state, and the leadership of Azerbaijan, which has permanently attached great importance to culture, cultural heritage, and the preservation of cultural values, have reaffirmed this tradition in the example of liberated Shusha.

After the liberation of Shusha, the cradle of culture and music of the Caucasus, the President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, called on the whole world to preserve and protect the national and human cultural values of this ancient city. International organizations, which voted that Shusha and its cultural heritage do not belong only to the Azerbaijani people, immediately announced their decisions:

Shusha was declared the Capital of Islamic Culture. Shusha was declared the Cultural Capital of the Turkic World.

Shusha was declared the Capital of Culture of Azerbaijan. The list will probably expand. But at least Shusha, which will have the responsible and honorable status of the capital of these cultures, is already creating great cultural geography beyond the cultural center of Azerbaijan and the Caucasus. Culture has always served peace, and cultural Shusha, which has been a component of this peace for years, has been deprived not only of this status but also of its role as a peace center.

Azerbaijan and its President have liberated Shusha, the capital of cultures, not only for our people but for the whole peace-loving humanity, so that this culture will continue to serve peace, security, peaceful and friendly coexistence for

hundreds of years ahead.

Symbol of freedom, peace and culture "Kharibulbul"
The association of the endemic plant "Kharibulbul" which grows in the Caucasus with Shusha is not only a love of nature but its great spiritual, cultural and peaceful significance and value preserved by the Azerbaijani people for 100 years.

The legend said that according to the wish of the Karabakh khan's daughter, who moved to a remote land with the Shusha languor, the flower "Kharibulbul" was brought and planted, but it did not grow in other lands, and both (khan's daughter and flower) perished in a distant land.

Therefore, the people of Azerbaijan have always protected "Kharibulbul" as a symbol of free Shusha and the eternal owner of this land, and passed this tradition on to future generations.

For centuries, Azerbaijani people have accepted Shusha as "Kharibulbul" and "Kharibulbul" as Shusha - a cultural unit connected by a chain - and have not reconciled with the violation of this unwritten law.

That is why when the Armenian armed forces invaded Shusha on May 8, 1992, and the city had been under occupation for 28 years, the Azerbaijani people said: "Our 'Kharibulbul' is in a cage, it is waiting for the real owner to release it, to liberate it, to return it to its cultural life."

Thus, 28 years later, the people of Azerbaijan, under the leadership of their proud, victorious leader Ilham Aliyev, freed Shusha - "Kharibulbul" with a peacekeeping (peace-enforcement) operation against the Armenian occupation of our country.

"Kharibulbul" - Shusha is already freed, "Kharibulbul" grows freely, blossoms freely, breathes freely, and sleeps freely.

This is the significance of "Kharibulbul"; this is the cultural value of "Kharibulbul".

"Kharibulbul" Shusha's call for peace

Shusha, where all values of culture and cultural heritage were destroyed and illegally changed during the occupation, began to restore its former and ancient cultural status with "Kharibulbul".

The visit of the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev to Shusha three times in a short time and the restoration of the cultural image of Shusha in difficult climatic and geographical conditions are extraordinary heroism and historical assessment of culture and cultural heritage.

The highly professional restoration of all Islamic and Christian cultural monuments in Shusha, the cultural center of the Caucasus, is another indication of the city's commitment to peace, coexistence, and multiculturalism.

Returning to Shusha with the "Kharibulbul" Music Festival, multicultural Azerbaijan once again sent a message of peace to the world from this city of peace.

The "Kharibulbul" Festival invited for the continuation of a peaceful, secure, and tolerant neighborhood in the region.

The active participation of various ethnic and cultural groups living in Azerbaijan in the "Kharibulbul" Music Festival, which promotes peace, coexistence and peaceful community, confirmed that the Armenian population of our country could also benefit from these opportunities.

The President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, once again demonstrated the commitment of our state to this policy by calling for peace from Shusha - "Kharibulbul" to the world, to the Karabakh Armenians, who may be our worthy citizens, and to Armenia, which may be our good neighbor.

-The writer hails from New Azerbaijan Party. He is the Member of the Board, Head of the Democratic Student & Youth Organization of Azerbaijan

India; an irresponsible state with nuclear weapons

Muhammad Akhter Aslam



According to Lok Sabha report, 147 mishaps or security-related incidents were reported in Indian atomic energy plants between 1995 to 1998

UNDER Article 39 of the UN Charter, it constitutes a direct threat to international peace and security, if a country is found to be non-compliant with its safeguards". On the contrary, India is reported as irresponsible state when it comes to international peace. On May 5, 2021 the seizure of more than seven kilograms of natural uranium from two unauthorized individuals in the Indian state of Maharashtra has raised many questions regarding the state's control over this highly sensitive radioactive material.

According to media reports the uranium seized was highly radioactive and pure. Since India became nuclear state, numerous incidents of collective and individual uranium theft and smuggling have taken place that indicates India as the most irresponsible and dangerous nuclear weapon state. With Hindutva terrorist ruling the country and RSS running thousands of terror centres called shakhas across India, a looming nuclear threat cannot be ruled out.

This timeline includes only the events where at least one KG of radioactive material was seized, and reported; in 1994, Meghalaya police seized Two and Half KGs of uranium from a gang of four smugglers in the Domiasiat Region. 1998, Police arrested an opposition politician possessing more than hundred KGs Uranium while in the same year, CBI captured a group with over nine KGs of the Nuclear Material in Tamil Nadu.

According to Lok Sabha report, 147 mishaps or security-related incidents were reported in Indian atomic energy plants between 1995 to 1998. Out of these, 28 were of acute nature and nine of these occurred in nuclear power installations. In 2008, Police Seized four KGs of Uranium in Supaul dis-

trict along the Indo-Nepal Border. 2009, three perpetrators arrested for illegal possession of five KGs of Depleted Uranium, 2016, A Container of radioactive material was stolen from a fortified research facility in eastern India and another incident taken place in same year, around nine KGs of uranium was seized from two individuals in Thane.

In 2018, a uranium smuggling racket was caught by the Kolkata police with one Kg of radioactive material and now, in the sequence of loose state control over uranium theft another incident taken place on May 05, 2021 which posing a major security mishap under nuclear proliferation. According to experts, terrorists detonate radioactive material by combining it with any conventional weapon, which called "dirty bomb".

Although the damage caused by a dirty bomb blast will not be as great as that of an atomic bomb, there will be potential for radiation and prolonged contamination in and around the site of the bombing.

It is matter of fact, BJP government is backed by extremists and could not be trusted, all incidents of nuclear proliferation inside India needed to be investigated, the IAEA must cautioning about this new trend by India to bring uranium as one of the business commodities, being traded openly by private dealers. In the light of such incidents the nuclear program in India is in the hands of irresponsible and inexperienced civilians and the extremist government which is being governed by RSS who has their unethical motives in contrast to Pakistan's outstanding nuclear safety and security record duly verified by the international monitoring watchdog.

International actors must make it mandatory to India that unless India strictly regulated nuclear material, it would be

considered complicit in the proliferation of nuclear material. Such loose state control shows that the India has to go a long way to become a responsible nuclear power and made member of Nuclear Supplier Group.

India must have to prove its credibility by enhancing the internal security of its nuclear plants and also need to bring stringent legislation by enhancing punishment on nuclear proliferation. So far, India's nuclear safety and security record is not much impressive. Lax state control, as indicated by the latest seizure of seven KGs of natural uranium, shows that still India is an irresponsible nuclear weapon state.

More worrying, is the fact that nuclear arsenal is in the hands of an irresponsible extremist regime. Indian state must regulate nuclear material or else could be considered complicit in their trafficking. However, "this is far from the truth. Natural uranium is not useful for making dirty bombs. For that cobalt 60 etc. are far more lethal. Seven kilograms of natural uranium contains about 0.049kg of U235, which is the bomb material, provided someone could subject it to an enrichment process, a challenge in itself, according to nuclear experts".

From above discussion, it would not be wrong to say that India is curse for this Region. Non-secular governments in Secular constitution rise different dilemmas with regard to regional security.

Therefore, International actors should Play their positive role to control Indian threats. It is well known before world that India is not only Nuclear State in the region. Any irresponsible action from India will lead to greatest debacle across the borders.

-The Writer is a student of M.Phil. Criminology at SU Jamshoro

Briefs

FCB confirm
Aguero
signing from
Man City

SPORTS DESK

MADRID: Barcelona confirmed that Manchester City striker Sergio Aguero will join the club on 1 July when his contract with the Premier League champions expires. Argentina international Aguero joined City from Spanish side Atletico Madrid in 2011 and went on to become the club's all-time leading goalscorer, netting 260 times as he helped them to claim five Premier League titles. "Barcelona are the best team in the world," Aguero, who celebrates his 33rd birthday on Wednesday, told a news conference. "And we all know it."

"It was a good decision to join and help the team achieve things. It's another step and I'm very happy. I hope I can contribute a lot to the club. "The first thing is to try and play and help the team as much as I can. We are a team, and I will try my best. Hopefully we can get to the end of the season and be in contention for the important trophies."

Barca said the Argentine will sign a two-year deal, with a 100 million euro (\$122.04 million) buy-out clause. Aguero is expected to be the first of a number of arrivals at Camp Nou this summer as new president Joan Laporta looks to revamp a squad that could only finish third in La Liga. Aguero's City team mate Eric Garcia has been heavily linked as a transfer target by local media, as have Dutch duo Memphis Depay and Georginio Wijnaldum.

Salaried
class to get
big relief...

From Page 01

leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan will be closer to its destination. In another tweet, Fawad Chaudhry said that Pakistan's success against the coronavirus pandemic has surprised the world. Fawad said that all countries in the region including India are facing problems in tackling the surging cases of the deadly virus but the positivity rate in all of Pakistan except Karachi has dipped below four percent. Counting the recent good news, Fawad said Kuwait has also agreed to issue visas to Pakistanis after 10 years.

Russia
confirms
9,500 new
infections

MOSCOW: Russia registered 9,500 new COVID-19 infections over the past 24 hours, taking the nationwide tally to 5,081,417, the official monitoring and response center said Tuesday. The national COVID-19 death toll rose by 372 to 121,873 in the past day, while the number of the country's recoveries grew by 8,994 to 4,693,579. Meanwhile, Moscow, Russia's worst-hit region, reported 3,669 new cases, taking its total to 1,183,639. Russia will resume flights with Britain from Wednesday, as the country's federal operational headquarters for the fight against the pandemic decided not to extend the suspension that was first introduced in December 2020. More than 138.5 million COVID-19 tests have been conducted across the country. - APP

Smoking
increases
virus risk

UNITED NATIONS: Smokers have up to a 50 per cent higher risk of developing severe diseases and death from coronavirus, the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, has said. On World No Tobacco Day 2021, he reminded that the nicotine found in tobacco is highly addictive and creates dependence, and the behavioral and emotional ties to tobacco use - like having a cigarette with coffee, craving tobacco, and feelings of sadness or stress - make it hard to kick the habit. However, with professional support and cessation services, tobacco users double their chances of quitting successfully, WHO, a Geneva-based UN agency, said. - APP

Israel rolls back comments
on AP's 'coffee with Hamas'

NEWS DESK

JERUSALEM: Israel's defence minister has distanced himself from comments made by his military chief after Israel bombed a Gaza Strip high-rise housing Al Jazeera and The Associated Press offices as well as other news outlets, saying the remarks were not meant to be taken literally.

In an article published on the website of Israel's Channel 12 news over the weekend, the military chief of staff, Lieutenant-General Aviv Kohavi, was quoted as saying "the building was destroyed justly" and he did not have a "gram of regret". The article claimed Hamas used various floors of the al-Jalala tower for "significant electronic warfare" meant to disrupt Israeli air force GPS communications.

The article then said Kohavi told "a foreign source" the AP's journalists drank coffee each morning in a cafeteria in the building's entrance with Hamas electronics experts, whether they knew it or not. The AP called the comments "pa-

Israel losing US perception battle
as Palestinian sympathy grows

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: Last month, as Israel carried out an 11-day bombing campaign on the besieged Gaza Strip and Hamas, the Palestinian group that controls the Strip, fired rockets back, something important was shifting halfway around the world.

For the first time in a long time, Israel seemed to be losing ground in the battle of perception in the United States as lawmakers questioned their government's pro-Israel policies. "This is not about both sides," said US congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in a speech, "this is about an imbalance of power," which tilts in favour of Israel largely because of American military and diplomatic support. "The president has said that Israel has a right to defend

tently false", noting "there was not even a cafeteria in the building". Al Jazeera also rejected the Israeli claim that Hamas was active in the building.

"I have been working in this office for more than 10 years and I have never seen anything [suspi-

cious]," Al Jazeera's Gaza correspondent Safwat al-Kahlout said the day after the Israeli air raid levelled the tower.

"I even asked my colleagues if they've seen anything suspicious and they all confirmed to me that they have never seen any military

aspects or the fighters even coming in and out," he added. "In our building we have lots of families that we know for more than 10 years, we meet each other every day on our way in and out to the office." Asked about Kohavi's comments, Defence Minister Ben-

ny Gantz told foreign journalists on Monday the military chief was only speaking in figurative terms. "When the chief of staff talked about it, he was trying to portray the atmosphere, not the actual aspects," Gantz said.

Gantz again alleged "there was Hamas infrastructure in offices that operated from this building". "It was never claimed that AP journalists were knowingly interacting with Hamas personnel. On the contrary, due to the nature of Hamas' activities, AP journalists had no means of knowing that Hamas personnel were in the building," the military spokesman's office said.

"The chief of the general staff explained the possible circumstances of such an encounter where the terrorist organisation Hamas embeds itself within the civilian population and uses civilian buildings for military purposes." The Israeli army gave occupants of the building one hour to evacuate before the May 15 air raid. No one was injured, but the high-rise tower was flattened into a pile of rubble.

Terrorists
will not be
allowed to
wreck peace

From Page 01

Quetta and addressed officers and faculty of College. The Chief of Army Staff's address to staff course-2020/2, focused on professional matters, internal & external security situation and matters concerning regional security environment. Speaking on the occasion, COAS emphasized Pakistan's resolve and determination to confront global phenomenon of terrorism by adopting whole of Nation approach. COAS said that future of enduring peace and stability in South Asia hinges on ability to resolve long pending issues within the region. This can be complemented through meaningful international support and will to take on complex challenges.

Focusing on COVID-19 pandemic, COAS said that Pakistani Army along with other state institutions will do all to mitigate the challenges faced by people of Pakistan.

PM Imran
Khan lauds
armed..

From Page 01

The prime minister had arrived in Quetta, earlier in the day, for a one-day visit. "Our opponents have created hue and cry even when [PTI] had formed the government in 2018, our opponents said that we were bound to fail," PM Imran Khan said. The Opposition kept reiterating that the country's economy would suffer, but now, when the growth rate's statistics were made public, they rejected them, he said. "Our opponents want us to fail," he said, as he stressed the government was doing everything in its power to uplift the economy.

"Last year, our growth rate stood at 0.5%, while this year, the growth rate has reached 4%, and this is troubling the Opposition," the prime minister said. "I am worried, whether they will remain as an alliance or not," he said, taking a jibe at the Pakistan Democratic Movement - which faced a setback after PPP and ANP left it. The premier said if the PTI forms a government again, it would focus more on Balochistan and invest in development projects.

In 2013, the overall situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was dismal, as poverty and inflation were skyrocketing in the country. "But now, a UNDA report showed poverty has reduced in KPK." The premier, shedding light on how his government achieved growth in KPK, said the PTI-led government promoted tourism, launched health cards for nearly half of the population.

Matsuda for
enhanced...

From Page 01

the establishment of the diplomatic relationship between Japan and Pakistan in 2022.

"By accumulating online dialogues, workshops, lectures and etc., we can surely develop interactions between our experts beyond borders despite current COVID-19 circumstances. I'm really thankful for both organizations to take excellent initiative for development of think-tank cooperation, which we will continue to support in the future.", he said.

ISLAMABAD, June 1 (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday stressed greater trade and connectivity among the countries of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) to attain the goals of cohesive regional development and prosperity. Addressing here at the inaugural session of Second Conference of Parliamentary Assembly of the Economic Cooperation Organization (PAECO) countries, the president said economic integration among regional states could act as an effective driver to foster sustainable peace and security. The conference gathered speakers and representatives of the national parliaments of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The president emphasized proper tapping of the region's immense resources by ECO countries to nurture alliances for a win-win economic stability. "Your voice will be only heard at global platform if you are economically strong and stable," he said.



GAZA: Mural depicting Razan al-Najjar, a 21-year-old volunteer paramedic, who was shot dead by Israeli snipers in 2018 as she tried to help evacuate wounded during Gaza's Great March of Return protests. - DNA

Israel begins
construction of 350
settlement units

WEB DESK

JERUSALEM: Israeli ministers on Tuesday laid the foundation stone for a new project to build 350 settler units in the Beit El settlement near the West Bank city of Ramallah. Health Minister Yuli Edelstein, Public Security Minister Amir Ohana, Education Minister Yoav Gallant and Regional Cooperation Minister Ofir Akunis along with Knesset Speaker Yariv Levin and other Knesset members participated in the ceremony to build the new

settlement units, according to Israeli Channel 20. "Settlements and land of Israel are more important than any person or any political situation," Edelstein, who is a member of the ruling Likud Party, told the ceremony. Gallant, for his part, said his government has solidified Jewish settlement construction in the Beit El settlement, which he described as an "Israeli city where ancestors lived". The Israeli government has approved the construction of the new 350 settler units in Beit El settlement at the end of 2020.

Osaka withdraws from French
Open after media boycott row

SPORTS DESK

TOKYO: Naomi Osaka has said she was withdrawing from the French Open following the bitter fallout from her decision to boycott all media activity at the Grand Slam event. She also revealed that she has "suffered long bouts of depression" and will now "take some time away from the court". "The best thing for the tournament, the other players and my well-being is that I withdraw so that everyone can get back to focusing on the tennis going on in Paris," the world num-

ber two wrote on Twitter on Monday.

The 23-year-old Japanese star was fined \$15,000 on Sunday and threatened with disqualification after she refused to carry out a mandatory news conference following her first round win. She claimed on the eve of Roland Garros that such post-match inquiries were akin to "kicking people when they are down" and that they had a detrimental effect on her mental health.

"I never wanted to be a distraction and I accept that my timing was not ideal and my message could have



been clearer," the four-time Grand Slam title winner said in her statement. "The truth is I have suffered bouts of depression since the US Open in 2018 and I have had a really hard time coping with that." She added: "In Paris, I was already feeling vulnerable

and anxious so I thought it was better to exercise self-care and skip the press conferences. "I announced it preemptively because I do feel like the rules are quite out-dated in parts and I wanted to highlight that." Osaka said she has also apologised to organisers over the affair which has dominated the early stages of the French Open ever since she warned last week that she would not carry out any media activity. French Tennis Federation president Gilles Moretton has described her vow of silence as "a phenomenal error".

Italian mafia
boss, freed
after 25 years

ROME: Italians have reacted with dismay over the release of an infamous Cosa Nostra mafia boss who, among other crimes, assassinated a prosecutor and dissolved a boy's body in acid. Sicilian Mafia turncoat Giovanni Brusca, 64, was released from Rome's Rebibbia prison on Monday after serving a 25-year sentence. He was arrested in 1996, four years after he detonated the bomb that killed Giovanni Falcone, an Italian magistrate who dedicated his career to overthrowing the mafia. - APP

Kremlin critic pulled
off plane, arrested

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Russian authorities have arrested a prominent opposition activist after he was hauled off a flight, and raided the homes of several others. Andrei Pivovarov, the head of the Open Russia movement, was pulled off a Warsaw-bound plane at St Petersburg's airport just before takeoff late on Monday. Pivovarov's team said police questioned him, searched his apartment and opened a criminal case against him on Tuesday for

allegedly violating Russia's legislation on "undesirable organisations".

"These situations show us that they are afraid of us, and we are a majority," Pivovarov's Twitter account said. The Krasnodar branch of the Investigative Committee, which probes major cases, said in a statement that Pivovarov had in August 2020 published materials in support of an "undesirable organisation". The statement also accused the activist of attempting to flee from investigators on Monday.



PARIS: Elina Svitolina returns shot during the women's singles first round match between Elina Svitolina of Ukraine and Oceane Babel of France at the French Open tennis tournament at Roland Garros. - DNA

Chinese ecological experiences can be learned

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "We surely do have examples from China, and there are many lessons learned from adjoining countries of their best practices. Whether we discuss forest protection with China or any European country, the main point is that we need to adopt the best practices." Dr. Masood Arshad, Senior Director, Water, Food and Climate at WWF-Pakistan said according to Gwadar Pro. After the initiation of CPEC, a lot of collaboration is taking place between China and Pakistan. Dr. Masood Arshad believes that Pakistan can benefit from the Chinese experience for

ecosystem restoration, forests protection, water conservation, flood control, etc.

"Whether it's watershed management, flood control strategy, forest cover improvement, rain lands or natural resources, we should learn their advanced experiences. There are many innovations like planting through drones or seed balls, and all of these have been learned from the region and we are implementing them here," said Dr. Masood Arshad.

While forests provide a habitat and a home to different animals, deforestation has caused many wild animal breeds to get extinct. A few animals, like Snow Leopards, Common Leopards, the Ungulate animals, Ixex, Markhors,

and Urinals, are facing issues either due to deforestation, hunting, or excess of humans. However, Dr. Masood Arshad holds positive about the restoration of this ecosystem. "Now, thanks to the campaign in Pakistan, we are getting lots of positive responses. New national parks and protected areas are being established and veterinarians are being recruited. These things will allow our future generations to enjoy wildlife," he said. To date Pakistan has made great efforts in environmental protection on both national and international levels, projects, be it billion tree planting, electric vehicle policy, or Green Pakistan, have gained a lot of support. As this year's World Environ-

ment Day, themed "Restore Our Earth", is soon to be hosted by Pakistan on 5 June, Dr. Masood Arshad said it's very lucky that United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has chosen Pakistan to celebrate it, and this is a matter of great honor for Pakistan. He mentioned that to celebrate this, not only WWF but also many other organizations are taking it forward. "We have about 20-25 different projects that we are handling in the field. Pakistan is progressing in improving its forests land, and we are trying to hold a program on a national level with the Ministry of Climate Change."

"We are trying to involve the private sector with us as well so that they should be aware and

can help us support the environment of Pakistan in the future," he added.

Recently, the world has faced issues due to climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus it's high time that we should appropriately manage the relation between Mother Earth and this pandemic, strengthening our relationship with nature. "We should all play our role as an individual, as a society, or even as an organization. We should work to protect our forests. The different corporate sector, CBO institutions, and other organizations should all work together to support this wave of positivity and help in the progress of Pakistan," said Dr. Masood Arshad, giving his messages.

Briefs

Anti-govt protests in Colombia claim 48 lives

FOREIGN DESK

BOGOTA: Anti-government protests raging in different parts of Colombia since April 28 have caused the death of at least 48 people, including one police officer, said judicial sources on Monday.

According to the latest report by the country's Ombudsman's office, at least 20 of the 48 deaths are directly caused by the anti-government protests shaking the country for over a month.

However, NGOs claim the death toll is much higher than the official figures.

Protests against the government's new tax reform plan are continuing across the country.

On Monday, students in the country's capital Bogota were on the streets for a peaceful anti-government protest. The country witnessed a bloody day on May 28 during which 13 people died in Cali, and dozens other were injured in Bogota and Medellin.

Meanwhile, at least nine people were murdered at a farm in the country's south in a separate development.

Eight men and one woman were killed on a farm located in the rural area of Algeciras in the southern Colombian administrative department of Huila, according to the Colombian media.

Turkey, Greece agree to recognize Covid jobs

DNA

ANKARA: Ankara and Athens agreed to mutually recognize each other's coronavirus vaccination certificates to permit travel between the countries, in a move to help tourism battered by the coronavirus pandemic, Trend reports citing Daily Sabah.

"We agreed on the vaccine certificate. Citizens of the two countries who are negative will be able to travel. We have decided to mutually recognize vaccines in the two countries," Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said.

The citizens of the two countries will be able to visit with either a vaccination certificate or proof of a negative PCR (Polymerase chain reaction) test, boosting their respective tourist industries. "The agreement we reached today will contribute positively to our tourism sectors. We have a common will with Greece," Cavusoglu told a joint news conference with his Greek counterpart Nikos Dendias in Athens as the NATO members seek to repair ties. Dendias also confirmed the agreement on the vaccinations. "Those with negative test results will be able to mutually visit countries," he noted.

Azerbaijan to commission Fuzuli Airport by September

DNA

BAKU: The international airport in Azerbaijan's Fuzuli city liberated from the Armenian occupation is planned to be commissioned till late September 2021, Trend reports referring to AZAL Vice President Etibar Huseynov.

"The total length of the airport will reach 4.8 kilometers, of which three kilometers are the runway and 900 meters - the lighting zone," AZAL vice president added.

"Today, along with the construction of the airport, the work is underway to install navigation and other equipment," Huseynov said.

"The Victory Road highway will have the access to this airport," AZAL vice president said. "Moreover, construction of the airport in Zangilan district has begun and construction is planned to be launched in Lachin district." Huseynov stressed that one terminal will operate by the time of commissioning the airport. The visit of Nabiyev and Turkish Minister of Transport and Infrastructure Adil Karaismailoglu to the Azerbaijani territories liberated from the Armenian occupation began on May 31.



LAHORE: Ambassador of Switzerland Bénédict de Cerjat in a meeting with staff of a Swiss company operating in Pakistan. – DNA

G7 set to launch green alternative to China's BRI

In the lead up to next week's summit, G-7 members have expressed different views on the geographical focus the initiative should have, said one of the people familiar with the discussions

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: The Group of Seven nations plans to launch a green alternative to China's Belt and Road initiative when the leaders meet at a summit next week, according to two people familiar with the matter.

The strategy, expected to be called the "Clean Green Initiative," would provide a framework to support sustainable development and the green transition in developing countries, the people said. The initiative will also be on the summit agenda

for the leaders. A G-7-backed plan to rival China's infrastructure strategy was initially pushed by U.S. president Joe Biden, and has featured in technical discussions between diplomats preparing next week's meeting in Cornwall, England, one of the people said. The same person said that it was not clear whether any new money would be put behind the G-7 initiative, explaining that the initial purpose was a pledge toward creating a strategic framework. The U.K. Cabinet Office didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. Beijing's



trillion-dollar initiative has seen over 100 countries endorse the

program, and its network of projects and maritime lanes already snake around large parts of the world. But critics argue that the projects often create a debt dependency and expose nations to undue influence by Beijing. Montenegro, a NATO member and European Union aspirant, is one of the latest countries struggling to repay loans to China. In the lead up to next week's summit, G-7 members have expressed different views on the geographical focus the initiative should have, said one of the people familiar with the

discussions. Germany, France and Italy are keen for it to support activities in Africa, while the U.S. is pushing for action in Latin America and Asia. Japan argues for more focus on the Indo-Pacific region. But all nations broadly agree on the need for a more transparent alternative to the Chinese program, the person added. In recent years, several G-7 countries, as well as the EU, have launched their own infrastructure initiatives with mixed results. More are in the works. The G-7 leaders' summit takes place June 11-13.

Saudi minister defends volume limit on mosque speaker

FOREIGN DESK

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's Islamic affairs minister is defending a contentious order restricting the volume of mosque loudspeakers, saying it was prompted by complaints about excessive noise. In a major policy last week in a country home to the holiest Muslim sites, the Islamic affairs ministry said the speakers should be set at no more than one-third of their maximum volume. The order, which also limited the use of loudspeakers mainly to issue the call to

prayer rather than broadcasting full sermons, triggered a conservative backlash on social media. Where is the disturbance in this! It brings nothing but peace and comfort. Give us back loudspeakers in mosques. Islamic Affairs Minister Abdullah al-Sheikh said on Monday the order was in response to citizens' complaints that the loud volume was disturbing children as well as the elderly. "Those who want to pray do not need to wait for ... the imam's" call to prayer, al-Sheikh said in a video published by state television.



ISLAMABAD: Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong met Chairman NEPRA, Tauseef H. Farooqi, and Chairman of NEPRA. Both sides agreed to further explore the potential of energy cooperation and promote more clean & low-cost energy projects. – DNA

Biden unveils measures to 'narrow racial wealth gap'

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The administration of United States President Joe Biden announced a series of steps that aim to "help narrow the racial wealth gap and reinvest in communities that have been left behind by failed policies". The White House announced the measures, which aim to crack down on housing discrimination and support minority-owned businesses, on the centennial of the Tulsa, Oklahoma race massacre of 1921, in which a white mob killed as many as 300 Black

people in the Greenwood neighbourhood, which was known as the "Black Wall Street". "The destruction wrought on the Greenwood neighbourhood and its families was followed by laws and policies that made recovery nearly impossible," the White House said in a statement on Tuesday. The administration added that subsequent policies locked Black Tulsans out of homeownership and access to credit; that the construction of federal highways in Greenwood cut the Black population off from economic opportunity; and that chronic disinvestment "denied Black

Wall Street a fair shot at rebuilding", "These are the stories of Greenwood, but they have echoes in countless Black communities across the country," the White House said, hours before Biden was set to travel to Tulsa to commemorate the massacre. The new measures include launching "a first-of-its-kind interagency effort to address inequity in home appraisals, and conducting rulemaking to aggressively combat housing discrimination" and using the "federal government's purchasing power" to increase government contracting with "disadvantaged businesses by

50 percent". The administration also highlighted a series of grants included in Biden's American Jobs Plan, a \$2.7 trillion package aimed at rebuilding the US economy and infrastructure that the administration has been working to build support for in Congress. The grants in question would "create jobs and build wealth in communities of colour", the White House said. Observers say racial disparities in the US persist for generations, limiting opportunities for wealth creation for Black and Latino families and reducing their ability to pass on property to their children.

China transfers cancer treatment tech to Pakistan

BEIJING: "The medical cooperation we have done with Pakistan is non-governmental. When the epidemic is over, efforts should be made to promote medical cooperation in technological innovation on the government level," said Li Dinggang, executive president of medicine of Beijing Lu Daopei Hematology Hospital. "I hope that the Chinese technologies will benefit our Pakistani friends, and then be extended to other countries along the Belt and Road," he added according to a report published by China

Economic Net (CEN). "In 2004, China approved the world's first gene medicine for the treatment of malignant tumors, which can be used to treat advanced-stage cancers. This news caused a global sensation at the time. A large number of foreign patients came to China for medicine. Some people who couldn't go to China invited Chinese doctors to come to their country for a consultation. I had the honor to participate in the preliminary research and development of gene medicine." Li Dinggang said. – DNA

Rohingya protest against living conditions

WEB DESK

DHAKA: Several thousand Rohingya refugees have staged "unruly" protests against living conditions on a cyclone-prone island off Bangladesh where they were moved from vast camps on the mainland, police said. Since December, Bangladesh has shifted 18,000 out of a planned 100,000 refugees to the low-lying silt island of Bhashan Char from the Cox's Bazar region, where around 850,000 people live in squalid and cramped conditions. Most of them had fled a brutal military offensive in neighbouring Buddhist-majority Myanmar in 2017 that United Nations investigators concluded was executed with "genocidal intent". Monday's protest involved up to 4,000 people, police said and coincided with an inspection visit by officials from the UN refugee agency (UNHCR).

"The Rohingya who are there became unruly the moment the UNHCR representatives landed (on the island) by helicopter today," local police chief Alamgir Hossain told the AFP news agency. "They broke the glass on warehouses by throwing rocks. They came at the police... Their demand is they don't want to live here."

Industrial policy 2020-23 incentivizes Rashakai SEZ

The average labor cost of an operational hour in the coastal and inland regions of China is thrice the cost in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Underpinned by KP industrial policy 2020-23, the newly launched Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) is set to be in high gear to galvanize billion-dollar foreign investment through incentives and concession models, high-tech development parameters, accelerated industrialization, and export-oriented economic activities. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, the enforcement of a 3-year industrial policy that conceptualizes business and development designs fixing challenges of officialdom and traditional loopholes, CPEC prioritized Rashakai Special Economic Zone has blazed the trails of synergic cooperation that bodes well for

both Pakistan and China. KP Industrial policy 2020-23 reveals that the Rashakai prioritized SEZ is being done on Public-Private Partnership (PPP) through Joint Ventures with Chinese enterprises and various foreign companies. "Chinese labor is graduating from low-paying to high-paying jobs, along with the introduction of improved labor laws, the labor costs are also rising sharply. The average labor cost of an operational hour in the coastal and inland regions of China is thrice the cost in Pakistan. pressures are compelling Chinese manufacturers to look elsewhere to relocate. Rashakai SEZ integrated with industrial policy KP is the best choice for them," the policy said. In this regard, former CPEC project

director and KP-BOIT CEO Hassan Daud Butt said that after the first Chinese firm, many more are gearing up to set their commercial feet at Rashakai SEZ. Century Steel PVT LTD, an enterprise owned by M/S Fuzhou Julitaihe International Company, a Chinese conglomerate has made a debut by investing \$ 50 million for setting up a steel plant in the first phase. The second phase will likely see probably \$ 100 million more investment by Century Steel firm, he added. "On the special directions of PM Imran Khan and to increase the "Pull Factor" for FDI, numerous incentives have been laid down to mobilize investors. The fiscal benefits under the SEZ law include a one-time exemption from customs duties and taxes for

all capital goods imported into Pakistan for the development, operations, and maintenance of an SEZ (both for the developer as well as for the zone enterprise) and exemption from all taxes on income for ten years," he added. After the commercial launch of Rashakai SEZ, he said that the wait for the attainment of plots has eventually ended and added that now it will take just a month to provide plots to all the enterprises that applied through online procedures. During the first phase, approximately 10MW electricity has been made available in SEZ and it is expected the supply of gas would be ensured by the end of the year, he added. One window service has become a hallmark of SEZs due to its primacy of one solution to all

hitches, he mentioned. As KP industrial Policy 2020-23 emphasizes fostering an export-led market, he revealed that Rashakai SEZ will promote the export-oriented industry in tune with regional competitiveness. Rashakai is destined to grab maximum foreign investment and companies as it is also equipped with the new KP Investment Promotion Strategy 2021-2025 that complements the provincial government's Industrial Policy 2020-23, Economic Recovery Plan 2020-23, and Commerce and Trade Strategy 2020. Due to its location on the motorway and proximity to the Torkham border and Central Asia, the Rashakai SEZ is expected to be the game-changer for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Iran-Tajik to boost mutual ties

DNA

TEHRAN: Iranian Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli on Tuesday said that Dushanbe and Tehran are keen on bolstering mutual ties. According to the Ministry of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Fazli made the remarks in a meeting with Tajikistan Interior Minister Ramazon Rahimzoda in Tehran.

Iran-Tajikistan relations are growing based on cultural, historical, neighborly as well as regional conditions, he noted. Persian (Farsi) is the common language of Iran, Tajikistan and Afghanistan, he said, adding that the three states can create a triangle of cultural cooperation in the region.

Both sides reviewed bilateral cooperation in the field of bilateral security cooperation between Dushanbe and Tehran and joint fight against extremism and terrorism.

The official delegation of Tajikistan led by Interior Minister Ramazon Rahimzoda arrived in Tehran today to hold talks with high-ranking Iranian officials and discuss the issues related to bilateral security cooperation between Tajikistan and Iran and joint fight against extremism and terrorism.

Azerbaijan, Turkey ink MoU on legal cooperation

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan and Turkey have signed a memorandum of understanding in the areas of strengthening international legal cooperation, further intensification of existing ties in this area and deepening of legal ties.

The memorandum was signed by Azerbaijan's Prosecutor General Kamran Aliyev and Turkey's Chief Public Prosecutor of the Supreme Court of Appeals Bekir Sahin, who is on an official visit to Azerbaijan.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the cooperation in the legal sphere and expressed confidence that mutually beneficial cooperation would continue successfully.

Noting that bilateral relations are successfully developing in many areas, the sides stressed that these relations will develop successfully in the future.

The Prosecutor General briefed the participants of the meeting on the need to strengthen the necessary regulatory framework for the activities of the prosecution within the framework of the judicial and legal reform in the country. In addition, the information was given about the comprehensive modernization and further improvement of the structure of the Prosecutor's Office, radical reforms in the direction of a complete reorganization of the staff and the rights of citizens.

Briefs

LHC judge declines to hear Kh Asif bail plea

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: A Lahore High Court (LHC) judge on Tuesday refused to hear a petition moved by PML-N MNA Khawaja Asif seeking post-arrest bail in an assets case. Judge Asjad Javed Ghural, a member of the division bench that was to take up the petition, recused himself from the case, after which the matter was referred to the LHC chief justice to fix it before another bench for hearing. He refused to hear the case over the petitioner's lawyers issuing statements against him. Asif through his counsel Barrister Haider Rasul Mirza filed the petition which stated that the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had arrested him from Islamabad last year on December 29. He contended that the corruption watchdog apprehended him despite the fact that he had provided it all the relevant records regarding his assets. Besides, the same record is also available with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). Khawaja Asif pleaded with the bench to order his release on bail. In its reply, NAB opposed the bail plea stating the corruption watchdog launched an assets beyond means inquiry against him as his assets do not match with his income.

Shehbaz flays KP police's handling of protest

DNA

LAHORE: PML-N President and Opposition Leader in the National Assembly on Tuesday condemned the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police for mishandling the protest by university teachers and employees over cuts in salaries and pensions. "It tells a sorry tale of how PTI govt is dealing with the higher education sector. Absolutely criminal," the PML-N president said in a tweet. Shehbaz Sharif said that higher education has been pushed back by decades due to the policies of the government. Meanwhile, the All University Employees Association continued their protest for the fifth consecutive day in Peshawar. University lecturers including foreign-qualified PhDs and employees gathered at Engineering University Chowk in Peshawar. The university employees are on strike against Monday's incident in which police lashed the protesters and registered cases against 21 persons.

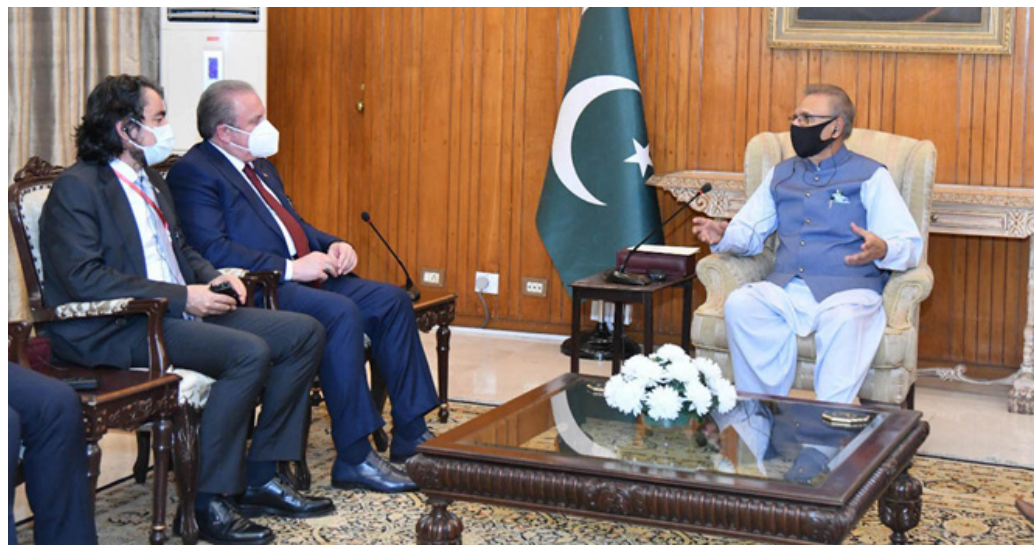
Ashrafi, Kuwait envoy discuss Pak-Kuwait ties

ISLAMABAD: Special Aide to the Prime Minister on Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Tuesday discussed steps to further improve Kuwait-Pakistan relations with Kuwait's Ambassador to Pakistan Nasar Abdul Rahman J. Al-Mutairi, at Kuwait's embassy. Ashrafi thanked the leadership of Kuwait for the restoration of visas for Pakistanis during the visit of Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, said a news release. "We are grateful to Kuwaiti leadership for lifting decade long ban on the visa for Pakistan," said Ashrafi adding Pakistan's relations with Arab Islamic world were improving in all areas of cooperation in accordance of the vision and thinking of Imran Khan. Ashrafi said that the visits of the Prime Minister to Saudi Arabia, foreign minister to Egypt after 10 years, Iraq after 39 years and Interior minister's visit to Kuwait after 11 years depicts Prime minister's vision and thinking to have stable and stronger relations with the Muslim world. — APP

President for enhanced Pak-Turk cooperation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has underscored the need for enhanced political and economic cooperation between Pakistan and Turkey for the mutual benefits of the two sides. He was talking to Speaker of Grand National Assembly of Turkey Dr Mustafa Sentop in Islamabad on Tuesday. The President said bilateral relations between the two countries have transformed into a strong strategic partnership over the years and would continue to grow further. Expressing his gratitude to Turkey for its steadfast support on Kashmir, Dr. Arif Alvi said the people of Pakistan are highly grateful to the leadership of Turkey for supporting Pakistan's



principled stance on Kashmir at all international fora. He also acknowledged that Tur-

key has been at the forefront of leading the global efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic by pro-

viding support and assistance to countries including Pakistan. Speaker GNAT said his country

would continue to support Pakistan's stance on Kashmir. Turkish speaker is in Islamabad for the conference of ECO assemblies speakers. Speakers from Iran and Turkmenistan are attending the conference via video link, while President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi attended the inaugural session as a special guest. The main theme of the conference is to promote parliamentary partnership for regional unity. Participants in the conference will consider inter-parliamentary co-operation among ECO member countries, as well as ways to promote trade, tourism and economic co-operation will also be considered. This conference of international significance has been made possible as a result of the special efforts of Speaker.

We have to make nature our ally, says Amin Aslam

Climate change minister attends P4G summit organized by Republic of Korea

STAFF REPORT



ISLAMABAD: The Second P4G Summit was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea in its capital, Seoul. Government leaders and top officials from 46 countries including Pakistan and heads of 21 international organizations, along with representatives from business sector and civil society, took part in the conference. The P4G (Partnering for Green Growth and Global Goals 2030) is a global initiative aimed at facilitating public-private partnership to tackle climate change and achieve Sustainable Development Goals. This year

due to the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, the Summit was held virtually and mustered international solidarity required to build back better and greener from the COVID-19 crisis and be a stepping stone for the success of the 2021 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26).

with other countries on a debt-for-nature swap. The two-day Summit engaged world leaders in dialogues on Inclusive Green Recovery from COVID-19, Efforts of the International Community to Achieve Carbon-Neutrality by 2050 and the Efforts to Strengthen Climate Action and to Facilitate Public-Private Partnerships through Inclusive Green Recovery. At the end of the Summit, the leaders adopted the Seoul Declaration, calling for the engagement of governments, businesses and civil society as part of "collective solutions" to global climate change and to achieve green recovery for current and future generations.

EU, Pakistan discuss democracy and rule of law

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: As part of their regular annual meetings, the EU and Pakistan discussed a range of issues related to the rule of law and human rights. The EU-Pakistan Sub-Group on Democracy, Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights meeting was held, through a video conference. During the meeting, participants discussed cooperation on human rights at international fora, Pakistan's National Action Plan on Human Rights, gender equality, women's and children's rights, freedom of expression and media, civil society space, freedom of religion or belief and rights of persons belonging to minorities. They also jointly

reviewed the progress in Pakistan's implementation of the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP+) and related commitments. The EU and Pakistan also addressed issues concerning the rule of law and access to justice, including the review of the crimes that can lead to death penalty, as well as legal and institutional developments. Pakistan provided an update on labour rights, including the Child Labour Survey. The EU presented the assessment regarding the implementation of the EU's Human Rights Programme. The EU-Pakistan Sub-Group on Democracy, Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights will present its conclusions to the EU-Pakistan Joint Commission later this month.

Locally-developed vaccine launched

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday launched the coronavirus vaccine developed in the country with Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Health Dr Faisal Sultan, saying the country will soon be able to start the production of the important drug. Faisal, while speaking at the launch ceremony, said that the is an opportunity in every difficulty. He also added that during the pan-

demic, China stood out as a friend of Pakistan. "China was already a friend and came forward when coronavirus [hit Pakistan]," said Dr Sultan. He also lauded the National Institute of Health (NIH) for developing the vaccine. Developing the vaccine from raw materials is not an easy task. [We are] proud of the people that developed the vaccine at the NIH," said Dr Sultan. Meanwhile, the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) chief Asad Umar remarked that today was an "important day".



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi exchanging views with Ambassador of South Korea, Suh Sangpyo. — DNA

Journalists' bodies reject proposed PMDA Ordinance

DNA

KARACHI: A joint meeting of the representative media organizations including All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS), Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA), Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE), Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), Barna Group, PFUJ (Dastoor Group) and Association of Electronic Media Editors and News Directors (AEMEND) have totally rejected the proposed Pakistan Media Development Authority Ordinance and

termed the concept as an unconstitutional and draconian law aimed against Freedom of Press and Expression and step towards imposing the state control to regulate the establishment as well as operation of all segments of media. The joint meeting was of the unanimous opinion that the proposed PMDA is intended to hinder media freedoms and take control over the media by the top information bureaucracy. The concept is an attempt to tighten Federal Government hold over the media through one draconian authority ignoring the fact that

print, digital and electronic media are separate entities each with their own defined features and respective regulatory laws. The move appears as an extension of now defunct Press and Publications Ordinance 1963 (PPO) of Ayub Khan era to all media platforms with regimental provisions to take over the independent and free media. This has no place in a democratically elected dispensation, stated the joint declaration. The joint meeting decided to resist the establishment of PMDA at all levels including legal recourse,

protest measures and advertising campaigns to educate the public against this blatant attempt to subjugate and control the media and curtail peoples' right to know. The meeting decided to form a Joint Action Committee of APNS, PBA, CPNE, PFUJ & AEMEND to decide further actions and seek support from political parties, bar associations, human right organizations and other segments of the civil society to oppose the proposed attack on media and urge upon the Federal Government to immediately withdraw the proposal.

China lauds media's role in dispelling propaganda

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong has said that Pakistani media played an important role in disseminating positive information about the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and dispelling propaganda of the countries hostile to the initiative. In a meeting with Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Tuesday, the two underscored the need for enhanced cooperation and close coordination between the media industries of China and Pakistan. The Chinese envoy stressed on strengthening business-to-business cooperation between the two countries. "Trade is a good beginning for all kinds of cooperation." The minister said CPEC was a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which was crucial to regional connectivity. He apprised the envoy about the progress made on the Alama Iqbal Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Faisalabad, which, he said, had great potential for the Chinese investors. Necessary infrastructure in economic zone had already been developed. The minister stressed the need for joint ventures of both the countries' compa-

nies in the textile sector. He expressed pleasure over the extension of CPEC beyond infrastructure development, social and agriculture cooperation. Farrukh Habib called for city-to-city cooperation, research and collaboration on social protection programmes between China and Pakistan. During the meeting, both the dignitaries exchanged felicitations on the successful completion of 70 years of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan. Farrukh said China was an iron brother and all-weather friend of Pakistan, which always stood by the latter in difficult times. "The Karakoram Highway is a testament of our strong friendly relations. The people of Pakistan have very favourable sentiments for China and keep Pakistan-China friendship in high regards," the minister remarked. He congratulated Nong Rong on the completion of 100 years of the establishment of Communist Party of China (CPC). Farrukh Habib appreciated and praised the vision of President Xi Jinping for regional connectivity and promotion of trade. The world in general and Pakistan in particular could learn from China as to how it successfully brought 700 million people out of poverty, he said.

Opposition's PDM has lost momentum: Sh Rashid

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid on Tuesday has lashed out at the opposition parties and said that Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) has lost its momentum. While holding a press conference, the minister said he had already predicted that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) will be divided. Some people are maligning the national institutions without any reason. Baseless allegations and smear campaign against the intelligence agencies are damaging the country's image, he said. Sheikh Rashid further said that thirty percent Pakistanis will soon get Saudi Arabia visas. Remittances have played vital role in four percent growth, he went on to say. The federal minister said that the government is equipping the cyber wing with modern gadgets. Earlier, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed on Friday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan will complete his five-year term regardless of PDM plans. He said that Rs 3 crore have been allocated for Lai Nullah, adding that Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar announced three universities for Rawalpindi which will be remembered forever after their deaths along with sixty universities and Lai Nullah.

Moderna seeks full US approval for Covid-19 shot

WASHINGTON: Moderna said Tuesday it was applying for full approval in the United States of its Covid-19 vaccine for people aged 18 and over, joining Pfizer which made the same request last month. The vaccine has been available since December 18, 2020 under an "emergency use authorization" intended to make life-saving medications available as fast as possible. More than 124 million doses of the vaccine have been administered in the US. "We are pleased to announce this important step in the US regulatory process for a Biologics License Application (BLA) of our COVID-19 vaccine," said Stephane Bancel, the company's CEO. "We look forward to working with the FDA and will continue to submit data from our Phase 3 study and complete the rolling submission." Last week Moderna announced its vaccine was highly effective in adolescents and it would seek authorization among 12-to-17-year-olds soon. The two-shot regime is around 90 percent effective against symptomatic Covid-19 and 95 percent effective against severe disease. — APP

PIA airlifts batch of Sinopharm vaccine

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) special plane airlifted a batch of 500,000 doses of Sinopharm vaccine from Beijing to Islamabad on Tuesday. Another plane of the national flag carrier will transport another batch of 500,000 doses of Sinopharm vaccine procured from China to Pakistan on Wednesday morning, Qadir Bux Sangi, PIA Country Manager for China told. Last Sunday, a special flight PK6852 transported a consignment of 500,000 doses of Sinovac vaccine from Beijing to Islamabad. The government has decided to run massive vaccination drive across the country to achieve the target of providing 70 million vaccines to the people aimed at fighting the Covid-19 pandemic. So far, about 5.3 million people have been vaccinated. The concerned authorities have already arranged 10 million more vaccines while 10 million more would be available in June and further 10 million in July, according to official sources.



ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong calls on Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Farrukh Habib. — DNA