



# Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

**Azerbaijan embassy celebrates National Salvation Day: Alizada**

Detailed News On Page-01

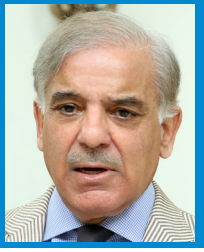
**No decision yet on phone calls and SMS tax**

Detailed News On Page-01



**Govt failed to come up with a good budget**

Detailed News On Page-01



**Briefs**

**Hammad clarifies FED levy on internet**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Energy Hammad Azhar has clarified regarding the imposition of federal excise duty (FED) on internet data usage, saying that Prime Minister Imran Khan and cabinet did not approve the levy. Hammad Azhar said in a Twitter message that PM Khan and the federal cabinet did not approve the FED levy on internet data usage. He added that it will not be included in the final draft of the Finance Bill (budget) that is placed before the parliament for approval. Earlier, it was learnt that FED has been imposed on over three-minute mobile phone calls, internet data and SMS in the budget for the new fiscal year. It added a nominal tax will be imposed on a large portion of the population under the federal excise tax (FED). Meanwhile, the federal government reduced the withholding tax rate for mobile services from 12 per cent to 10 per cent in the budget 2021-22.

**10% increase in salary 'worst joke'**

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal on Friday slammed the government's proposal to increase the income of salaried individuals by 10% and called the move the "worst joke". "A 10% increase in the salaries after record inflation is the worst joke made by the government with them," tweeted Iqbal as Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin presented the federal government budget in the National Assembly. He added that the move was like "rubbing salt on their wounds". "We reject this. At least a 20% increase should be given," said the former interior minister. All eyes were on the Parliament as Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin presented the budget 2021-22 on Friday.

**Holiday Notice**

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. - Editor

**Inside...**

GCU, German University to exchange 10 students - Page 02

Serena hotels sign MoU with WWF, AKRSP - Page 03

Admin market committee to improve supply system - Page 04

Soul-searching to countering hate - Page 05

China has created a dystopian hellscape in Xinjiang: Amnesty - Page 06

Pakistan Embassy Brussels holds Webinar on "RDA" - Page 07

Ambassador Alizada hosts Salvation Day reception - Page 08

**Rs 8,487 bln budget presented**

**4.8 % growth target**

**small cars become cheap**

**motorbikes prices reduced**

**Relief for govt employees**

## Growth-oriented budget

Tarin delivers budget speech amid Opposition's ruckus; duties on local cars reduced; tax on printing materials cut; taxation system made easy; FBR reforms announced; motor bikes also become cheap; no decision yet regarding tax on phone calls

**Opposition creates ruckus**

**Rs 21.72 billion for health sector**

**CPEC SEZ to be exempted from tax**

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: As soon as Minister for Finance Shaukat Tarin began his budget speech in the National Assembly (NA) on Friday, lawmakers belonging to the opposition parties, including Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), started shouting slogans to register their protest against the money bill. "PTI's Qarzistan, Watan ki betyan sarkun par, sharam karo, doob maro, muk tera show Niazi, Go Niazi Go Niazi" were the slogans shouted by the opposition legislators.

COMMERCE REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin presented the budget 2021-22. The finance minister was greeted by jeers from Opposition benches, with members shouting slogans and taunting the finance minister by laughing loudly as he praised PM Imran Khan's economic initiatives. He announced that the total outlay of the budget had been kept at Rs 8,478 billion and had set the tax collection target at Rs5,829 billion. Speaking about the various allocations made by the government, Tarin said Rs 480bn had been allotted for pensions payments of both civilians and retired military officers. He said the defence budget of the country had been allocated Rs1,370bn while the government had earmarked Rs1,168 for development and non-development grants for provinces. He said the government had allocated Rs682bn for subsidies to various sectors of the economy, adding that Rs479bn had been allocated to run the civil government. Tarin said the government was serious in stemming the spread of the coronavirus and keeping its adverse effects at bay, adding that the government had set aside Rs100bn for it. He said the federal PSDP had been allocated Rs964 billion.

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The government has allocated Rs21.72 billion to 20 on-going and 26 new projects in the health sector under the Public Sector Development Programme 2021-22. The budget documents showed that out of the total allocated amount, Rs13.07 billion has been allocated to out-going projects while Rs8.65 billion has been earmarked for new projects. A further breakdown of the amount showed Rs5.6 billion has been earmarked for the Sehat Sahulat Programme and Prime Minister's National Health Insurance Programme phase-II.

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD: The enterprises of the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) being built under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are proposed to be exempted from the minimum tax for the year of 2021-22 and onwards. The minister for finance and revenue Shaukat Tarin in his budget speech here on Friday said the SEZs are a key project of the mega CPEC project. He said the SEZ enterprises were earlier exempted from tax however under the law, they are still liable to pay minimum tax on their turnover which was causing hardship to the investors.



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Shaukat Tareen presenting budget in the National Assembly. - DNA

Tarin lashed out at the previous governments, saying that a mountain of circular debt amounting to Rs1 trillion was inherited by the incumbent government due to the botched policies of its predecessor.

**Rs 5 bln allocated for COVID-19 responsive**  
The government has allocated Rs 5 billion for COVID-19 responsive and other

natural calamities control programme under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2021-22. The allocation was part of the total amount Rs 88.5 billion, earmarked for the special programmes in the PSDP-2021-22, said the document. Other programmes include Sustainable Development Goals supplementary funds

and Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for PPP (Public Private Partnership) projects.

**Planning, Development Division to get Rs19.245 bln**  
The government has earmarked a hefty amount of Rs 19.245 billion for various new and ongoing schemes of the Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Division including Rs 10.2 billion

for eight projects of Sindh Infrastructure Development Co. Lt (SIDCL) under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2021-22. During the current fiscal year, the government had allocated only Rs 3.545 billion for the development projects of Planning division.

According to the budgetary document released here on Friday, the government has proposed allocation of Rs 5.605 billion for four new schemes, Rs 3.343 billion for 13 ongoing schemes while another another Rs 10.297 billion for eight ongoing schemes under the SIDCL.

**Rs1.9bn allocated for Information & Broadcasting Division**  
The government has allocated around Rs1.9 billion for some 15 ongoing and new schemes of Information and Broadcasting Division under the Public Sector Development Programme of Fiscal Year 2021-22. An amount of Rs 1457.465 million was allocated for seven new schemes, while a sum of Rs 442.218 was earmarked for ensuring completion of eight ongoing schemes, said the PSDP 2021-22 document.

The ongoing schemes including 100KW (kilowatt) medium wave radio station at Gwadar, modernization of camera and procurement of production equipment of Pakistan Television (PTV) corporation, broadcast station at Barkhan,

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Govt of Azerbaijan decorated Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Omar Ayub, Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood and Ms. Haumaira Secretary FPSC with Azerbaijan National Award. Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada gave these awards on behalf of the Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan. (News and more pictures on the back page). - DNA

**Pakistan moving towards stability, says Fawad Ch**

ZUBAIR AHMED

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry has said on Friday that all economic indicators of Pakistan are positive and the country is moving towards economic stability after a long time. In a twitter message, he said that the opposition should learn to differentiate between reforms and accountability so that electoral and judicial reforms could be discussed. "Political and economic stability was made possible only because the people and institutions had full confidence in Prime Minister Imran Khan," he said. Special Advisor to Prime Minister (SAPM) Shahbaz Gill said Imran Khan set out to fix the economy after taking over the government with the worst deficits in the history. He further said, "The international organizations are now testifying that Pakistan's economy is moving in the right direction." "Special measures to make the life of common man easier will be the focus of this budget," he said.

**Opposition rejects budget proposals**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Leaders of the opposition came together on Friday to reject the government's stance of economic growth and development in today's budget session, saying they would join hands to give it a "tough time" over the federal budget for fiscal year 2021-22. Speaking to the media in Islamabad alongside PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari after the National Assembly budget session, PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif said: "All opposition parties in parliament have decided we will give a tough time to the government and expose it, the false figures they've shown and the distortion [in numbers] they've done." He blasted the government's narrative on the state of the economy, questioning how could the economy improve when "the poor [man] is dying, he can't get bread for a one-time meal, there is a wave of poverty and unemployment in the country."

Continued on Page 06

## Turkey ready to take Kabul airport control

Hulusi Akar in a meeting with its NATO allies had said that the 500 Turkish forces in Afghanistan will take the control and responsibility of the Hamid Karzai International Airport

MONITORING REPORT

ANKARA: The Turkish forces have agreed to take the control of the Hamid Karzai International Airport if the NATO allies provide supports, the Turkish Defense Minister stated in a meeting with its NATO allies. Hulusi Akar, the Turkish Defense Minister in a meeting with its NATO allies had said that the 500 Turkish forces in Afghanistan will take the control and responsibility of the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, if financial, logistic and political supported is provided by allies. Akar discussed these issues at a NATO defence ministers meeting held during the DenizKurdur (Sea

Wolf) military exercises at Turkey's Aksaz Naval Base, located in the southeast coast of the Aegean Sea in Marmaris, Mugla, Hurriyet reported. This comes as the withdrawal of the foreign forces which is scheduled to be completed by September 11 have increased concerns among the international community and the diplomatic mission's presence in Afghanistan. At the same time, ZalmayKhalilzad, the U.S special envoy for the Afghan peace process has initiated his travels to Kabul, Doha and the regional countries in order to provide assistance to the process. In Kabul he met, the Afghan leaders including Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, Dr. Abdullah and Hamid Karzai.

## Turkey's troops should leave Afghanistan: Taliban

AGENCIES

DOHA: Turkey should withdraw its troops from Afghanistan under the 2020 deal for the pullout of foreign forces, a Taliban spokesman has said, effectively rejecting Ankara's proposal to guard and run Kabul's airport after the United States-led NATO forces depart.

The development raises serious questions for the US, other countries and international organisations with missions in Kabul about how to securely evacuate their personnel from landlocked Afghanistan,

should fighting threaten the capital, Reuters news agency reported on Thursday.

It also appeared to dash Ankara's hopes of using the securing of Kabul airport to help improve ties with Washington - strained by Turkey's purchase of Russian defence systems - in talks set for Monday between President Joe Biden and Turkish President RecepTayyipErdogan.

Asked in a text message whether the Taliban rejected Turkey's proposal to keep forces in Kabul to guard and run the international airport after other foreign troops leave, the Taliban spokesman in Doha responded that they should go as well.

## India discloses ties with Taliban

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: India has established communication channels with the Taliban leaders including Mullah Abdul GhaniBaradar, HTML reported. According to the reports by the prominent Indian media outlet, HTML, this move has been described as a 'significant' mark shifting from Delhi's current position of not engaging with the Taliban leaders. The outreach is undertaken by the senior security officials and is limited only to those

Continued on Page 06

## Briefs

## Summer vacations in Punjab after exams

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Punjab Education Minister Murad Raas on Friday has said that the summer vacations across the province will be announced within two weeks after completion of examinations. Addressing a press conference, the minister said that the government knows about the problems which children are facing due to the scorching weather. Punjab government is taking steps to benefit the teachers. Over 70,000 transfers were made last year. The online portal will eliminate the corrupt practices, he said. Murad Raas told that leave applications and process regarding retirement of the teachers will also be applied online. An app is also being launched for the parents to have an idea of education standards in Pakistan, he told.

## Prof. Jamshaid elected new president of KP P&amp;LA

ABBOTTABAD: College Teacher's Alliance candidates Professor Jamshaid Khan and Professor Faiz Muhammad Khan were elected as president and general secretary respectively Thursday after winning the elections of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Professor and Lecturers Association (P&LA). According to the details, the elections for the position of president and the general secretary were conducted where four panels of lecturers from all over the province participated. College Teacher's Alliance candidates Professor Jamshaid while securing 2760 votes became the new president of KP Professor and Lecturers Association while his opponent Abdul Majeed Afridi of Govt. College Peshawar got 2206 votes. For General Secretary Slot College Teacher's Alliance candidates Professor Faiz Muhammad Khan of Govt. College Mandian was elected by securing 2603 votes while his opponent Professor Ajar Khan of Govt. College Chamla Bonair got 2196 votes. In the elections, 6000 male and female lecturers from 300 colleges participated and elected their representatives as president and general secretary. - APP

## Convener FPCCI terms budget pro-people

DNA

PESHAWAR: Convener FPCCI Central Standing Committee on Railways, Zia ul Haq Sarhadi Friday appreciated the federal budget 2021-22 while terming it best for the business community, industries as well as common man. Commenting on the budget, he said the tax exemption given by the government in agriculture and automobile sectors would give boost to these sectors, adding that it would also help the government in maintaining the growth rate during next fiscal year. He lauded the federal government for considering the proposals of business communities in the budget document and hoped that practical measures would be taken to fulfill their demands. Sarhadi said the industrial and manufacturing sectors witnessed broad based growth during the last fiscal year and hoped the incentives given by the government in fiscal budget 2021-22 would help achieve the targets set for the year. He said the federal government has presented a pro-people and business-friendly budget despite monetary pressure and economic challenges, adding that certain relaxations to the industrial sector for generation of employment opportunities for the youth would address the issue of unemployment in the country. He said the government should ask FBR to facilitate the tax payers especially business communities and traders to broaden the tax net. He also appreciated increase in salaries of government employees and pension, saying the decision will give them respite from increasing prices of essential commodities.

## GCU, German University to exchange 10 students

The VC said that internationalization is the third pillar of his strategic vision and he would be very happy to host the students and teachers from UASN at GCU Lahore

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: The Government College University Lahore and University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg (UASN), Germany have agreed to exchange ten students every year, and no tuition fee would be charged from these students by the host university for the next five years. GCU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi and UASN German President Prof. Dr. Gred-Teschke signed the memorandum of understanding online for faculty and student exchange, research collaboration and training of staff members. The online 16-point accord signing was followed by a video conference among the heads and officials of both universities. UASN Germany Department of Landscape Architecture and Civil Engineering Prof. Dr. Andreas Wehrenpennig and Head of International Office Dorina-Mackedanz also attended the video conference. Speaking on occasion, Prof. Asghar Zaidi assured Prof. Teschke



of providing maximum facilities to the German students in Pakistan including on-campus accommodation, and requested the UASN Germany administration for the same for his students. The Vice Chancellor said that internationalization is the third pillar of his strategic vision and he would be very happy to host the students and teachers from UASN at GCU Lahore. He also told the German university officials about the history and traditions of GCU. The president of UASN Germany said he looks forward to a strong partnership with GCU Lahore. He assured Prof. Zaidi of his fullest support in academic collaboration and exchange of students and faculty. He also showed a printed publication related to the city of Neubrandenburg and the university which he would be sending to the GCU Vice Chancellor through post. Both the universities have also agreed to develop a partnership for joint research projects, exchanging staff and holding joint training, conferences and, workshops and seminars.

## UAF to provides Ehsaas fellowship

DNA

FAISALABAD: As many as 1,500 undergraduate students of the University of Agriculture Faisalabad got Ehsaas Scholarships that will help them to complete education. The certificate and cheques distribution ceremony was held at the syndicate room here Friday. UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Anas Sarwar Qureshi along with Higher Education Commission USAID Project Director Azhar Ali Khan, and Director Financial Assistance and University Advancement Prof Dr Javed Akhtar distributed the cheques. Talking to the students, Dr Anas Sarwar Qureshi urged them to devote their energies for acquiring knowledge and developing skills that will pave a way for a bright future. He said that innovative ideas were key to excel in the changing world. He added that the government's initiatives of Ehsaas programme was a hallmark step as it was reserved for students from low-income families aiming to enable them to aspire for higher education. Waqas Akbar Ahmad, a research assistant, also spoke on the occasion.

## Minister inaugurates corona vaccination camp at FCCI

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: A massive anti-corona vaccination drive has been started on special directive of Prime Minister Imran Khan to revive national economy and in this regard vaccination camp set up at Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) will also play a pivotal role by vaccinating industrialists, traders, FCCI members and their families on a priority basis. Provincial Minister for Culture and Colonies Khayal Ahmad Kastro. Inaugurating the anti-corona Vaccination Camp in the basement of Faisalabad Chamber on Thursday, he said that the government has started vaccination to protect every person in Pakistan from coronavirus and scope of this drive is being expanded gradually to restore normal industrial, commercial and business activities in the country. He appreciated the efforts

of President FCCI Engineer Hafiz Ehtesham Javed for setting up a vaccination camp in Faisalabad Chamber and said that vaccine will be injected to the industrialists and traders in a very calm and comfortable environment. The mobile camps are also being set up in the factories for vaccination of workers which would also help in reviving the national economy. He also assured to provide ample quantity of injections to the camp set up in Faisalabad Chamber. Earlier, FCCI President Engineer Hafiz Ehtesham Javed welcomed the provincial minister and said that the services of male and female vaccinators have been hired for FCCI camp so that the women members of the chamber could be vaccinated by female vaccinator. He also appreciated the co-operation of divisional and district administrations in the vaccination camp and said that the economic activities will be resumed as soon as people will be vaccinated.



## PHP held road safety seminar at cadet college Jhang

The workshops and seminars are important tool of inculcating road sense and education about traffic signs, maintaining of safe distance, hazards of over speeding and abuse of mobile phone during driving

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The violators are bane of traffic. The observance of traffic rules is duty and obligation of every citizen. In compliance of directions of SSP Punjab Highway patrol, Region Faisalabad Mirza Anjum Kamal, Mobile Education unit conducted road safety awareness seminar at Cadet College Jhang. Incharge MEU Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti dilated upon the importance of understanding and abidance of traffic rules. He elaborated that accidents occurs mainly due to human error that is about 92% and rest 8% is all about environmental, vehicular mechanical and engineering faults. He said that almost 16 thousand to 17 thousand commuters lost their precious lives and 50 to 60 thousand grievously injured in Road traffic accidents (RTAs). Road safety is all about creating awareness about the safety of road users either



they are pedestrians, two wheelers or four wheelers. Impatience and recklessness cause accidents on highways. The workshops and seminars are important tool of inculcating road sense and education about traffic signs, right of way, maintaining of safe distance, and hazards of over speeding and abuse of mobile phone during driving. Most of the fatalities occur due to human error. Incharge Mobile Education unit, Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti further exhorted students that wear-

ing safety helmet reduces the chances of head injury. The citizens should obey traffic rules, never over speed and drive dangerously. The courtesy and careful behavior on roads help in preventing road traffic accidents and making travel pleasant and uninterrupted.

## FPCCI condemns violence at Bahria Town

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Senior Vice President Khawaja Shahzeb Akram said that entire team of FPCCI strongly condemned the heinous act of ransacking of buildings and other infrastructures at Bahria Town Karachi by a mob. In a media statement issued here Thursday, he added, "We express complete solidarity with Bahria Town Pvt. Limited and Malik Niaz against this act of sheer violence. Our sympathies are for the families and businesses affected and tortured in the violence that was committed in the name of protest. The incident not only harmed the people, who invested their lifelong savings but also for those who are associated and dependent on real state sector for their livelihoods. It also sent out a distressed signal for all sectors."

## KP CS hosts farewell to outgoing IGP

DNA

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dr. Kazim Niaz on Friday hosted a farewell in honor of former Inspector General Police, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dr Sanaulah Abbasi at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House Islamabad. Addressing the ceremony, Chief Secretary lauded the services of Dr Sanaulah Abbasi saying he was an outstanding and honest police officer. He stated that his dedication towards his responsibilities and professionalism was exemplary for entire police force. He said the outgoing IGP rendered his services in the best possible manner and earned good manner, said a press release issued here. On this occasion, former IG Dr Sanaulah Abbasi said, "people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are very hospitable and was carrying happy memories with him".

## KITE arranges training on Covid SOPs

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism (KITE) project in collaboration with DTS has given training to 500 people in different training sessions on awareness of Covid SOPs and guidelines for reopening of tourism sectors. The objective of the training sessions being held simultaneously in Swat, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Dir Upper and Peshawar was to give orientation to district administration, TIC, Gilyat Development Authority, Kaghan Development Authority (KgDA) Rescue-1122, police and other stake holders. The participants were given training on SOPs for hospitality sector and its impact on tourism sector. The aim of training creating awareness among staff of local hotels, restaurants, travel and tour operators for going business with safety of tourists in the wake of Covid-19. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Shibli Faraz in a meeting with KPK Minister for Food, Science and Information Technology Atif Khan. - DNA

## Completion of cochlear implants an achievement

RAWALPINDI: Surgeon General of Pakistan Army Lieutenant General Nigar Johar has said on Friday that the completion of 200 cochlear implants is indeed remarkable achievement indicative of innovativeness and commitment of Army Medical Corps to public health and well-being. A special ceremony was held at Army Medical College Rawalpindi to mark completion of 200 cochlear implants. The ceremony was graced by Surgeon General of Pakistan Army Lieutenant General Nigar Johar as chief guest. - DNA

## IFSB appoints Reza Baqir as Chairman

The IFSB, established in 2003 at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, is an international standard-setting organization that promotes and enhances the soundness and stability of global Islamic financial services industry by issuing prudential standards and guiding principles for the industry

DNA

KARACHI: Governor State Bank of Pakistan, Dr. Reza Baqir has been appointed as the Chairman of the General Assembly of Islamic Financial Services Board (IFSB) for the year 2022. His appointment was approved by the IFSB General Assembly in its 19th meeting held on 9th June 2021. On his appointment as Chairman for the 20th General Assembly, Governor SBP expressed his gratitude to IFSB Council and General Assembly members for their expression of confidence in him to steer this august forum and showed resolve that IFSB will continue to serve as one of the leading standard setting bodies in

Islamic finance at global level. Adding further he said that standards developed by IFSB will help to augment the regulatory and prudential frameworks for Islamic finance globally. Dr. Reza Baqir is currently serving as the Deputy Chairman of the Council of IFSB, which is also a senior executive and policy making body comprising heads of the regulatory and supervisory authorities on Islamic finance. The IFSB General Assembly is the apex representative body of its three categories of members namely 'full members', 'associate members' and 'observer members'. As of June 2021, there are 187 members of the IFSB, which comprises 81 regulatory and supervisory authorities, 10 interna-



tional inter-governmental organizations, and 96 market players, which include financial institutions, professional firms, industry associations and stock exchanges operating in 57 jurisdictions. The IFSB, established in 2003 at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, is an international standard-setting organization that promotes and enhances the soundness and stability of global Islamic financial services industry by issuing prudential standards and guiding principles for the industry. To strengthen the regulatory and supervisory infrastructure for Islamic banking industry, the State Bank of Pakistan has over the years adopted various IFSB prudential standards and guidelines after necessary customization in light of the prevailing local legal and regulatory environment. In Pakistan, currently there are 5 full-fledged Islamic banks and 17 conventional banks operating with standalone Islamic banking branches offering a wide array of Shariah compliant financial solutions. As of

March 31, 2020, the market share of the Islamic banking industry assets and deposits in the overall banking sector stood at 17% and 18.7% respectively and the branch network of Islamic banking institutions comprises over 3,456 branches and 1,638 windows. State Bank of Pakistan is fully committed in promoting Islamic banking as envisioned in its 3rd five year strategic plan 2020-25 by setting a target of 30% market share of Islamic banking in overall banking industry. Further, special emphasis on increasing financing to agriculture and SME sectors has also been made part of the strategic plan. SBP has also received several global accolades in promoting Islamic banking in the country.

**Briefs****CIA Police busts three house burglars**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Crime Investigation Agency (CIA) of Islamabad Police has arrested three accused including a lady involved in house theft incidents and recovered 20 mobile phones, a police spokesman said.

According to the details, DIG (Operations) Islamabad police, Afzal Ahmad Kausar had categorically directed all the police officers to accelerate their efforts to curb crime and secure the city.

Following these directions, SSP (Investigation) Atta ur-Rehman constituted a special police team under the supervision of DSP CIA also including ASIs Tasneem Ahmed, Basharat Usman, and lady ASI Asia along with others nabbed three accused including a lady, identified as Rani Kausar, Zafara Hayat and Auras. Police team also recovered 20 mobile phones from their possession.

Separate cases have been registered against them at Golra and Ramna police stations and further investigation is underway. DIG (Operations) Afzal Ahmad Kausar has appreciated the performance and directed all police officials to remain vigilant in their respective areas and to ensure safety and security of the citizens.

**IGP visits family of martyred cop**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP), Islamabad, Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman on Friday visited the house of head constable Bashir Shah here at his residence who was martyred after unidentified gunmen opened fire on him during routine patrol in the area of Shams Colony police.

Superintendent of Police (SP), city, Umer Khan and other senior police officers also accompanied the IGP. Talking to the family of the deceased constable, the IGP said Bashir sacrificed his life in the line of duty while protecting lives and properties of the public. The IGP said the family of the deceased cop would be provided with all privileges till the age of 60 under the Prime Minister's 'Shuhda Package.' He instructed the department to give the constable's family every possible care. The police martyrs are our heroes who have written a golden chapter of history with their blood by protecting the lives of others, he said adding their sacrifices would not go in vain. The IGP assured the family that the culprits would be arrested soon and brought to the justice.

**REAP hails lifting of Russia's ban on Pak rice**

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Abdul Qayyum Paracha, Chairman Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan (REAP) has been pleased to express his gratitude to Department of Plant Protection (DPP), Ministry of Food Security & Research (MNFSR), Ministry of Commerce (MINCOM) and Embassy of Pakistan in Moscow for their excellent joint efforts and coordination with Russian authorities to make it possible to lift the ban on Pakistani rice imposed by Russian authorities.

He said that it was a commendable team work and everyone has put their contribution, specially Allah Ditta Abid, Director General (DPP), Sohail Shahzad, Director Technical (DPP), Nasir Hameed, Trade Minister Pakistan Embassy Russia and dedicated efforts of Mr. Muhammad Raza, Ex-SVC REAP & Convener REAP's Standing Committee on DPP matters to pursue this task in the larger interest of rice export trade of Pakistan, which is the 2nd largest source of foreign exchange for our beloved country.

**Serena hotels sign MoU with WWF, AKRSP**

Climate change is a reality that cannot be ignored: Amin Aslam, Monitoring system being developed: Aziz Boolani

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan), and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) with the aim to further the common objectives of climate mitigation, climate adaptation, land degradation, food security, biodiversity conservation and enhancing community resilience in view of Pakistan's needs, and to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The MoU signing ceremony was held at the Islamabad Serena Hotel which was graced by the Federal Minister and Advisor to the Prime Minister for Climate Change Mr. Malik Amin Aslam, heads of NGOs, media representatives and other stakeholders.

As a responsible corporate citizen, Serena Hotels has been carrying out several green initiatives like tracking and offsetting carbon emissions of our hotels, investing in renewables, and making our buildings and operations green-friendly. Our aim is not only to mitigate the carbon emissions for our hotels but to become carbon negative. Hence we have partnered with WWF-Pakistan and



AKRSP for the effective implementation and widening of scope for our mission, and to link it with the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Pakistan (TBTP) and Clean and Green Environment

Movement (CGP) of Prime Minister Imran Khan," said Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels South and Central Asia.

The aim of the MoU is to develop a collaborative frame-

work of Serena Hotels with the implementing parties in the broad areas of habitat restoration through tree plantation and improving Pakistan's forest cover across the country. The initiative will also support the protection of existing forests through implementation of a sustainable forest management plan, co-created with the local forest-dependent communities. It further aims to enhance

community resilience, and improve food security by creating alternative livelihood opportunities, strengthening market linkages and establishing value chains for non-timber forest products. Mr. Boolani said they are in discussions with the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) for developing a system for the monitoring and reporting of the afforestation program using aerial and satellite imagery. "The monitoring system will link the project with the Government's web portal, the National Forest Management System (NFMS) and REDD+ to bring transparency to our initiatives, and bring it into the fold of the national efforts," he said.

CEO of WWF-Pakistan Mr. Hammad Ali Naqi and CEO AKRSP Mr. Jamiluddin also spoke on the occasion, and highlighted their respective organisations unique contributions to the mitigation of climate change. They remarked that the recent Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted the need for protecting vulnerable ecosystems. They underlined the importance of the private sector stepping forward and going beyond typical CSR activities to become leadership champions and provide stewardship by addressing the environmental footprint within their boundaries.

**Success stories, lessons from Pak for Asia-Pacific region**

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations held a webinar, celebrating forest and landscape restoration; success stories and lessons from Pakistan for the Asia-Pacific region today to mark the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration - a rallying call for the protection and revival of millions of hectares of ecosystems all around the world for the benefit of people and nature as Pakistan hosted the World Environment Day 2021.

Led by the United Nations

Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Decade on Restoration - which runs from 2021 to 2030 - was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in a 2019 resolution. The webinar was attended by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Mr. Malik Amin Aslam, representatives from UNEP, FAO, CGIAR, academia, countries from the Asia-Pacific region and other stakeholders. Welcoming the participants, FAO Representative ai in Pakistan, Rebekah Bell stat-

ed that FAO is proud to be a partner of the government in the one billion tree tsunami, ten billion tree tsunami and other ecosystem restoration activities. The government's ten billion tree tsunami initiative is being adapted by other countries as well. FAO currently has a Global Environment Facility funded program working to restore the highly degraded Chilgoza forest in the country by improving the forestry livelihoods of the local communities. We are also working in southern Punjab to restore the rangeland based livelihoods of the communities.

**CDA to install modern LED lights**

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to convert all the existing street lights of the Federal Capital from sodium lights to modern LED lights. This decision of conversion will not only make maintenance of street lights easy but will also save electricity cost. In light of these instructions, the E&M department has started to work immediately. There are 42,000 sodium street lights in Islamabad. When these lights will be converted to modern LED lights, it will save up to 40 million rupees per month in electricity bills. - DNA

**New historic budget make life easier of common man**

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Planning and Shauzab on Friday said that PTI-led government would give a his financial year 2021-22, focus on making life man and deserving people of the country. She said is people working class and farm-ers-friendly budget will usher in a new era of progress and prosperity in the country, she said while speaking to a Private news channel. She said huge funds have been earmarked in the budget for education, health, agriculture and social sector. She said a positive change would be brought in the lives of people by completing all projects under Ehsas programme, adding that the new budget would help in poverty alleviation. She said in the Budget 2021-22 the government made efforts not to increase taxes and to keep the rates of products at their original prices, adding, we tried to give maximum relief to the public. She said government would go to the people's court and on the basis of its performance. She said country was moving fast towards economic stability after long time due to prudent policies of Prime Minister Imran Khan, adding, a number of economic indicators have shown improvement despite the challenging environment of Covid-19.

**AIOU Academic Council approves new programs**

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) convened a joint session of its Academic Council and RET/APD yesterday. Prof Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum presided over the joint session while deans of various faculties, principal officers and external members of the Academic Council participated in the session. Some of the members participated in the session via online mode by following COVID-19 SOPs. The joint session unanimously approved offering of different new academic programs as well as curriculum revision of existing programs. Owing to surge in cases of COVID-19 pandemic, it was mutually decided to further strengthen online academic operations including admissions, workshops and examinations and to adapt them further to HEC guidelines. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary for Narcotics Control, Akbar Durrani chairing the meeting on preparations of activities to be conducted on the International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking. - APP

**Hazrat Abu Talib conference held at PUCAR**

Hazrat Abu Talib was the supreme heir of the state of Madinah, his services should be included in the curriculum: Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi

ZUBAIR AHMAD

RAWALPINDI: In connection with the 1481st birth anniversary of Mohsin Islam, the uncle of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the father of Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Abu Talib, a conference was organized under the auspices of Central Imam Husain Council in collaboration with Punjab Arts Council Distinguished Scholar Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi presided over the conference. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi said that Hazrat Abu Talib was the supreme heir of the state of Madinah and his services should be included in the curriculum so that the new generation could seek guidance from him.



Distinguished Scholar Madiha Husain Abidi said that this sentence of Hazrat Abu Talib's love for the Holy Prophet (PBUH) was enough which he had said to the infidels that "even if the sun was placed on one hand and the moon on the other hand, I would not leave Muhammad Mustafa".

Sardar Babar Ali Baloch, Allama Izhar Bukhari, Akhlaq Zaidi, Syed Fawad Ali Bukhari, Ruqiyah Shah Bibi, Raza Kazmi and Manzoor Abbas Naqvi also addressed the seminar and discussed the biography of Hazrat Abu Talib. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmad thanked the guests. At the end of the conference, a resolution was tabled to pave the way for creating an atmosphere of unity among the people to eradicate Islamophobia.

**Shuaib to defend its PHD dissertation**

DNA

TAXILA: It is notified for the information of all that Shuaib Farooq a PhD Scholar of Islamic Studies Department of HITEC University Taxila, will defend his research dissertation on Wednesday June 30, 2021 at 02:00 PM in IQBAL Auditorium of the University. The topic of his research is

The research has been supervised by Dr. Rab Nawaz. Defense is open to all interested individuals can attend the open defense and be seated by 01:45PM.

**IESCO issues power suspension schedule**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO)'s spokesman, System Maintenance/Development Work is in process. Therefore power supply of below mentioned feeders/areas will be temporary suspended as per given schedule: On 13th June From 06:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Rama, Nishan Haider, Dhadi City, Express, Latif Feeders, From 05:00 am to 12:00 noon, Marie Times Feeder and surrounding areas will remain without power. Moreover On 13th and 14th June From 05:00 to 12:00 noon, the power supply from 132 KV transmission line Tarnol to Fateh Jang has been provided by alternative sources but load management of 15 MW can be done if required. IESCO management apologizes to its esteemed customers for the power outage. If the work is completed ahead of time, the power supply can be restored even before the scheduled time.

**6 outlaws, female member of gang' held**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have arrested six outlaws from different areas of the city and recovered snatched cash, motorbike, narcotics and weapons, a police spokesman said. He said that, following directions of SSP (Operations) Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanweer, SP (Saddar) Farooq Amjad Butter constituted police team under supervision of SDPO Margalla Malik Basheer including SHO Karachi Company police station Sub-Inspector Asif Khan and others.

This team ensured high vigilance in the area and succeeded to nab a female accused of dacoit gang involvement in various dacoity incidents identified as Bani Begum. Police team recovered and snatched cash from her.

During the preliminary investigation, she confessed her involvement in various incidents of snatching cash and mobile phones. Case has been registered against them and further investigation is underway.

Further-more, Margalla police arrested a bike lifter namely Anwar-ul-Haq and recovered a stolen motorbike, Sihala police arrested accused Abu Bakar involved in selling oil illegally.

Ramna police arrested Sher Ali and recovered one 30 bore pistol while Shahzad Town police arrested two accused Muhammad Imran and Tufail and recovered 115 gram hashish and one 30 bore pistol from their possession.

Cases against all arrested accused have been registered and further investigation is underway from them. Islamabad Police also arrested 06 proclaimed offenders from various areas of the city.

DIG (Operations) Afzal Ahmed Kausar and SSP (Operations) Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanweer have appreciated the police performance and announced commendation certificates and cash prize for the police teams.

## Briefs

## 'Programme launched to uplift of households'

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Friday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan had launched the 'Kamyab Pakistan' programme to ensure economic uplift of up to six million households. In a tweet, he said under the mega project, each household would be aided to set up its own business through an interest-free loan amounting to Rs 500,000. Additionally, soft loans worth Rs two million would also be given to each of those household for constructing low-cost housing units, he added. He said their economic empowerment would be ensured by providing health cards, and imparting technical education to one member of each family. Farrukh said the farmers would be given interest-free loans amounting to Rs 200,000 and Rs 150,000 for tractors and machinery, and crops, respectively.

## Road accidents witness 21% decrease

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Communications Murad Saeed Thursday apprised the National Assembly that road accidents had witnessed 21 per cent decrease during the current year owing to devise and implement the 'Road Safety Policy' in the country. Responding to a calling attention notice, raised by Muhammad Asim Nazir and others regarding suspension of public transport buses on Motorway, he said there was no Road Safety Policy till 2018. He said the incumbent government not only devised country's first Road Safety Policy but also implemented it in letter and spirit. The policy aimed at ensuring safe traveling and control road accidents, he added. The minister said transport ministry had been devolved to the provinces after the passage of 18th constitutional amendment.

He said earlier, there was no data mechanism of road accidents in the country. Now, under the policy, all institutions concerned were bound to share data, he said. Murad said action was also being taken against those transport companies which were violating the acts and standard operating procedures. He conceded that there was 'Act of Parliament' regarding road safety but it was not being implemented. The incumbent government ensured the implementation of the Act to control road accidents in the country, he added.

## ED notifies transfer, posting of officers

ISLAMABAD: The Establishment Division on Thursday issued the notification directing transfers and postings of various high ranking officers. According to a notification, Sohail Habib Tajik, a BS-20 Officer of Police Service of Pakistan, presently serving in Intelligence Bureau (IB), is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of the Azad government of the State of Jammu and Kashmir for the appointment as inspector general of police (IGP), under Section 10 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973, in terms of Clause (viii) of Karachi Agreement 1949, with immediate effect and until further orders. Similarly, Capt (Retd) Muhammad Anwar-Haq, a BS-19 officer of Pakistan Administrative Service, presently awaiting posting in Establishment Division, is transferred and posted as officer on special duty (OSD), with effect from 17-05-2021 and until further orders. While, Salah-ud-Din Khan, a BS-21 Officer of Police Service of Pakistan, presently serving as IGP, Azad government of the State of Jammu and Kashmir is transferred and directed to report to Establishment Division, with immediate effect and until further orders. — AP

## Admin market committee to improve supply system

Kamran Cheema, Administrator, Market Committee said that prices depended on the supply and demand in the market and efforts were being made to improve the supply chain system to ensure delivery of goods in the market at normal prices

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Kamran Cheema, Administrator, Market Committee, Islamabad and Director Industry ICT visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) held a meeting with Office Bearers of ICCI to discuss matters regarding price control and improve delivery of goods in the wholesale market in the Capital. Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan President, Fatma Azim Senior Vice President, Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Muhammad Ijaz Abbas former President, Mehboob Ahmad Khan, Ashraf Farzand, Chaudhry Nadeem ud Din, Khalid Chaudhry, Ashfaq Chatha and representatives of various markets were present in the meeting. Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that ICCI has established good working relations with the district administration for better protection of the interests of the business community



and citizens, however, the issues regarding the price list should be addressed in consultation with the business community. He said that the wholesale market was playing an important role in the supply of goods in the Capital, however, auction of price lists was creating some discrepancies leading to difference in prices. He said that

the rents of shops in Islamabad are very high which also have an impact on the prices. He said that a price list should be issued to every sector by taking the vendors of fruits and vegetables in confidence and steps should be taken to maintain the prices of essential commodities at a reasonable level to save the citizens from inflation.

However, he was of the view that the imposition of heavy fines was not the better solution to such problems. Addressing the business community, Kamran Cheema, Administrator, Market Committee said that prices depended on the supply and demand in the market and efforts were being made to improve

the supply chain system to ensure delivery of goods in the market at normal prices. He said that cooperation of business community and the wholesale market was important for price control. He said that efforts would be made to supply a price list in the morning in markets. Sector wise decisions will be made by taking the trade associations of various markets into confidence. He said that the development work remained to be done in the wholesale market while the sanitation system was being improved and the issue of entry fee will also be resolved. Fatma Azim Senior Vice President, Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Ejaz Abbasi, Khalid Chaudhry and others including market representatives also spoke at the occasion and hoped that the Market Committee would take the business community into confidence in matters related to price fixing and would make decisions with the aim to better protect the interests of the business community and citizens.



ISLAMABAD: Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of Naval Staff calling on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of Air Staff, during his visit to Air Headquarters. — DNA

## 'Budget 2021-22 sets country's direction'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Capital Development Authority (CDA) Affairs Ali Nawaz Awan on Friday said that the budget 2021-22 have set the direction of the country. "The budget announced by the government under the leadership of the Prime Minister Imran Khan has set a direction for the country. Several measures have been announced in the budget for the sectors, which are playing a vital role in the progress, prosperity and development of the country."

He said despite the COVID-19 challenges and financial constraints, the government have increased the development allocation to Rs 900 billion. Ali Nawaz said that the housing sector has been given special incentives with an objective to provide low cost homes to poor people as per the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan. He was of the views that the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz government during its tenure, badly damaged the country's economy, but due to the policies of PTI government, the economy is now in stabilized. He said that the issue of water has been solved for the residents of federal capital, while road network has also been improved. "The record development has been undertaken in the federal capital by the PTI government during the last three years," he added.



## Business community term budget balanced, pro-growth

He said economic indicators showed an upward trend and GDP growth improved significantly with better remittances in the last fiscal year

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry and United Business Group (UBG) in the federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) declared the federal budget 2021-22 as balance budget. According to the statement issued on Friday after the budget speech of Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin, the budget for next fiscal year is tax free, balanced, growth and export oriented with a basket of excellent package of incentives to accelerate the economic activities. Commenting on the federal budget President SAARC Chamber and Central Chairman United Business Group

(UBG) Iftikhar Ali Malik hailed the government for making historic reforms for ease of doing business. Malik said that the remarkable measures announced in the budget, would help set a direction of the national economy as well as uplift of poor segment of the society.

He said economic indicators showed an upward trend and GDP growth improved significantly with better remittances in the last fiscal year. He hoped that Pakistan would progress in every sphere of life following the prudent economic policies. Iftikhar Ali Malik said that Pakistan's economy was going through a challenging phase due to the outbreak of global COVID-19 pandemic, adding

that manufacturers, traders, retailers, importers, exporters and other business community were in distress and facing huge financial losses due to the COVID-19 situation, however, he said the government took extraordinary bold decisions to overcome this crisis. President UBG and former FPCCI President Zubair Tufail stresses the urgent need to enhance agricultural growth to its maximum size as Pakistan could not progress without a developed agricultural sector. "The wrong policies of previous governments resulted an increase in agricultural cost and decrease in revenues," he said. It is a need of the hour to use the modern techniques for increasing the per acre yield,

adding, the government allocated record funds for the research and development activities to put the Agri-sector on modern scientific lines, he added. Zafar Bakhtawari Secretary General UBG and former VP FPCCI also appreciated Prime Minister Imran Khan for allocating sufficient funds to improve the capacity of hydro power to fully ensure uninterrupted power and gas to industries for timely exports to their foreign designation. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig former SVP FPCCI and secretary Information UBG hoped that all irritants if any in the budget would be removed to the satisfaction of the business community which is a source of financial strength of the government.

## RCGI terms budget 2021-22 as business friendly

Group Leader Sohail Altaf said that Rs 900 billion has been earmarked for the development program PSDP which will increase economic activities. However, implementation of the announcements made in the budget should be ensured

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce has termed the financial budget 2021-22 as balanced and business friendly. Commenting on Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin's budget speech, Chamber President Mohammad Nasir Mirza said that a detailed position would be given after reading the budget document. However, in general, the budget is balanced. The reduction in withholding

tax from 17 percent to 12 percent will help in boosting trade activities. The tax revenue target of Rs 5,800 billion can be achieved only when new taxpayers are added. We have reservations about proposing a third party audit. He said that relief of Rs. 42 billion in terms of customs duty is welcome. Initiatives such as incentives and rewards for sales tax retailers will increase the number of new taxpayers. Good steps have been taken in sales tax and fed-



eral excise duty. Appreciate the move to increase the turnover tax threshold for SMEs from three million to ten million. Group Leader Sohail Altaf

said that Rs 900 billion has been earmarked for the development program PSDP which will increase economic activities. However, implementation of the announcements made in the budget should be ensured. Former Presidents Jaiil Ahmad Malik, Raja Amer Iqbal, Senior Vice President Osman Ashraf, Vice President Shahraiz A Malik, members of the executive Committee and Chamber members were also present on the occasion.

## Police arrest 8 for illegal weapons

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Police in their crackdown against illegal weapons rounded up eight persons from different areas and recovered a Kalashnikov, two rifles of 12 bore, one 222 rifle, three pistols of 30 bore and ammunition from their possession, said police spokesman on Thursday. He informed that Saddar Wah police on the directives of Rawalpindi City Police Officer (CPO), launched crackdown and arrested eight persons namely Irfan, Munib ur Rehman, Muhammad Imran, Naib Din, Maqsood Iqbal, Sabab ur Rehman, Javed Iqbal and Musharraf Idrees and recovered a Kalashnikov, two rifles of 12 bore, a 222 rifle, three pistols of 30 bore and ammunition from their possession. He said that the police were conducting operations against criminals on regular basis without any discrimination. The police would continue their raids against lawbreakers and they would be sent behind the bars. Separate cases have been registered against all the accused while further investigations are underway, he added.

## Court defers Mandiwala's indictment

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Thursday once again deferred the indictment of Senate former deputy chairman Saleem Mandiwala and other accused till June 23, in Kidney Hills plots allotment reference. The charges could not be framed this day again due to the incomplete attendance of the accused named in the corruption case. ACI Judge Muhammad Bashir heard the corruption case filed by National Accountability Bureau (NAB) against Mandiwala and co-accused. At the outset of hearing, the two accused including Tariq Mehmood and Abdul Qadir's lawyers requested the judge to grant one-day exemption from hearing, which was permitted by the court. The court also allowed Mandiwala to leave after marking his attendance.

The judge instructed all the accused to ensure their attendances on the next date of hearing and adjourned the case till June 23.

## 19 new COVID-19 cases reported

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: As many as 19 patients were reported during the last 24 hours in the district with three belonged to Rawal Town, seven from Potohar town, four from Rawalpindi cantt, three Taxila and two from federal capital. "Presently 48 Corona virus confirmed patients were admitted to various facilities of the city including 10 were admitted in Holy Family Hospital, 8 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 14 in Institute of Urology and 16 in Fauji Foundation Hospital". According to the daily situation report issued by the District Corona Management center, results of 781 people were awaited while 187,770 were declared negative. So far 211,966 COVID-19 suspects have been brought to the health facilities, out of which 26,578 cases were tested positive including 24,536 from Rawalpindi and 2042 to other districts who were provided with the required treatment and 25,282 discharged after recovery. District Health Authority updated that so far 489,276 people including 28,470 health workers and 460,806 senior citizens have jabbed themselves against the lethal coronavirus (COVID-19) across the district since the vaccination administering drive launched on March 10. The report said only one patients has died due to this deadly disease in the last 24 hours.

## 477,558 vaccine doses administered

RAWALPINDI: As many as 477,558 people including 28,386 health workers and 449,172 senior citizens inoculated against coronavirus from 23 centres operating across the district since the start of the vaccination drive. According to data shared by the district administration here Thursday, 26 more Covid-19 positive cases were reported during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 26,559 in the district while four lost their battle of life against the virus. As per the latest data, 7 cases were reported from Rawal Town, 6 from Potohar town, 5 from Rawalpindi Cantt, 3 AJK, 3 Attock and one each from Islamabad and Murree. "Presently 54 confirmed patients were admitted to various city facilities, counting 9 in Holy Family Hospital, 13 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 12 in Institute of Urology, 19 in Fauji Foundation Hospital, and one in Hearts International Hospital," the health authority report said. District Health Authority said that so far 25,246 patients were discharged after recovery while 726 were quarantined including 451 at home. — APP

## Migrant deaths: safe routes are essential

**T**HE identification of the body of Artin Iran Nezhad in Norway brings a tragic migration story to an end. Artin, aged 15 months when his Iranian Kurdish parents tried to cross the Channel in a small boat, was reported missing when the vessel sank near Dunkirk last October and the rest of the family died. Since New Year's Day, when a baby's remains were found near Karmoy, forensic scientists have worked to identify them. This week it was announced that Artin's body will be flown back to relatives in Iran for burial.

Like the photograph of Alan Kurdi's lifeless body being lifted from the sea by a police officer in Turkey six years ago, the tale of a dead baby lost for months at sea is filled with pathos. What more graphic illustration could there be of the extreme risks taken by desperate migrants than the loss of the tiny children they would doubtless have done everything in their power to protect?

For refugee advocates and other humanitarians, such incidents open a window on a bigger picture. The hostile rhetoric surrounding immigration has long been characterised by deliberately dehumanising images and terminology. Suspicion towards migrants is often infused with racism. The hope is that human stories such as Artin's, and the protectiveness that adults instinctively feel when shown his picture – with his long fringe over a smiling face and chubby neck – help to break down prejudice, and remind the public and politicians of our shared humanity.

In the UK, such a reset has rarely been needed. Channel boats have not been in the news much since last autumn, but now the crossing season has returned and already there is cause for alarm, both at the situation on the ground and the attitude of the government. All the signs are that the antagonism of last year, when the home secretary, Priti Patel, appointed a "clandestine Channel threat commander" to head off new arrivals, and Boris Johnson described migrant crossings as "dangerous and criminal", will intensify even though the number of asylum claims is down. Immigration rules that the government aims to put into primary legislation, in a bill next month, have already seen hundreds of asylum seekers housed in military barracks in Kent and Wales. Last week, a high court judge ruled in favour of six men who argued that the accommodation did not meet required standards, citing overcrowding and the decision to ignore Public Health England's advice that it was unsafe due to the pandemic. Asylum seekers have also been prosecuted, with the Crown Prosecution Service facing criticism for bringing charges on the basis that people who have steered, or helped to steer, a boat can be classified as smugglers. Last month, one such conviction was overturned, with the Iranian man saying he took the helm because he "didn't want to die at sea". Ministers apparently calculate that voters are on their side and relish forcing their opponents in parliament and outside to take up what they see as an unpopular cause. But with the right to family reunion lost due to Brexit, and the current resettlement scheme focusing on refugees stuck en route due to the pandemic, the government's plans to place further barriers in claimants' way, following the example of countries including Australia and Denmark, ought to come under the harshest scrutiny. To take a tough line on Channel crossings when safe alternatives are so hard to find is not only cynical but inhumane.

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## Overhauling Pakistan's railway

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

**T**HE tragic train crash at Ghotki was nothing short of a nightmare for the relatives of the deceased and those who survived. The crash is a reminder that accidents can happen, but we need to be prepared to tackle them.

The need to create emergency response units in the far-flung regions of provinces is a must. Injured cannot be transported to the nearest cities. They must be given immediate medical aid. Such can only happen when medical centers capable of giving first aid and medical treatment are operational in and across the various districts of the provinces. A holistic strategy needs to be implemented.

Pakistan Railways need to monitor the tracks and repair the tracks having the slightest of fault or that need any type of overhaul. The entire railway system needs to be upgraded and digitized.

Such sensors must be placed in tracks and in carriages that inform the control tower when and where a carriage fell off track or was damaged. Digital media is aiding all sectors and Pakistan Railways must plan and invest in such initiatives.

Such procedures need to be implemented at the earliest. Moreover, the control towers must be placed in various areas of each province that must be linked with emergency response units. In case of any news of a crash, the units must reach the site to check the intensity of the crash and take necessary action.

Furthermore, these emergency response units must have paramedics and medical equipment to treat the injured.

They must also have the communication apparatus to call for backup. This overhauling of the railway sector will take a considerable amount of time. The manual system will be converted into a digital one.

The upgrading of the system along with the training of personnel and hiring of skilled workers will be nothing short of a challenge. This will only benefit the sector and the millions of passengers that choose to travel by train across Pakistan each year.

## Soul-searching to countering hate

Wajeeha Bilal



As we think of our childhood; playing with children from different countries and different faiths, every day seemed like a celebration. This idea of being able to care for the people who live on this earth just like us, seems like a dream

**W**HEN we have been raised in multi-cultural and multi-national surroundings, everyone around us looks so much like us that it affects us in some way or the other. They touch our lives, and it impacts our emotions from childhood. We find ways to make friends with them and express care for them in our own way.

As we think of our childhood; playing with children from different countries and different faiths, every day seemed like a celebration. This idea of being able to care for the people who live on this earth just like us, seems like a dream. We do not want to be the ones hurting them, we want to be the ones providing comfort. The feeling of joy and care enter in our thoughts and memories.

It becomes a part of who we are as humans. Whenever possible, we try and take a dab of that bliss from our childhood into our adult lives. We look for ways to experience joy with our fellow humans, as we did when we were little.

At the same time, it can be absolutely difficult to absorb the hateful realities of humankind, when our childhood has been nourished by love and care for our fellow humans. Maybe our caring nature makes it impossible to accept the adult world with its heinous crimes.

The loving memories that have a deep impact in our lives are so strong that it is hard to imagine what we witness daily.

Humanity seems to have ended with the passage of childhood. We are not the ones caring for others, rather we are the ones watching and witnessing these acts of horror. Watching in silence is burdensome for every soul that is trying to survive daily, and these hateful crimes rest heavy on the heart. A helpless void captivates our daily lives.

In what the officials had claimed was a planned and premeditated attack motivated by hate, a man driving a truck crashed and killed four members of a Muslim family in the south of Canada's Ontario province. It not only brought back painful memories of a Quebec City Mosque mass shooting in January 2017 by a white supremacist and a driving rampage in Toronto that killed 10 people in April 2018, but it is also a proof of hate and Islamophobia in the western society.

We were also reminded of the most brutal terrorism act in the New Zealand city of Christchurch in 2019, when an Australian extremist targeted some of the city's mosques in an insidious terrorist act. Officials believe that the victims were targeted because of their Islamic faith.

It is a big struggle to understand the hateful nature of such condemnable acts of terrorism. These despicable acts of hate and terrorism point to a human nature devoid of affection and care. Insidious hatred and terrorism seem to be getting out of control for everyone who helplessly witness massive trauma. We try to take control of the situation and understand that it is our responsibility, everything that we had cared for growing up, cannot die with the passage of time. When we feel saddened by hateful crimes, we must try to give respect to the victims in the best way we can.

When we pay homage to a life, we give our share of respect for the life that has existed. We find a way to stand by the life that has suffered and against the terrorist who took away the innocent life. We do not forget to honor those who have suffered. So, we put on our armor of rightful thoughts, words and actions and stand against those who spread hate and terror. Our efforts start adding

meaning to the hopeless and meaningless ways of the world.

Alongside the news of hate are our efforts of love to make the world understand that there are people who care and stand with unity. We realize that the only way to make life meaningful is to help the world see where our loyalties belong.

The spark is ignited through our words and thoughts as we find the will and courage to stand with the victims of hate and oppression.

Making people understand the worthiness of those who are considered less noble by them is the most difficult task in this war against hate. People who inflict islamophobia and white supremacist terrorism suffer from superiority complex.

You might feel like a dead person when the memories of your childhood are slaughtered by the images of daily hatred, but as soon as you enter the war to counter daily hate and phobia, life becomes meaningful, and joys of innocence seem worthy of recalling.

When the world leaders globally condemn acts of violence and people like us raise voices against hateful notions, the terrorists have no choice but to suffer the very consequence of the seeds of hate that they aim to sow.

People are bound to change or face the consequences. Our message of unity is for the entire human race. It is bound to end up being a massive success.

Going through emotional pain of witnessing hate, you might not think of life as meaningful, but every life has its own path. And so does yours that is not apart from the world but is a part of its unity.

(Wajeeha has authored "The Conscious Ego", "The Beautiful Present")

## Islamophobia: a terrorist attack in Canada

Andrew Mitrovica



That a prime minister would sully the office he held and shame the country he led by relying on and exploiting the sectarian tactics and rhetoric usually associated with segregationists in America's Deep South in a futile bid to keep his job is the foul measure of the man who some Conservatives reportedly want to lead the faltering party again

edy".

suspect Harper's tardiness in penning his obligatory tweet condemning "cruel acts of racial and faith based hatred" was likely the product, in part, of his vulgar record while prime minister as the accelerant-in-chief of fomenting suspicion and animus towards Muslims he was duty-bound to have, instead, welcomed and celebrated as loyal, devoted Canadians.

Once a rank politician, always a rank politician. Given his documented history of stoking Islamophobia – with the enthusiastic approval of his many confederates within Canada's sprawling right-wing-media-industrial complex – Harper likely paused to ponder the public relations risks or rewards of denouncing this nation's latest heinous act of Islamophobia.

So, true to his calculating nature, Harper waited before sharing his typically soulless, exculpatory tweet with his equally ardent and unrepentant followers.

Indeed, Harper refused to even acknowledge that the massacred four and the critically injured boy were Muslims who followed the teachings of Islam – the premeditated victims of a young, white, assassin who, somewhere, at some time, was radicalised by someone or something. Harper ended his perfunctory, unconvincing expression of sympathy for the grieving families with the suggestion that the murders were unfathomable. Clearly, Harper has not only forgotten his noxious past but has been so busy making lots of money crisscrossing the globe leveraging the rarified contacts he made while prime minister to have noticed the epidemic of enmity directed at Canadian Muslims. He also, incredibly, neglected to recall the mass murder of six worshippers during evening prayers at a Quebec City mosque in January 2017 by another young, white, radicalised assassin.

Since Harper has apparently buried his history of pitting "old-stock" Christian-Canadians against Muslim-Canadians and his steadfast admirers in the fourth estate will, no doubt, deem it unbecoming at this "difficult time" to remind audiences of their man's contemptible, divisive modus operandi, I am going to because decency and the jarring moment demand it.

I will begin with Harper's studied use of the combustible phrase "old-stock Canadians" at a leaders' debate during the 2015 election campaign.

Harper, a bureaucrat as spontaneous as Rip Van Winkle, invoked the term allegedly to defend his petty government's callous decision to deny health care to unsuccessful refugee claimants, insisting the move was supported by new immigrants and "old-stock Canadians" alike. Despite subsequently denying that the phrase was malicious or insulting, Harper's cynical, parochial intentions were plain: appeal to his largely white, Christian base while feeding a stubborn, malevo-

lent undercurrent that only "old-stock Canadians" were bonafide Canadians. Not done stoking ethnic discord, Harper later dispensed with the calibrated code and vowed to ban public servants from wearing hijabs and set up a tip line so presumably "old-stock Canadians" could snitch to the federal police on "new" but not true Canadians for their "barbaric cultural practices," including, but not limited to, arranged marriages. The obsequious cabinet ministers tasked by Harper with realising the sinister, blatantly intolerant edicts explained that the proposed hijab ban and Stasi-like snitch line were intended to "protect Canadian values." Sure they were. That a prime minister would sully the office he held and shame the country he led by relying on and exploiting the sectarian tactics and rhetoric usually associated with segregationists in America's Deep South in a futile bid to keep his job is the foul measure of the man who some Conservatives reportedly want to lead the faltering party again. But Harper's profane antipathy towards Canadian Muslims was evident to the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) and anyone else even remotely paying attention in 2014.

At the time, the leading non-profit group which has, for decades, advocated on behalf of Canadian Muslims wrote to Harper to chastise him for inviting on an official delegation travelling to Israel a rabbi who had "introduced, defended and praised... two of the most recognised and vitriolic anti-Muslim activists of our time", Pam Geller and Robert Spencer, at an event in Toronto in late 2013. Harper's response was swift and incendiary. The prime minister's then director of communications called the NCCM, in effect, a hive of Hamas-supporting terrorists.

"We will not take seriously criticism from an organisation with documented ties to a terrorist organisation such as Hamas," Jason MacDonald said on the now-defunct Conservative Party propaganda network, Sun TV. After Harper and MacDonald refused to apologise for or retract their calumny, the NCCM sued both for defamation. In 2017, the NCCM prevailed, winning a resounding and historic legal victory that required the prime minister's former chief spokesperson to disavow publicly his defamatory remarks against the council and, by extension, all of its patriotic staff and members. Still, Harper's de rigeur admonition on Tuesday that "Canada is a place of tolerance and pluralism" must be considered in the indelible context of his government's ugly, venomous attack on the loyalty of Canadian Muslims and the raw, devastating residue of a family's destruction possibly by an "old-stock" Canadian who had hatred ingrained in his hollow soul.

In any event, in his waning days as prime minister, Harper appears to have exacted his cheap revenge on the NCCM for their brave decision to confront two pow-

erful bullies in court.

At the eleventh hour, citing its imaginary "adversarial tone," the Royal Canadian Mounted Police pulled its support for a booklet produced by the NCCM and another Canadian Muslim association aimed at preventing the radicalisation of teenagers into Kalashnikov-wielding or pick-up-truck-driving terrorists. Well, so much for shielding Canadians from adolescent predators who maim and kill innocents for perverse political or religious motivations. Harper's departure from politics in 2015 did not prompt his elected successor as Conservative Party leader, Andrew Scheer, to change toxic course. Rather, Scheer embraced Harper's appalling factional instincts and openly solicited the support of avowed bigots and xenophobes who prefer a Canada stocked with "old-stock" Christian Canadians as an intolerant path back to the prime minister's office.

Perhaps the nadir of Scheer's Harper-like appeal to and appeasement of the Tory party's insular, retrograde supporters was leading his diminished caucus in brazenly opposing a non-binding, symbolic motion introduced by a Liberal Member of Parliament in early 2017 to condemn Islamophobia and all religious discrimination in the aftermath of the slaughter of Muslims in Quebec. Scheer announced in a Facebook post that he would vote against the motion on the grounds that it would stifle "free speech and legitimate criticism" and that "it singles out just one faith".

It was, of course, a sorry, disingenuous burlesque meant to disguise an embedded strain of Islamophobia that has, for a long time, been tolerated and promoted within the Conservative Party and that represents a growing, not-so-fringe opinion in Canada.

On cue, the right-wing party's current leader, Erin O'Toole, quickly channelled his predecessors' penchant for peddling fear, distrust and resentment when he released a video last June asking viewers to "join the fight to take back Canada". O'Toole failed to identify the nebulous, nefarious forces he plans to "take back Canada" from, but his loaded language was reminiscent not only of Harper's "old-stock Canadians" line but Donald Trump's incoherent-with-rage rants that America had to be rescued from Mexican rapists and immigrants from "shit-hole" countries. O'Toole, I am sure, would reject the comparison, but truth is in the experienced eye and ear of the beholder. And O'Toole, Scheer and Harper have, by their pernicious words and deeds, helped fuel the Islamophobia they claim to abhor.

The inevitable consequences of such reckless, inflammatory conduct have, once again, been visited on Canadian Muslims by another coward in another Canadian city for an all-too-familiar reason.

It must stop. Now.

—Courtesy Al Jazeera

## Briefs

## KFU to open a branch in Uzbekistan

DNA

TASHKENT: Kazan Federal University (KFU) plans to open a branch of the university in Uzbekistan. Deputy khokim of Jizzakh region of the Republic of Uzbekistan Azim Akhmedkhodjaev made a proposal to organize one of the campuses of the university in Jizzakh. This was reported by the press service of the KFU.

The corresponding agreement was signed on 7 June 2021 between the Russian university, the khokimiyat of the Jizzakh region of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan on preparation for the establishment of a branch of Kazan University in the city of Jizzak and the establishment of mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of educational activities. The rector of Kazan University said that the purpose of creating the branch is to train highly qualified personnel for the Republic of Uzbekistan in accordance with educational programs and generally recognized international requirements for the quality of higher education.

## Ukraine reach 'compromise' with UEFA on Euro 2020 shirt

KIEV: Ukraine's football association said Friday it had managed to agree on a compromise with UEFA over Euro 2020 kits that feature patriotic slogans and sparked Russia's ire.

"We've managed to reach a victorious compromise with UEFA," the association chief, Andriy Pavlenko, said in a statement on Facebook, describing the negotiations as "extremely tough".

Kiev has angered Moscow after its football association unveiled Euro 2020 kits that show the outline of Ukraine including Crimea, which was annexed by Russia in 2014. Russia criticised a slogan written on the inside of the shirts - "Glory to the Heroes". "Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the Heroes!" are popular patriotic chants in Ukraine. In 2014, they became a rallying cry for pro-Western protesters who ousted a Kremlin-backed leader. But the Ukrainian battle cry has drawn criticism from Moscow for its association with World War II-era nationalist groups who cooperated with the Nazis and used it as a greeting. European football's governing body initially approved the design, but after Russia formally complained ordered the removal of the slogan "Glory to the Heroes". On Friday, Pavlenko said that instead of removing the slogan altogether Ukraine would add another element to the inside of the jersey. The words "Glory to the Heroes" will be part of a new emblem featured on the shirt, said Pavlenko.

## Iran's restores its right to vote in UN

FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: Iran's Permanent Representative in the United Nations confirmed the payment of Iran's arrears to the United Nations and the re-establishment of Iran's right to vote in the organization. Majid Takht Ravanchi, Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations, said in a Twitter message on Friday that the illegal US sanctions have not only deprived the Iranian people of drugs, but also prevented Iran from paying arrears to the United Nations. He added that since after more than 6 months, the United Nations announced today that it has received the money so all inhumane sanctions must be lifted now. The UN Secretary General, António Guterres had previously written to General Assembly President Volkan Bozkir that several countries including Iran had not paid their arrears so their voting rights should be revoked in accordance with the bylaws.



ABU DHABI: Islamabad United all-rounder Muhamad Usman Wazir celebrating after taking wicket against Quetta Gladiators in a PSL-6 match. - DNA

## China has created a dystopian hellscape in Xinjiang: Amnesty

China routinely denies all accusations of human rights abuses in Xinjiang. Experts generally agree that China has detained as many as a million Uyghurs and other Muslims and imprisoned hundreds of thousands more in its crackdown in Xinjiang

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: The human rights organisation Amnesty International has said China is committing crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, the north-western region that is home to the Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities. In a report published on Thursday, Amnesty called on the UN to investigate, saying China had subjected Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other Muslims to mass detention, surveillance, and torture. Agnes Callamard, the secretary general of Amnesty International, accused Chinese authorities of creating "a dystopian hellscape on a staggering scale". "It should shock the conscience of humanity that massive numbers of people have been subjected to brainwashing, torture and other

degrading treatment in internment camps, while millions more live in fear amid a vast surveillance apparatus," MsCallamard said. She also accused the UN Secretary General António Guterres of "failing to act according to his mandate". Mr Guterres "has not denounced the situation, he has not called for an international investigation", MsCallamard told the BBC. "It is incumbent on him to protect the values upon which the United Nations has been founded, and certainly not to stay silent in front of crimes against humanity," she said. In a 160-page report based on interviews with 55 former detainees, Amnesty said there was evidence the Chinese state had committed "at least the following crimes against humanity: imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in

violation of fundamental rules of international law; torture; and persecution." The report follows a similar set of findings by Human Rights Watch, which said in an April report that it believed the Chinese government was responsible for crimes against humanity. China has been accused by some Western nations and rights groups of pursuing a genocide against the Turkic ethnic groups in Xinjiang - though there is dispute over whether the state's actions constitute a genocide. The author of the Amnesty report, Jonathan Loeb, said at press conference on Thursday that the organisation's research "did not reveal that all the evidence of the crime of genocide had occurred" but that it had so far "only scratched the surface". China routinely denies all accusations of human rights abuses

in Xinjiang. Experts generally agree that China has detained as many as a million Uyghurs and other Muslims and imprisoned hundreds of thousands more in its crackdown in Xinjiang, which began in 2017. There have been widespread reports of physical and psychological torture inside prisons and detention camps in the region. China has also been accused of using forced sterilisation, abortion, and population transfer to reduce birth rates and population density, and of targeting religious leaders to break religious and cultural traditions. China denies those accusations, and says its camps in Xinjiang are voluntary vocational and de-radicalisation programmes for combating terrorism in the region. In its report, Amnesty said counter-terrorism could not

reasonably account for mass detention, and that the Chinese government's actions showed a "clear intent to target parts of Xinjiang's population collectively on the basis of religion and ethnicity and to use severe violence and intimidation to root out Islamic religious beliefs and Turkic Muslim ethno-cultural practices". The organisation said it believed those taken to the network of camps in Xinjiang were "subjected to a ceaseless indoctrination campaign as well as physical and psychological torture". Those torture methods, according to the report, included "beatings, electric shocks, stress positions, the unlawful use of restraints (including being locked in a tiger chair), sleep deprivation, being hung from a wall, being subjected to extremely cold temperatures, and solitary confinement".

## Uzbek President receives highest Tajik state award



DNA

TASHKENT: President Shavkat Mirziyoyev laid flowers at the monument to Ismail Somoni on Dusti Square in Dushanbe. A concert was held at Kokhi-Borbad Art Palace with the participation of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan artists. The Decree of the President of Tajikistan on awarding the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev with the highest

state award of Tajikistan - Zarrintoch (Golden Crown) Order of the first degree for outstanding services in the development of cooperation between the two countries was read out. President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon solemnly presented this award to the President of Uzbekistan. Expressing gratitude, the President of Uzbekistan noted that such a high award is an expression of great respect and trust, recognition and appreci-

ation of common efforts to strengthen the centuries-old ties of brotherhood and good-neighborliness between peoples of the two countries. It was emphasized that Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are close neighbors, peoples of both countries have one sacred land and water, one religion, history and destiny, same worries, joys and anxieties. "By supporting each other, developing mutually beneficial cooperation, we will be

able to achieve a high flight, our most cherished goals. We must always be each other's support, shoulder to shoulder to overcome any difficulties and trials", the President of Uzbekistan said. In recent years, our relations have undergone enormous, historical changes. Today, millions of people in both Uzbekistan and Tajikistan feel them in their daily lives, the President noted. "This is the embodiment of a new model, a completely new atmosphere of Uzbekistan - Tajikistan relations. Most importantly, all our efforts and practical actions fully meet the vital interests and aspirations of the peoples of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan", Shavkat Mirziyoyev said. Noting that the joint concert of art masters of the two countries has become a good tradition, embodying the eternal and sincere Uzbekistan - Tajikistan friendship, the President of Uzbekistan stressed the important role of art in bringing peoples closer together. "If people tend to build different borders, then art knows no borders, its great mission is to unite people."

## Art workshop held within Simurg Music Festival

BAKU: A workshop of Azerbaijani artists is being held in Art Tower gallery in Icherisheher within Simurg Music Festival. The workshop brought together talented artists Eldar Babazade, Roy Hasanova, Nigar Familsoy, Kamilla Muradova, Dashed Mammadov, Saida Tagizade, Nigar Niyazova, Aynura Mustafayeva, Vusal Sharifov, Afag Akbarova and Roza Muradova, who created stunning art works inspired by various music styles from classical to jazz. Simurg Kids Music Festival 2021 aims at identifying all creative abilities of young people. The festival is headed by pianist Saida Tagizade. The previous festival was held only among pianists. This year, the festival's program is more diverse and spectacular as it brings together not only pianists but also musicians and even vocalists. Major events will be held in various cities as part of the festival supported by the Culture Ministry, the Ministry of Education, Icherisheher State Historical and Architectural Reserve, Baku Media Center, Arts Council Azerbaijan (NGO), Pasha Holding and Aqua Vita. - DNA



## EURO 2020 kicks off today

SPORTS DESK

ANKARA: The Turkish national football team is set to face Italy in the opening match of the UEFA EURO 2020 as the European football contest will start on Friday. Turkey do not have any injured player for this match. However Italian central midfielder Marco Verratti is expected to miss the Turkey game for a knee injury. Verratti, 28, was injured in May as his club Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) previously said. His treatment is ongoing. The match, which will be held at Stadio Olimpico in Rome, will kick off at 1900GMT. The game will be officiated by Dutch referee Danny Makkelie. Turkey will face Italy, Wales and Switzerland in the EURO 2020 Group A. The matches against Wales on June 16 and Switzerland on June 20 will be played at Baku Olympic Stadium in Azerbaijan. Turkey and Italy last met in EURO 2000 co-hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands. Italy beat Turkey 2-1 in the Group B match in the Dutch city of Arnhem.

## Opposition rejects budget proposals

FROM PAGE 01

Shehbaz said these issues would be jointly addressed in parliament and "we will give a tough time to the government in passing the budget." Bilawal similarly lashed out at today's budget presentation and said it did not align with reality, claiming that even people listening to the speech would've thought it was the budget of another country. He said the prime minister and finance minister's stance, of economic development while the country was facing "historic poverty, unemployment and inflation", held no weight and was akin to "rubbing salt into the wounds of the people of Pakistan who are suffering."

## India discloses ties with Taliban

FROM PAGE 01

Taliban leaders who are said to be 'nationalist' and are outside the sphere of Pakistan and Iran influence. The report also suggests that the back-channeling between the Taliban leaders and India have been underway for some months, however, no meeting between them have been so far confirmed. This comes as India, a prominent neighboring country to Afghanistan did not have contacts with the Taliban in the last 20 years, however, Pakistan, another neighboring country of Afghanistan have had a strong relationship and connections with the Taliban for the past 3 decades. Pakistan, having a major influence over Taliban, is counted as key player in the Afghanistan peace process.

## Chinese officials punished

DNA

BEIJING: Authorities in China have punished 27 government officials over the deaths of 21 ultra-marathon runners last month. Athletes taking part in the 100km (60-mile) ultramarathon in Gansu province were hit by high winds and freezing rains. According to state media, those who died had suffered from hypothermia. In the wake of the incident, China announced it was suspending all high risk sports events lacking clear oversight, rules and safety standards. A report into the race, released on Friday, said "non-standard and unprofessional event operations led to the accident". Following the report's release, state-run media outlet Xinhua announced that the head of Jingtai County, where the race took place, had been removed from her post. The local mayor and the Communist Party chief of the city of Baiyin have also been disciplined. Other officials were given warnings and demerit ratings. Zhang Xiaoyan, owner of the company that organised the race, has been detained and faces criminal charges.

## Growth-oriented budget presented

FROM PAGE 01

Rebroadcast Stations at Kharan and Ziarat Balochistan, and Kotli, Rehabilitation of medium wave services from Muzaffarabad and replacement of medium wave transmitter at Mirpur. The new schemes included in PSDP 2021-22 were meant for setting up an auditorium and passenger lift at Radio Pakistan, Multan, Digital and social media simulation lab in Information Service Academy, Islamabad, Pakistan Information Centres (phase-I), besides carrying out feasibility study of Pakistan Media University, pilot project of DTMB-A (digitalization of terrestrial network), and reconstructing of news operations by replacing existing outdated equipment with modern cutting edge technology.

Rs 3,249.540 million allocated for 13 petroleum sector

The government on Friday allocated an amount of Rs 3,249.540 million in the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2021-22) to execute seven ongoing and six new petroleum sector projects aimed at accelerating oil and gas exploration activities and achieving self-sufficiency in the energy sector. According to the PSDP document, funds amounting to Rs 1,473.683 million have been earmarked for seven ongoing schemes, out of which Rs 263 million have been kept for establishment of National Minerals Data Centre (NMDC), Rs 345.321 for Expansion and Up-gradation of Pakistan Petroleum Core House (PETCORE), Rs 30 million for Geological Mapping on 50 Toposheets, out of 354 un-mapped Toposheets of Outcrop Area of Balochistan Province, Rs 385.336 million for strengthening

and up-gradation of Karachi Laboratories Complex (KLC) at HDIP Operations Office, Karachi, Rs 76.580 million for supply of 13.5 MMCFD gas at Doorstep (Zero Point) of Dhabeji Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Sindh, Rs 230 million for supply of 30 MMCFD gas at Doorstep (Zero Point) of Rashakai Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and Rs143.446 million for up-gradation of POL testing facilities of HDIP at Islamabad, Lahore, Multan, Peshawar, Quetta and ISO Certification of Petroleum Testing Laboratory at Islamabad. Rs 61.5b allocated for 3P projects in PSDP 2021-22. The government has allocated an amount of Rs 61,500 million for Viability Gap Funding (VGF) of public private partnership (3P) projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2021-22. The allocation was part of the total amount Rs 88.5 billion, earmarked

for the special programmes in the PSDP-2021-22, said the document, a copy of which is available with APP. Other programmes including Sustainable Development Goals supplementary funds for which an amount of Rs 22 billion was earmarked in the PSDP 2021-22, whereas a sum of Rs 5 billion was allocated for COVID-19 responsive and other natural calamities control programmes. Rs 12,017 million in PSDP 2021-22 for agri sector. The government has allocated an amount of Rs12,017.280 million in its Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2021-22 for uplift and development of agriculture and livestock sectors in the country. The hefty sum was allocated for the completion of 27 ongoing and eight new schemes during upcoming fiscal year to promote and develop local agriculture sector on modern lines, besides making it more profitable

to achieve the goal of sustainable economic development. According to a budget document issued here on Friday, an amount of Rs 8,139.166 million would be spent on 27 ongoing developmental projects, whereas Rs 3,878.114 million to be spent on eight new projects during the financial year 2021-22 for agriculture sector development. The government has allocated Rs 700 million for enhancing the command area of small and mini dams across the country to bring more areas under crop production to achieve the targets of self-sufficiency in food products. Under annual development agenda, government has allocated Rs 900 million for productivity enhancement of wheat, which is major cash crop of the country and main source of staple food, where as an amount of Rs 300 million was also earmarked for improvement of water courses to conserve water.

## Briefs

**Kazakhstan recorded 1,120 corona cases**

DNA

NUR SULTAN: Kazakhstan has recorded 1,120 new daily cases of the coronavirus infection, the Health Ministry said on June 11. Nur-Sultan recorded 205 new cases, Karaganda region - 173, Almaty city - 137, East Kazakhstan - 88, West Kazakhstan - 86 cases. 63 new cases were confirmed in Atyrau region, 55 - in Almaty region, 50 - in Akmola region, 47 - in Mangistau region, 40 - in Shymkent city, 37 - in Pavlodar region, 35 - in Kostanay region, 32 - in Zhambyl region, 21 - in North Kazakhstan region, 20 - in Aktobe region, 18 - in Kyzylorda region, and 13 - in Turkestan region. 399,096 cases total were confirmed Kazakhstan since the start of the pandemic. 1,656 people have recovered from the coronavirus infection bringing total recoveries to 374,070. Twelve people died of coronavirus in 24 hours, no fatal cases were reported from coronavirus-pneumonia. In total, since the beginning of the pandemic 4,136 people died of coronavirus and 3,400 of covid pneumonia in Kazakhstan.

**Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan hold border demarcation talks**

DNA

ALMATY: The 84th meeting of the governmental delegations of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in the joint Uzbek-Kazakh demarcation commission was held in Almaty on June 11, Duno news agency reported. The delegations continued preparation of the drafts of final documents on demarcation of the state border and discussion of the draft agreement on demarcation of the Uzbek-Kazakh state border from June 7. The next meeting will be held in Uzbekistan. The previous 83rd meeting of the Uzbek-Kazakh demarcation commission was held on May 24-28 in Tashkent. The length of the border between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan makes more than 2,100 km. The talks on border demarcation started in 2003 and intensified since 2017.

**Ruling in key Indonesian air case postponed**

WEB DESK

JAKARTA: Indonesians continue to hold their breath as they await the outcome of a landmark legal battle over who is responsible for Jakarta's dirty air after a panel of judges delayed their decision for the second time in two months. The citizen lawsuit was filed in 2019 in a bid to hold the Indonesian government accountable for air pollution in the Indonesian capital. In legal filings, the 32 plaintiffs listed in the lawsuit also asked that officials be forced to improve the city's air quality - which regularly hits hazardous levels according to air quality indexes - through tougher regulations and sanctions. The case has been plagued with delays in recent months. The plaintiffs had originally been expecting a verdict on May 20, before the judges issued a first postponement until June 10. On Thursday, it was postponed again - until June 24. During the hearing at the Central Jakarta District Court, Chief Justice Saifuddin Zuhri blamed the large number of documents filed in the case for the delay, telling the court that the panel of three judges needed additional time to read through all the legal literature. "I hope you can accept that we are not able to read the verdict today. Therefore, we have agreed to postpone the decision for two weeks," he said during the just more than three-minute hearing, which was screened to the public via Zoom due to coronavirus protocols.

# Pakistan Embassy Brussels holds Webinar on "RDA"

The Ambassador thanked the diaspora for the record increase in the flow of remittances and hoped that this trend would continue in the future. Ambassador underscored that the trend was a sign of confidence and trust of the overseas Pakistanis in the economic policies

DNA

BRUSSELS: The Embassy of Pakistan, Brussels in collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and Meezan Bank Limited, organized a webinar on "Roshan Digital Account" (RDA) Sharia compliant investment and financing opportunities, today. The webinar was addressed by the Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, Luxembourg, and the European Union, Zaheer A. Janjua, Founding President and CEO Meezan Bank, Mr. Irfan Siddiqui, and SBP Managing Director Syed Irfan Ali. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Janjua termed RDA as innovative initiative of the Government, which has facilitated Pakistani diaspora in sending money to their loved ones in Pakistan



and eased digital payment system by providing full range of banking services. He noted that during first 10 months of the current financial year 2020-21 (July-April), remittances from Belgium and Luxembourg have increased by 270 percent amounting to the US

\$202.6 million as compared to the US \$54.8 million in the corresponding period of the previous financial year. The Ambassador thanked the diaspora for the record increase in the flow of remittances and hoped that this trend would continue

in the future. The Ambassador underscored that the trend was a sign of confidence and trust of the overseas Pakistanis in the economic policies of the government. The Founding President and CEO of Meezan Bank, Mr. Irfan Siddiqui, spoke about the wide range of ben-

efits for the subscribers under this initiative. The Managing Director SBP, Syed Irfan Ali also made a detailed presentation on key features and benefits of the RDA. The virtual interaction was attended by a broad cross-section of Pakistani diaspora based in Belgium and Luxembourg, including bankers, financial experts, business persons, students, academia, and media. The participants actively participated in the discussion, asked questions about the scheme, and appreciated the initiative. Prime Minister Imran Khan had inaugurated the Roshan Digital Account scheme, in September 2020 to provide innovative banking solutions to millions of non-resident Pakistanis. More than US\$ 1 billion has been remitted to Pakistan, since the launch of this facility last September.

**Flights between Almaty and Samarkand launched**

DNA

TASHKENT: A solemn meeting of passengers of the first flight of Air Astana on the Almaty-Samarkand route was held at the Samarkand international airport on 9 June. Airbus 321 of the Kazakh air carrier landed at Samarkand International Airport at 16:15 Tashkent time.

The meeting ceremony was attended by representatives of the administration of the Samarkand region, the regional department of tourism and sports, the General Consulate of Kazakhstan in Samarkand, Air Astana and the media. The deputy khokim of the region, the head of the regional department of tourism and sports Botir Nurullaev and the consul of Kazakhstan in Samarkand Arsen Abdrahmanov solemnly cut the red ribbon, thereby giving a start to a new direction. It was noted that the new route will further strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries and fraternal peoples and will serve the development of the tourism industry of both states.

## Uzbek, Tajik Presidents pay visit to Arbob Palace of Culture

DNA

KHUIJAND: The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon visited the Arbob Palace of Culture near Khujand.

A meeting was held with representatives of the older generation, as well as the creative and scientific intelligentsia of Sughd region. The Leader of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon noted that friendship and mutual trust between the two countries have become stronger thanks to the political will of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

"Could we even imagine that the accumulated problems will be solved in such a short time? Even international organizations did not believe in this. Today, there are no unresolved issues between our states. An atmosphere of mutual trust has been established. The initiator and architect of these relations is the respected Shavkat Mironovich Mirziyoyev", Emomali Rahmon said. It was emphasized that



in recent years, 17 checkpoints have been opened on Tajikistan - Uzbekistan border, for which the people of Tajikistan are very grateful. The President of Uzbekistan expressed deep respect to the audience and delivered a speech about the importance of appreciating the friendship and good-neighborliness of our peoples, developing cultural and humanitarian ties. "In recent years, we have

achieved tremendous results thanks to good-neighborliness and eternal friendship between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Indeed, for centuries it was the most important center on the Great Silk Road and played a big role in the cultural life of the entire region. History keeps the memory of the exploits of the great commanders - the famous son of Khujand Temur Malik and the Khorezmshah Jaloliddin Manguberdi, who

stood side by side against the conquerors. The city continued playing an important role, grew and developed under the Timurids, Shaybanids and during the period of the khanates. It deserves special attention that the public Uzbek Center for Spirituality and Enlightenment, a scientific school for training specialists in Uzbek philology at the local university, is actively operating in Khujand.

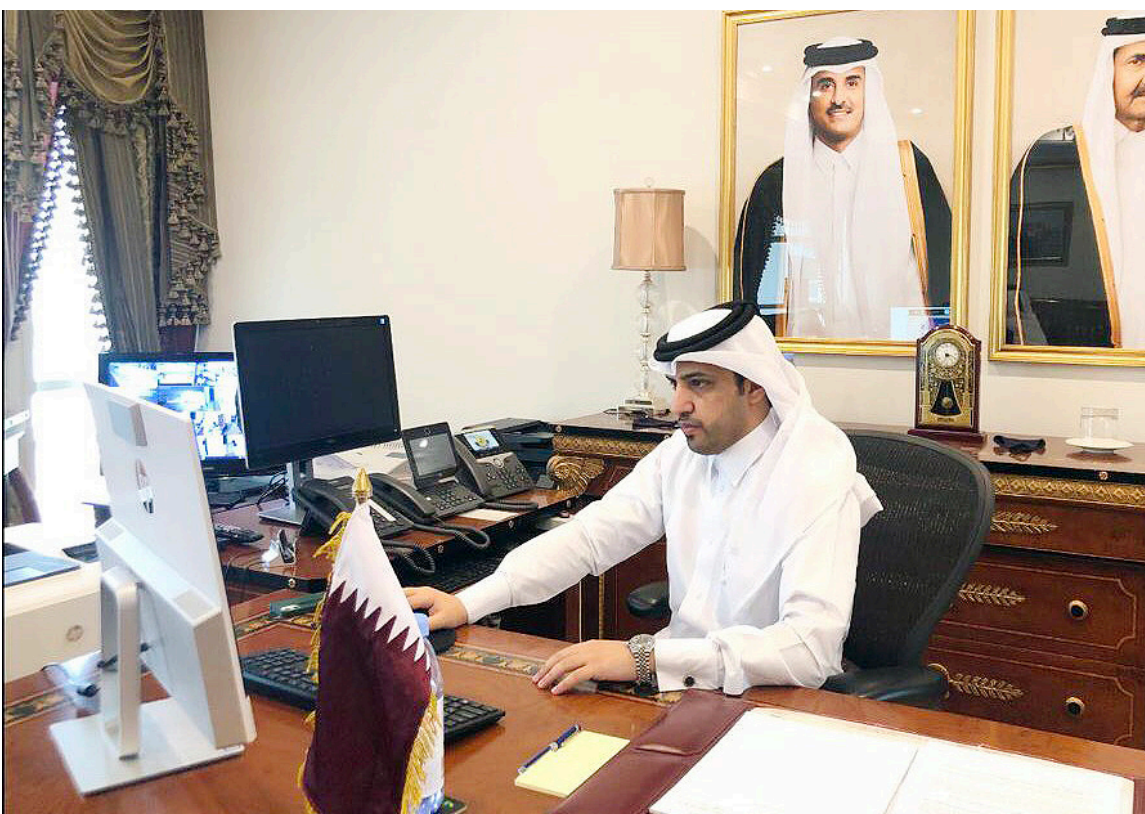
exported to 96 countries and imported from 152 countries. Furthermore, during the reported period, exports of non-oil and gas products increased by 27 percent in an actual term, and by 10.7 percent in real terms, compared to the same months of 2020, and amounted to \$697 million. The top five countries importing Azerbaijani products were Italy with 37.5 percent of exports, Turkey with 16.6 percent, India with 5.5 percent, Spain with 5.3 percent, and Georgia with 4.9 percent. Russia accounted for 3.1 percent of Azerbaijan's total export volume. In terms of non-oil and gas products export, the most export volume accounts for Turkey with 31 percent, Russia with 27 percent, Switzerland with 9.8 percent, Georgia with 7.7%, and the US with 3.3%.

## Azerbaijan's foreign trade turnover hits \$9.5 billion

DNA

BAKU: The volume of Azerbaijan's foreign trade turnover amounted to \$9.5 billion in January-April 2021, the State Statistics Committee has reported. Out of the total turnover, export amounted to \$6 bn or 63 percent, while import amounted to \$3.5bn or 37%. Overall, the country's foreign trade turnover resulted in a surplus of \$2.4bn. Compared to the corresponding period in 2020, the country's foreign trade turnover increased by 16.5 percent in actual prices and decreased by 12.4 percent in real terms. Moreover, legal entities and individual entrepreneurs in the country carried out trade operations with partners in 164 countries. Goods were

exported to 96 countries and imported from 152 countries. Furthermore, during the reported period, exports of non-oil and gas products increased by 27 percent in an actual term, and by 10.7 percent in real terms, compared to the same months of 2020, and amounted to \$697 million. The top five countries importing Azerbaijani products were Italy with 37.5 percent of exports, Turkey with 16.6 percent, India with 5.5 percent, Spain with 5.3 percent, and Georgia with 4.9 percent. Russia accounted for 3.1 percent of Azerbaijan's total export volume. In terms of non-oil and gas products export, the most export volume accounts for Turkey with 31 percent, Russia with 27 percent, Switzerland with 9.8 percent, Georgia with 7.7%, and the US with 3.3%.



ISLAMABAD: Qatar Embassy, Islamabad, represented by the Second Secretary, Mr Masoud Talib Al Athbi, participated in a virtual meeting of the Core Group of the Support Platform for the SSAR: "Virtual Mission to Pakistan" hosted by the UNHCR and SAFRON Ministry. - DNA

## Demolishing Palestinian homes for theme park

About 1,500 people living in more than 100 buildings in the al-Bustan area of Silwan in occupied East Jerusalem are under threat

FOREIGN DESK

OCCUPIED EAST JERUSALEM: Nearly 120 Palestinian families face the destruction of their homes to make way for an Israeli religious theme park where the Israelis believe King David had a garden in biblical times. About 1,500 people living in more than 100 buildings in the al-Bustan area of Silwan in occupied East Jerusalem are under threat. On Monday, Jerusalem Municipality inspectors, accompanied by Israeli forces, delivered notices to demolish at least 13 of those homes and structures within 21 days, after an Israeli court ruled earlier they had been constructed without building permits. "Stating that the orders were delivered is somewhat inaccurate," said social activist Angela Godfrey-Gold-

stein, the co-director of the Jahalin Solidarity organisation. "When inspectors deliver orders to Palestinians, they don't give them in person or even affix them to the relevant doors despite the notices saying 'demolition within 21-days of receipt'," Godfrey-Goldstein told Al Jazeera. The notices were often not received, blow away and are sometimes found on the ground, she said. "Hence, many Palestinians only know their houses are about to be demolished when they wake up to the sound of doors being bashed in or the day before when inspectors come to photograph their target," explained Godfrey-Goldstein, a former member of the Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions, which fights the destruction of Palestinian homes in the Israeli occupied territories. The Jerusalem Municipality very seldom approves Palestinian build-

ing permits in its continuing effort to Judaize the eastern sector of the city which includes facilitating illegal Jewish settlement building, the forced expulsion of Palestinian residents to make way for Jewish settlers and the planned destruction of hundreds of Palestinian homes. Jerusalem deputy mayors Arieh King and Fleur Hassan-Nahoum are on record recently confirming that the aim of the state was to limit Palestinian construction in East Jerusalem as a deliberate policy that favoured Jews to protect Israel's character, saying Israel was a Jewish state. Three generations, more than 30 people, live in the homes of Fakhri Abu Diab and his brother, Nader Abu Diab. Both buildings are listed to be demolished within the next few weeks. The families' appeals against the 2019 Israeli court decision authorising the demolitions were dismissed

in 2020. Orders to proceed were issued in March of this year and the final notice was delivered on Monday. "My family has lived in this home for decades, long before Israel occupied East Jerusalem," said Abu Diab, an accountant by profession and a spokesman for the Silwan Land Defense Committee. "When I got married in 1988, I tried for nearly three years to get a building permit to enlarge my home as my family expanded. "I went dozens of times to Jerusalem Municipality, sometimes accompanied by a lawyer and an engineer, but I was repeatedly told that building permits would not be issued for al-Bustan as it was to be turned into a Jewish theme park," Abu Diab told Al Jazeera. He said he had been involved in numerous appeals to foreign diplomats, NGOs, the United Nations and journalists for help in order

to prevent the families from being made homeless. "The French and American diplomats told me they would put pressure on the Israeli government not to proceed with the demolitions, which the French said broke international law. "We get lots of verbal support, but no concrete action. Where is the UN, where is the international community? We desperately need international intervention now before the demolitions take place, not afterwards when we are already on the streets and are then given tents and food by aid organisations," said Abu Diab. The Jerusalem Municipality's plan to build Gan Hamelech (King's Garden) Park on al-Bustan's land, and to link it to the nearby City of David, is only part of the Judaisation story that applies to all of the Israeli-occupied West Bank, specifically Area C, comprising 60 percent of the territory.

**UK pledges to donate 100M vaccine**

WEB DESK

LONDON: Britain on Friday pledged to donate 100 million doses of surplus vaccine doses to the world next year. Prime Minister Boris Johnson's announcement came as a G7 summit kicks off in Cornwall, England. The other G7 leaders are also expected to make similar vaccine pledges during the summit, where an effective fight against coronavirus will be one of the main items on the agenda. Johnson said: "Since the start of this pandemic the UK has led the way in efforts to protect humanity against this deadly disease. Over a year ago we funded the development of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine on the basis it would be distributed at cost to the world." "This unprecedented model, which puts people squarely above profit, means over half a billion doses have been administered in 160 countries so far," he added. "As a result of the success of the UK's vaccine programme we are now in a position to share some of our surplus doses with those who need them. In doing so we will take a massive step towards beating this pandemic for good."

**Over 30,000 children risk death in: UN**

AGENCIES

NEW YORK: Tens of thousands of malnourished children risk dying in hard-to-reach areas of Ethiopia's conflict-racked Tigray region, now hit by famine, the United Nations said on Friday. "Without humanitarian access to scale up our response, an estimated 30,000-plus severely malnourished children in those highly inaccessible areas are at high risk of death," UNICEF spokesman James Elder told reporters in Geneva. His comments came after the UN on Thursday said some 350,000 people in Tigray were facing famine, while two million more people were just a step away from those extreme conditions. "There is famine now in Tigray," UN humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock said, warning that "every expert you speak to will tell you this is going to get a lot worse". Lowcock said fresh data showed the number of people classified as being in famine conditions was "higher than anywhere in the world at any moment since a quarter of a million Somalis lost their lives in 2011". The UN has said that more than 90 percent of the more than five million people in the Tigray region need emergency food aid, and has urgently appealed for more than \$200m to scale up its response. Play Video Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, winner of the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize, sent troops into the northern region in November to detain and disarm leaders of the Tigray People's Liberation Front, the region's former ruling party.

**Kenya reopens airspace for Somalia**

FOREIGN DESK

NAIROBI: Kenya on Thursday announced it will reopen its airspace for flights to and from Somalia, a move welcomed by Mogadishu. Kenya's Foreign Ministry said it has "taken due consideration of intercessions made and has decided to reopen Kenya's airspace to all flights originating from Somalia and emanating from Kenya to Somalia". The goodwill measure has been taken in the mutual interest of the two East African countries, the ministry said, adding that it hopes it will lead to full normalisation of relations, "including diplomatic, trade and people-to-people linkages that have undergone undue strain". The ministry clarified that all coronavirus protocols will be applicable for passengers coming to Kenya from Somalia. The Somali government hailed Nairobi's decision as a step that could smooth over relations between the two countries, which hit a low last December.

**Briefs**

**No proof found against Tareen : FIA**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Deputy Director Chand Ashraf told the banking court on Friday that since no evidence had been found against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Jahangir Khan Tareen and his son Ali Khan Tareen in the fake bank accounts case, therefore there was no need to arrest them. "Both Tareens have got a clean chit in the cases made against him," he told the court in Lahore. He further said in the event of any action in the future, the Agency would inform the applicant in advance. Earlier, both father and son withdrew their bail applications in two cases namely money laundering and corporate fraud cases filed against them. Speaking on the occasion, counsel for 'estranged' PTI leader Jahangir Khan Tareen said his client had been appearing in court for the last 10 months. "Despite the fact that allegations were levelled against him but no proof was provided," he said. Meanwhile, the FIA official, while informing the session court that right now the case of Tareen and his son was being studied, said there was no need to arrest both of them. Later, talking to the media Tareen said after a months-long inquiry, finally the FIA had admitted there was no need to arrest him and his son. "Today the FIA has admitted my and my son's innocence," he said.

**Man who slapped Macron jailed**

DNA

PARIS: A French court sentenced a man who slapped French President Emmanuel Macron across the face this week to a prison term of 18 months, 14 of which were suspended. Damien Tarel, a 28-year-old medieval history enthusiast, has been in custody since the assault on Tuesday, which a prosecutor called "absolutely unacceptable" and "an act of deliberate violence". Tarel attacked Macron when the French president was shaking hands with members of the public during a walkabout in France's Drome region. Tarel said that several days ahead of Macron's visit to the region, he had thought about throwing an egg or a cream tart at the president, but added the slap was not premeditated.

**Israel ex-top spy reveals operations against Iran**

FOREIGN DESK

TEL AVIV: The outgoing head of the Israeli spy agency Mossad has given a revelatory interview about the country's operations against Iran. Yossi Cohen gave details about the theft of Iran's nuclear archive. The warehouse raid in 2018 ferried tens of thousands of documents out of the country to Israel. He also hinted at Israeli involvement in the destruction of Iran's nuclear facility at Natanz, and the assassination of a nuclear scientist. Mr Cohen retired as the head of Mossad last week. He spoke to journalist Ilan Dayan on Channel 12's Uvda documentary programme, which was broadcast on Israeli television on Thursday night. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appointed Mr Cohen as Mossad chief in late 2015. He joined the agency in 1982 after studying at university in London, and told the programme he had had "hundreds" of passports throughout his career. The most revelatory moments in the interview were about the theft of Iran's nuclear archive.

**Ambassador Alizada hosts Salvation Day reception**

National Salvation Day is one of the glorious pages of the history of independent Azerbaijan; awards medals and certificates to Pakistani friends; says he will be leaving soon after completing his term in Pakistan

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada has said his country is greatly indebted to Pakistani govt and people of Pakistan for extending whole-hearted support during war with aggressor Armenia. The ambassador expressed these views while speaking at the National Salvation Day function. The ambassador also conferred medals on the ministers and parliamentarians. Besides, certificates were awarded to those media persons who contributed significantly towards promoting and strengthening of bilateral relations.

Ambassador Alizada said the National Salvation Day is one of the glorious pages of the history of independent Azerbaijan. After regaining its independence in 1991 Azerbaijan was at the verge of civil war and loss of independence. On that time by the persistent demand of the Azerbaijani nation, Heydar Aliyev, National Leader of Azerbaijan assumed the responsibility of the country, saved the state and the nation of Azerbaijan from the hard and strict tests of the history and Azerbaijan embarked on the path of development, ensured stability and the country began to confidently move forward.

The political reforms carried out in Azerbaijan under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev were designed for the development of democracy, human rights, unity and full protection of the interests of the country. He said, H.Aliyev put an end to all negativity in the country, disbanded all illegal armed groups, established safety and order, and began building the state institu-



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada award Azerbaijan national award to Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood. – DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada award Azerbaijan national award to Secretary Federal Public Service Commission. – DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Ali Alizada award Azerbaijan national award to Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Omar Ayub Khan. – DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Omar Ayub Khan and Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada award certificate to Editor Daily Islamabad POST, CENTRELINE and DNA News Agency Ansar Mahmood Bhatti. – DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Omar Ayub Khan and Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada award certificate to Editor The News, Islamabad Aamir Ghauri. – DNA

Along with the rapid development and dynamic progress of the country, the wise policy laid by National Leader and successfully continued by the current President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, gained to Azerbaijani nation to achieve its main goal - the restoration of the territorial integrity of the modern independent Azerbaijan. Due to dynamic development, high national spirit

and unity, professionalism and heroism of victorious Azerbaijan Army, and thanks to the dedication of our martyrs, under the command of the Supreme Commander-in-chief, Azerbaijan has defeated aggressor Armenia which kept 20% of Azerbaijani territories under the illegal occupation for almost 30 years, and Azerbaijan has secured its territorial integrity, put an end to

Armenian occupation and restored peace and justice in the region. 'We are thankful to our fraternal country Pakistan and its nation which always stood by Azerbaijan and put its principal position in the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, especially during Patriotic War of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan has also always stood by and supported Pakistan in all matters,

including the Kashmir issue and I am sure this mutual support to each other will be continued and further strengthened'. Ambassador Ali Alizada added, from the first day of the restoration of independence of Azerbaijan, Pakistan and Azerbaijan as two brotherly countries always enjoy longstanding strategic partnership and cordial relationship which reflects the will of our fraternal nations and our relations continue to grow in upward trajectory.

The mutual share of our sorrows, as well as the celebration of the different significant occasions of both countries together, including the victory of Azerbaijan and the mark of National Salvation Day today once again prove our commitment for the strong friendship and brotherhood, he concluded.

**Economic stability marks beginning of 'Golden Era'**

Farrukh Habib said the current account remained surplus for the last ten months, exports surged by 13 percent, large-scaled manufacturing grew by nine percent and over one billion dollars were deposited in the Roshan Digital Bank Account.

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said on Friday that the 'Golden Era' of development had begun in the country as the present government's prudent policies ensured economic stability. Responding to the anti-government remarks of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, he said the purchasing power of citizens had increased by 36.6 percent, thanks to people-friendly policies of Prime Minister Imran Khan. He said that wages of the



labourers associated with all the sectors including construction had increased by 29 percent. Highlighting economic achievements of the present government, he said the current account remained surplus for the last ten months, exports surged by 13 percent, large-scaled manufacturing grew by nine

percent and over one billion dollars were deposited in the Roshan Digital Bank Account. Likewise, the Federal Board of Revenue collected Rs 4,170 billion taxes during the first eleven months of Fiscal Year 2021, while agriculture sector grew by 2.77 percent and primary balance had remained surplus for the first time in the last five years, he said. The Minister said it was Prime Minister Imran Khan, who in spite of International Monetary Fund's demands, preferred not to increase electricity prices and impose direct taxes amounting to Rs 150 billion to provide relief to the

masses. He said the government continued to pass on the relief to citizens despite the spike in prices of sugar, crude oil, petroleum products, edible oil and other items in international market. Palm oil price went up by 102 percent in the global market, but the government allowed only 20 percent increase, the Minister said, adding prices of soybean oil was enhanced by only 23 percent against the increase of 119 percent at the international market. He said similarly, the prices of crude oil surged by 119 percent against which the government increased it by only 23 per cent.

**Qureshi, Sarwar discuss Palestine issue, Islamophobia**



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Governor Punjab Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar called on Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Friday and discussed with him matters including the Palestine issue and the growing trend of Islamophobia. The Governor Punjab lauded the Foreign Minister on drawing the attention of the international community towards the ongoing systematic atrocities against the oppressed Palestinians and on the success of Palestine Peace Diplomatic Mission. The two leaders expressed deep sorrow over the killing

of innocent members of a Pakistan-origin family in Canada. The Foreign Minister said in order to bring justice to the innocent victims and to curb the growing trend of Islamophobia, he held a detailed discussion with his Canadian counterpart. He welcomed the positive response of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau over the incident and mentioned that Pakistan High Commission in Ottawa was in constant touch with the families of the victims to provide every possible assistance. Qureshi stressed effective global action to root out Islamophobia and hate speech from across the world.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland Bénédicte de Cerjat had a good meeting with Pakistan's National Security Advisor Moed Yusuf, after his recent trip to Geneva. They discussed bilateral relations, important regional matters, including Afghanistan, as well as the broad concept of hard & soft power in international relations. – DNA

**US Chargé d'affaires visits Karachi**

DNA

KARACHI: U.S. Embassy Chargé d'affaires a.i. Leslie Viguerie visited Karachi June 7-9, where he met with Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, Pakistan Navy officials, and prominent business leaders and women entrepreneurs to promote and strengthen the many ties between the US and Pakistan. Chargé Viguerie commended Chief Minister Shah for his support of United States Agency for International Development's projects in Sindh, which are aimed at strengthening the province's education, health, and agricul-

tural sectors through civilian assistance grants. Chargé Viguerie affirmed the importance of the U.S.-Pakistan military relationship during his meeting with Rear Admiral Naveed Ashraf. Later, Chargé Viguerie took a deck tour of the USS Monterey, a U.S. Navy ship docked at Karachi Port. The USS Monterey visited Karachi to conduct extensive interoperability training and subject matter expert exchange with Pakistan Navy counterparts. U.S. officers and sailors were hosted for dinner aboard the Pakistan Navy Ship Aslat before cooperating in bilateral maritime security training at sea.

**G7 to donate 1 bln Covid vaccines**

NEWS DESK

LONDON: G7 leaders are meeting for their first in-person talks in nearly two years, with an expected pledge to donate one billion COVID-19 vaccine doses to the world's poorest countries. The club of leading economies - Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States - say a joint approach is the world's best chance for recovering from the global health crisis and tackling climate change. As the summit opened at the seaside resort of Carbis Bay in Cornwall, southwest England on Friday, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson told leaders the gathering was a chance to learn lessons from the coronavirus pandemic and ensure they do not repeat any errors. "We need to make sure that we now allow our economies to recover," he said, adding that a more equitable future for the world was essential. "We need to make sure that when we recover, we level up and we build back better. We have a huge opportunity to do that as G7," he added. "If the best G7 leaders can manage is to donate one billion vaccine doses then this summit will have been a failure," Oxfam's health policy manager Anna Marriott said, insisting the world needs 11 billion doses instead as she called for a global waiver on patent protections for vaccines.

**Four PAF officers made AVM**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The government has promoted 04 PAF officers to the rank of Air Vice Marshal today. The promoted officers include Air Vice Marshal Khalid Mehmood, Air Vice Marshal Asad Amir Pirzada, Air Vice Marshal Salman Abbas Shah and Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Irfan. Air Vice Marshal Khalid Mehmood was commissioned in GD (P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in May, 1991. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military). Air Vice Marshal Asad Amir Pirzada was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in May, 1991. During his career, he has served as Director Network Bases at Air Headquarters, Islamabad and Commandant CAE PAF Academy, Asghar Khan. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military). Air Vice Marshal Salman Abbas Shah was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in May, 1991. He has also served as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Aircraft Engineering) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military). Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Irfan was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in May, 1991. He has also served as Deputy Manufacturing Director Avionics Production Factory, Kamra. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

**FC soldier embraces martyrdom**

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A soldier of Frontier Corps Balochistan on Friday embraced martyrdom during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted in Hulmerg area of Kharan district, Balochistan where two terrorists were killed; involved in various acts of violence and terrorism in the area. The two terrorists were involved in various acts of violence and terrorism were killed and a significant quantity of arms and ammunition was also recovered, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) media release issued here on Friday. During the exchange of fire, one brave soldier of Frontier Corps Balochistan, Sepoy Fida ur Rehman, resident of Mastuj, Chitral embraced martyrdom (shahadat).