



# Islamabad POST

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**Govt promoting SEZs under CPEC, says PM Imran Khan**

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**MILGEM to improve PN capabilities**

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**Murad presents Rs1.47 trillion deficit budget**

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## Briefs

**FM Qureshi to leave for Turkey**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi will leave for a visit to Turkey this week. Pakistan's foreign minister in his visit to Turkey will attend the diplomacy forum in Turkish city of Antalya from June 18-20, sources said. The upcoming is third Turkish visit of FM Shah Mahmood Qureshi in three months, according to sources. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi is expected to meet Afghan, Iranian and Kuwaiti counterparts and other foreign ministers and diplomats on the sidelines of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum.

**PTI govt robbing pockets of people**

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari rejected IMF's demand to impose income tax worth Rs150 billion on the salaried class. Declaring PTI as the most corrupt government in the country's history, Chairman PPP said that the ruling government is successfully robbing the pockets of the people by raising taxes. He also said that Budget 2021 is a document in which amnesty has been given to certain investors by taking money from people's pockets.

**FBR asked to ensure tracking progress**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Shaukat Tarin on Tuesday directed the tax authorities to ensure effective tracking progress of installed Point of Sale (POS) machines and provide post deployment support to the retailers. He further directed to determine the total volume of sales by retailers to effectively tap the revenue generation through POS system after adjustment of input and output taxes.

## Worst ever rowdy scenes in Assembly

Govt and opposition MPs trade abuses; exchange hot words; a few get injuries

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: It was pandemonium on Tuesday in the National Assembly as Leader of the Opposition Shahbaz Sharif addressed the lower house. As soon as the PML-N president started speaking, he was greeted by loud jeers, slogans and whistles from the treasury members. As PTI MNAs surrounded the former Punjab chief minister, PML-N lawmakers and other Opposition members formed a protective circle around him. The jeering and slogans got louder as Sharif took aim at the government. "Imran Khan Niazi promised 10 million jobs. Where are those jobs?" asked Sharif. "Where are the \$300bn that were supposed to be brought back to the country from abroad?" Continuing to lash out at the government, he said that PM Imran Khan's claims of eliminating corruption from Pakistan were hollow. "Pakistan is suffering from the worst form of corruption today," he said. "No act of posting or transferring someone these days is done without an element of corruption these days," added Shahbaz.

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**Khaqan Abbasi ignores NA speaker's notice**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: It seemed that former prime minister and PML-N senior leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has trashed the notice sent by the speaker of National Assembly asking him to explain his position for showing a behavior unbecoming of a member during proceedings of the lower house. Sources said that almost one and a half months have gone that Mr Abbasi has not responded to Speaker Asad Qaiser's show-cause notice. It seems that the former prime minister has chucked the speaker's notice. During the National Assembly's proceedings of April 21, PML-N leader Abbasi threatened to hit the speaker with shoe. On this, Speaker Qaiser issued a show-cause notice to the PML-N leader asking him to explain his behavior not befitting of a member of the parliament.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs the Cabinet meeting. - DNA

**Government promoting SEZs under CPEC: PM**

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Tuesday, terming timely completion of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) one of the government's foremost priorities, stressed that measures were being taken for the promotion of investment in export industries in the Special Economic Zones (SEZs). The industries, besides providing jobs, increasing economic volume and the precious foreign exchange, would also ensure the access of "Made-in-Pakistan" brand in the international market, he added. The prime minister expressed these views while presiding over a review-meeting on foreign investment in export industries under CPEC. Federal ministers Shaukat Tarin, Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Sheikh Rashid Ahmad, Asad Umar,

Continued on Page 06

**Pak records decline in Covid cases**

Just 838 more people tested positive for the deadly virus

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The country on Tuesday recorded the lowest number of positive cases reported in a day for the past two weeks of June; the national tally of total active COVID-19 cases was recorded 40,929 with 838 more people tested positive for the deadly virus and 1,576 people recovered from the disease during the last 24 hours. Fifty-nine corona patients have died during past 24 hours, 56 of whom were under treatment in hospitals and three out of the hospitals in their respective quarantines or homes, according to the latest update issued by the NCOC.

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**NCOC considers to open more sectors**

Information Minister says Nawaz Sharif must come back; blames host country for 'illegally' housing the ex-PM



ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry addressing a press conference. - DNA

ZUBAIR AHMED

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry on Tuesday said that the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) will consider reopening cinemas by the month's end. He also slammed Nawaz Sharif and

asked him to come back. The Information Minister also blamed the host country for 'illegally' housing the ex-prime minister of Pakistan, who according to him was hiding in the UK. Addressing a post-cabinet meeting press conference in Islamabad, the information minister said that the cabinet has decided it will monitor the implementation of development projects under Public Sector Development Program (PSDP).

According to the publication, Chaudhry said a mechanism for the timely availability of funds for the projects will be developed. A third party will carry out the assessment of the projects to ensure transparency. The minister said the PSDP allocation for the next fiscal year has been set at Rs900 billion, "and most mega projects for Sindh will be financed from it", said the national broadcaster. The cabinet also accorded approval to the storm-water drain project that is a part of the Karachi Transformation Plan.

Continued on Page 06

**Saudi FM to visit Pak next month**

During the visit dates of the visit by Saudi crown prince Prince Muhammad Bin Salman would also finalized

M HAIDER

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, is expected to pay a two day official visit to Pakistan next month. The visit would be a follow up of the Prime Minister Imran Khan visit to KSA last month during which bilateral cooperations and ties would be reviewed. The dates of the visit by Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud are being worked out through diplomatic channels. Diplomatic sources confided to this scribe that during the visit progress on implementation on agree-



ments and MOUs signed during PM Imran Khan visit to KSA would be reviewed. The Saudi foreign Minister would meet the Prime Minister Imran Khan and hold formal talks with his counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi in the Foreign Ministry. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud during

Continued on Page 06

**Pak gets \$3.17 bn debt relief from G-20**

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: G-20, the premier forum of the world's leading economies, has suspended Pakistan's debt of \$3.17 billion by the end of this year. Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhary Fawad Hussain shared the positive news while addressing media in Islamabad. He said this is yet another positive development for the country's economy. The information minister said that the federal cabinet has decided to monitor the implementation of development projects under PSDP. He said that a mechanism will be established in order to ensure timely availability of funds for the development projects. He said that a third party evaluation of the development projects will be conducted to ensure transparency. He said that the annual PSDP for the next fiscal year is of Rs900 billion, and most of the mega projects for Sindh will be financed from it.

**Army will continue defending nation: COAS**

COAS expressed satisfaction over progress of the stabilization operations across Pakistan

NEHAL MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: Two days long 78th Formation Commanders' Conference was held at GHQ. General QamarJavedBajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) presided the conference which was attended by Corps Commanders, Principal Staff Officers and all Formation Commanders of Pakistan Army. Participants were briefed on prevalent geo-strategic environment, challenges to national security and own strategy in response to evolving threat. Participants held detailed discussion on a host of pro-



fessional matters. Forum was also briefed on the cutting edge technologies being harnessed to modernise Army's outfits besides up-gradation of logistics infrastructure corresponding to emerging operational imperatives. COAS expressed satisfaction over progress of the stabilization operations across Pakistan following the successes of Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad. Forum paid rich tribute to the resilient nation particularly the people of tribal areas for their supreme sacrifices in the war against terrorism.

Continued on Page 06

## Pak, Egypt mily top brass explores joint ventures

Gen Nadeem Raza meets the Sisi; Egyptian military leadership lauds professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their sacrifices in fight against terrorism

NEW DESK

CARIO: General Nadeem Raza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, who is on official visit to Egypt, called on General Abdel Fattah ElSisi (Retd), President of Egypt. Matters of bilateral military cooperation including security, counter-terrorism and prevailing regional environment were discussed during the meetings. President conveyed his feelings of high esteem for Pakistan Armed Forces and said that he valued brotherly relations between both the countries. Chairman JCSC also reiterated that Pakistan is keen to expand its existing bilateral military to military cooperation with Egypt. The dignitaries lauded the profession-

alism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their sacrifices in fight against terrorism. Chairman JCSC also had separate meetings with General Mohamed Ahmed Zaki, Minister of Defence

& Commander-in-Chief of Egyptian Armed Forces and Chiefs of the Tri-Services. Chairman JCSC led the 2nd Round of Defence and Security Talks. CJCS highlighted the positive

role of Pakistan in countering violent extremism, regional stability, connectivity and it's impact on the region and beyond. Chairman JCSC also shared Pakistan's contributions and efforts for peace

and stability in Afghanistan. Earlier upon arrival at Ministry of Defence, Chairman JCSC was presented Guard of Honour by a smartly turned out contingent of Egyptian Armed Forces.



**Petrol price increased**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Finance Ministry on Tuesday approved a Rs2.13/litre hike in petrol and an increase of Rs1.79/litre in the price of High-Speed Diesel. A notification issued by the ministry also said that the price of kerosene oil is being increased by Rs1.89/litre and light diesel prices will go up by Rs 2.03per litre. The petrol prices have increased by 2.13%, HSD by 1.79%, kerosene by 1.89%, and light diesel by 2.03%. Last week, Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin had indicated that the prices of petroleum products will be increased in the coming month as talks with the IMF continue over the stabilisation of revenue collection.

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COMSTECH to give 500 scholarships for Palestinians - Page 03

Absolute powers to ITOs to harm business activity - Page 04

No, America should not 'accept and move on' - Page 05

Quetta Gladiators defend 159 against Lahore Qalandars - Page 06

Azerbaijan, Turkey sign historic Shusha Declaration - Page 07

Murad presents Rs1.47 trillion deficit budget - Page 08



## Briefs

NTUF  
launches  
'KnowTex'  
project

DNA

FAISALABAD: The National Textile University Faisalabad (NTUF) has undertaken a new project 'KnowTex', which will make an increase of US\$1 billion in national exports within 3-5 years, said Prof Dr. Tanveer Hussain, rector NTUF.

In a statement issued here on Tuesday, he said that textile industry is the backbone of national economy in terms of its share in exports and employment source for lakhs of people across the country. Its growth has been stable, but it is still missing out on major share of exports, based on unexplored dimensions.

In this connection, the NTUF has launched a project in collaboration with the NED University of Engineering & Technology Karachi and Balochistan University of Information Technology and Engineering & Management Sciences Quetta.

He said that the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Islamabad would provide funds for the project while SMEDA (Small & Medium Enterprises Development Authority), TUSDC (Technology Upgradation & Skill Development Company), All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA), Pakistan Ready-made Garments Association and Pakistan Textile Exporters Association (PTEA) will provide help to execute this project in a most beneficial manner.

SC seek  
details of  
patients  
recovered  
of corona

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: A meeting of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly's Standing Committee (SC) on Health Tuesday directed administrative authorities of health department to present data of patients recovered and died of corona in Lady Reading Hospital (LRH).

The meeting chaired by Rabia Basri also sought details of fund allocated to treat corona patients in LRH for discussion in next meeting of the standing committee. Chairperson also directed health department to arrange a presentation in next meeting regarding details of KP Drug Rules 2017, reward and punishment of drug inspectors and appointments being made in three different categories. The chair also directed to consult law department regarding regularization of Gajju Khan Medical College faculty members and suggested formulation of a subcommittee on the subject matter.

FF Steel  
conducts first  
Online MTO  
Program

PESHAWAR: The FF Steel became the first company that successfully conducted one of its kind online mock test in Pakistan for their first-ever MTO program on Kahoot App to attract top talent nationwide.

The online test was arranged on Sunday, June 13, 2021 to achieve certain advantages, for example, the test was conducted simultaneously for all the prospecting candidates of top 5 ranked universities, ensuring cost-effectiveness, efficiency and driving instant results, also the overall system is completely transparent, said a press release issued here on Tuesday. Organizations globally are adapting to Covid and coming up with innovative ideas to operate in a safe environment to maintain social distancing and avoid contact. The innovative way was practiced globally and encouraged by many top countries in the world. In Pakistan, only a handful of companies used the integration of technology to such an extent and FF Steel is one of the pioneers in doing so. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs review meeting on CPEC. - DNA

Government to approve budget  
without any obstacle: Sarwar

Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar said that despite the coronavirus pandemic the federal, as well as the Punjab government, has allocated sufficient funds for education, health, clean drinking water and public welfare

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Punjab Governor Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar has said that there is no obstacle in the approval of federal and provincial budgets. The opposition may daydream about denouncing the budget but all allies are with the government. Pakistan is moving forward on the economic front adding that work is underway on Punjab Aab-e-Pak Authority projects worth Rs 5 billion. The incumbent government is taking practical steps to improve sectors of education, health and other

ers. He was talking to the media on the inauguration of the new government school building in Village 515 GB of Toba Tek Singh, and the inauguration of a Water Filtration Plant by Punjab Aab-e-Pak Authority in Chak 289GB of Pir Mahal, the inaugural of the Solar System in the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad Toba Tek Singh campus. MNA Riaz Ahmad Patiana, MPA Syed Ahmad Saadi, Central Vice-President Chaudhry Ishfaq and Haji Mohammad Ramzan were also present on this occasion. Governor Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar said that Prime Minister Imran Khan has always



been doing principled politics and his only aim is the development, prosperity and stability of Pakistan. As far as political

opponents are concerned, their intentions will be thwarted. He said that the opposition's war of words on the budget is tantamount to public enmity. Government and its allies are on the same page and we will easily get the budget passed. Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar said that despite the coronavirus pandemic the federal, as well as the Punjab government, has allocated sufficient funds for education, health, clean drinking water and public welfare. PTI government will complete its constitutional term and all promises made to the public will be fulfilled,

he maintained. The government has taken exemplary steps to root out corruption and to bring reforms in public institutions. Regarding Punjab Aab e Pak Authority Governor Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar said that the Punjab government has allocated funds for clean drinking water in the budget of the new fiscal year. Punjab Aab e Pak Authority is working expeditiously for the provision of safe drinking water in the cities as well as villages. No impediment in the provision of safe drinking water will be tolerated and the promise of providing safe drinking water will be fulfilled at the earliest.



KARACHI: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi and Turkey officials signing the milestone certificate during steel cutting ceremony of PN Corvette/ Ship at Karachi Shipyard. - APP

Punjab budget growth  
oriented: Minister

LAHORE: Punjab budget for financial year (FY) 2021-22 is positive and growth-oriented and in accordance with PTI manifesto. He said all economic indicators have now improved and the GDP growth rate would remain at 3.9 per cent during the next financial year. Punjab Finance Minister Makhdoom Hashim Jawan Bakht expressed these views, while addressing a post-budget press conference here at 90-Shahrae Quaid-i-Azam on Tuesday. Punjab Chief Secretary Jawad Rafique Malik, P&D Chairman Abdullah Khan Sumbal, Provincial Finance Secretary Iftikhar Ali Sahoo and Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) chairman also accompanied the minister. Secretaries and other officers of various departments were also present. Hashim said, "Our four flagship programmes are: (i) UHI worth Rs 80 billion and 100 per cent population of Punjab would have UHI cover in the next six months; (ii) Insaf up-gradation of schools project under which 8,360 primary schools would be up-graded to elementary level with a cost of Rs 6.5 billion. - DNA

## FCCI to shift grain market from city area

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) will play its pivotal role for the immediate shifting of grain market from congested city area to the outskirts for its future expansion, however in this connection Grain Market Association must identify the availability of suitable land around the city with well connection roads and rail links, said Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed President FCCI.

Addressing a special meeting of the office-bearers of

the grain market association held in FCCI, he expressed satisfaction over the realistic, positive and holistic attitude of the commission

"They are voluntarily opting for the shifting of Grain Market outside the city where they could have sufficient space to further expand the



agents and said that they are fully aware of the traffic environment and other related civic issues due to the presence of grain market in thickly populated city area.

market", he remarked. Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed assured that their problems would be resolved on top priority basis without any inordinate delay. Simi-

417804  
people got  
Covid jobs

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: The process of administered the general public and Health Care Worker was continued at designated 34 vaccination centers and till now 417804 people vaccinated. DC Muhammad Ali informed to reports that 381382 general public and 36422 health workers administered vaccine in which 319976 had first and 61406 had second while 23021 and 13401 health workers had vaccinated first and second dose. Meanwhile, As many as 6413 more people and Health Care Worker administered the corona vaccine at designated 34 vaccination center yesterday and till now 405239 people vaccinated. DC Muhammad Ali informed to reports that 369145 general public and 36071 health workers administered vaccine in which 309214 had first and 59931 had second dose.

Criminal  
involved in  
killing cop  
arrested

DNA

KARACHI: Baghdadi Police Tuesday arrested an alleged street criminal who during robberies had gunned down a cop and other citizens also. SSP City Sarfraz Nawaz said Baghdadi Police in a raid conducted in Moosa Lane area nabbed Abdul Rehman and recovered two pistols, 7 snatched mobile phones and bullets from his possession.

Arrested accused was involved in number of killings, attempt to kill and robberies. Accused Abdul Rehman on May 7th, 2021 during a robbery gunned down Police Constable Moez in Lyari area. Moez was posted as driver of SP City.

Besides, the accused also shot killed citizens Gul Muhammad, Mumtaz Ahmed, Muhammad Asghar and shot killed and injured various others during street crimes. Further investigations were underway.

1027 vacancies  
to restructure  
KP local  
govt system

DNA

PESHAWAR: The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tuesday approved establishment of local government offices at tehsil level in order to restructure the local bodies system in the province. The development took place on the recommendations of Provincial Minister for Local Bodies, Elections and Rural Development, Akbar Ayub Khan under Local Government Amendment Act 2019.

The Finance Department in its new fiscal year starting from July first would allocate needed funds for establishment of local government offices at tehsil level. The prominent feature of the step was that government has also created 1027 vacancies in 79 tehsils of the province.

These tehsil offices vacancies included Assistant Director, Assistant Engineer, Accountant, Sub Engineer, Computer Operator, Progress Officer, Auto Cad Operator, Junior Clerk, Driver, Security Guard and Sweeper. A statement from the Local Government office said the expenditures would be carried out from the Account 4 of the relevant district and tehsil offices.

Rescue-1122  
conducts  
mock exercise

STAFF REPORT

SARGODHA: A mock exercise was organised by the Punjab Emergency Service (Rescue-1122) Sargodha. In this regard, fire extinguishers exercise was conducted at Shaheen Chowk, Sargodha. On the occasion, District Emergencies Officer Mazhar Shah said that the purpose of the mock exercises was to check the available resources and evaluate their performance besides that to improve the cooperation between the various agencies. Rescue 1122, Civil Defense, Sui Gas and WAPDA teams participated in the mock exercise.

Ways to  
strengthen  
Pak-Iran  
media co-op  
explored

LAHORE: Head of Mass Communication and Media Department of Pakistan's Gift University and Director of Iran's Culture Center in Lahore have stressed the need to develop media cooperation between the two brotherly countries in a bid to confront the discriminatory view of Western media. Tahir Malik also a prominent journalist during a meeting with Director Khana-e-FarahangjafarRonas on Monday called for enhanced ties between Iran and Pakistan by taking advantage of common capacities, especially in the field of media and communications. In the meeting, he discussed the media cooperation between Iran and Pakistan for the development of cultural, artistic and tourism relations. Tahir Malik, with 30 years of experience in the field of media and presenter of the political program of Pakistan TV Channel GNN. - APP

## PPP, PML-N exploited poor during their tenures

Prime Minister Imran Khan, he said, had allocated resources in the budget for the poor who were being looted by these two parties, he said, adding "Both the parties are worried about increase in minimum wage and salaries of government employees"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib Tuesday said these were PPP and PML-N, which during their tenures in government, introduced the culture of ruthless exploitation of poor and put the country under dominance of foreign financial institutions. Reacting to statements of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Zardari and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Maryam Aurangzeb, he said the opposition parties were totally confused after seeing the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) gov-

ernment's historic, successful and unprecedented federal budget. The minister said the pro-poor and growth-oriented budget presented by the PTI government had darkened the political future of the two parties - PPP and PML-N. Prime Minister Imran Khan, he said, had allocated resources in the budget for the poor who were being looted by these two parties, he said, adding "Both the parties are worried about increase in minimum wage and salaries of government employees." After the federal budget, Farrukh said Bilawal was foreseeing the Sindh province slipping from the hands of the PPP. Under the PTI government, all



facilities like employment, housing, health and development were available for the public, he added. He said youth were benefiting from the KamayabJawanProgramme and earning respectable

livelihood, while the Health Card was fast becoming a guarantee of public health. Farrukh said the Health Card facility had been provided to the masses in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, whereas an amount of Rs 60 billion had been earmarked for the Punjab province in that regard. He said the EhsasProgramme had become a source of welfare for the poor and Naya Pakistan Housing Scheme was becoming a symbol of roof and shelter for homeless people. The minister was of the view that with the construction of 10 big dams was opening the door for production of inexpensive

electricity and agricultural revolution in the country. He said a gang that came out of jails on bail wanted to stop the country's journey towards economic development by creating chaos. Farrukh said Punjab's historic budget, which was presented after the federal budget, had completely isolated this corrupt gang. The minister expressed the confidence that the downtrodden segments of the society would rise and flourish under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. "We will achieve the goal of welfare state by building economy with responsibility and transparency," he remarked.



**Briefs****Gallery 6 selects 82 paintings for APW**

ISLAMABAD: Gallery 6 on Tuesday selected 82 paintings for Arjumand Painting Award (APW) 2021, in first phase. In a statement issued here, Gallery 6 thanked artists for an overwhelming response to APA 2021. It took four marathon sessions spread over two days to select paintings in the first phase of judgment. Congratulations to all those whose paintings have moved to the next round of competition. The selected artists must submit their painting ready to be displayed well framed between Monday 28TH, June to Saturday 03 July 2021.

The paintings selected in the first phase including artists Adnan Khan, Ahsan Javaid, Ahsan Memon, Alefiya Abbas Ali, Ali Gillani, Ali Raza, Ammara Rafique, Amra Khan, Anam Traiq, Aqib Ehsan, Asad Asghar, Asghar Ali, Asif Hussain, Aun Raza, Awais Naqvi, Buland Iqbal, Fahima Bashir, Faiza Taufique, Fakhr Asif, Farah Khan, Farina Najam, Farooq Aftab, Fawad Jafri, Feroza, Hafsa Sarfraz, Hina Afzal, Imran Ali, Isra Noman, Karim Ahmed Khan, Khadija Saeed Akhtar, Komal Jabeen, Maham Nadeem, Maliha Matin, Manisha Jiani, Ansab Da, Mariam Arshad, Mariya Shaikh, Maryam Arslan, Meerab Rehmat, Mubashar Iqbal, Muhammad Sulaman, Muzammal Khan, Nabihha Muzaffar, Najma Bibi, Namrah Naseer, Naseeb Khan, Nashrah Raza, Nazar ul Islam, Nishwa Farayd, Qiraat, Soomro, Rabia Saleem, Rahim Baloch, Rahman Zada, Rao Hassan Nasir, Rida Nadeem, Saba Qayyum Leghari and others. - APP

**IRSA releases 287,800 cusecs water**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 287,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 406,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1461.96 feet, which was 77.96 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 199,000 and 135,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1142.85 feet, which was 104.85 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 69,400 and 15,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 177,700, 157,100 and 34,900 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 73,200 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 31,800 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.

**Economic growth top priority of government**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), senior leader Sadaqat Ali Abbasi said that PTI government has presented a developmental budget and heading towards economic growth which was among top priorities of the government. Talking to media, Tuesday, he said, manufacturing growth has increased 10 percent and the set tax target would also be achieved for next fiscal year. He said a record remittances had received through Roshan digital account which proved the government steps towards achieving its targets. He said the budget development of infrastructure, public health through Ahsas program initiative and economic empowerment would also create job opportunities and help in reducing poverty as well and added that exports also were increasing and current account showing surplus due to successful policies.

**COMSTECH to give 500 scholarships for Palestinians**

Prof. Choudhary extended thanks to the Chairman APSUP and vice chancellors of the universities for their timely support, and overwhelming response for this noble cause

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH announced 500 scholarships for Palestinian students and scholars in partnership with Association of Private Sector Universities of Pakistan (APSUP), and member institutions of COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence. It was stated by Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH while addressing a press conference at COMSTECH office on Tuesday. He stated that over 370 scholarships for Palestinian students have been committed by 24 member institutions of APSUP, while 130 scholarships have been promised by public sector universities of COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence.

Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH said that Palestinian people are under aggression and siege by occupant forces. Palestinians now have limited access to higher education and research facilities. Over seven decades of occupation has systematically destroyed educational and socio-economic infrastructures of Palestinian state.

In order to support them, COMSTECH launched a special program offering research fellowships, technicians training & workshop participation grants for Pal-



estian students, and today's announcement is first milestone achieved under this program, he said. Mr. Murtaza Noor, Media Advisor to Coordinator General COMSTECH and Coordinator Inter-University Consortium for Promotion of Social Sciences appreciated the gesture of Pakistani universities for offering scholarships to the students of the state of Palestine. He said that in collaboration with concerned organizations and partner universi-

ties, proper mechanism would be chalked out for placement of Palestinian students. Three hundred and seventy scholarships have been announced by twenty two APSUP member private sector universities: Superior University Lahore, University of Lahore, Iqra University Karachi, Abasyn University Peshawar, Al-hamd Islamic University Quetta, Jinnah University for Women Karachi, CECOS University Peshawar, Greenwich University Karachi, Indus University Karachi, Institute of the Punjab

job (ISP) Multan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah University, Karachi, National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences (FAST) Islamabad, Preston University Islamabad, Qurtuba University Peshawar, Sarhad University Peshawar, CUSIT, Peshawar, Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology Karachi, University of South Asia Lahore, University of Sialkot, Sialkot, Textile Institute of Pakistan, Karachi, SBB Dewan University Karachi, Muslim Youth University Islamabad, Alkhair University, AJK, and University of Faisalabad. Whereas one hundred and thirty scholarships have been offered by thirteen public sector higher education and research institutions, including International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (IC-CBS), University of Karachi, Government College University, Lahore, Islamia University Bahawalpur, Quaid e Azam University, Islamabad, NETKENT University, Turkey, National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), National Institute of Health, Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKI), COMSATS University Islamabad, Al Shifa Eye Trust, NED University of Engineering and Technology (NEDUET), Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology (KFUEIT), University of Lahore, and University of the Punjab.

**Minister visits Safe City HQ**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on Tuesday visited Safe City Headquarters and reviewed the arrangements being made regarding the expected visit of the Prime Minister there.

The minister directed the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad and other senior police officials to ensure elaborated arrangements. The Prime Minister would inaugurate the newly established "Eagle Squad" of Islamabad police comprising 100 bikes while minister for interior will brief the PM about the extension of Safe City Project.

It is worth mentioning here that Rs 300 million being spent on the project. - APP

**8 arrested for possessing illegal weapons**

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in a crackdown against illegal weapons rounded up eight persons from different localities and recovered eight 30 bore pistols from their possession, said a police spokesman on Tuesday. He informed that Pirwadhai, Airport, Taxila, Saddar Baroni and Chonra police arrested Muhammad Suleman, Farhan, Subhan, Owais Haider, Syed Habib, Abdul Ghani, Tufail and Matuallah.

He said the police were conducting operations against criminals on regular basis without any discrimination. The police would continue raids against lawbreakers and sent them behind the bars, he added. He said the separate cases were registered against all the accused while further investigations was underway.

**Int'l Day of Family Remittances**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The International Day of Family Remittances will be marked on June 16 (Wednesday) across the globe including Pakistan to recognize the critical contributions of migrants to supporting their families.

Family remittances have an enormous impact in developing countries. Family remittances are money transfers made by people living abroad to family members in their home country. These transfers have an enormous impact in developing countries as one of the largest financial inflows, competing only with international aid.

The UN Governing Council proclaimed June 16 International Day of Family Remittances during a session in Rome in February 2015. More than 500 billion US dollars are transferred every year between family members across country borders worldwide, according to UN estimates. These remittances provide opportunities for education, food, health, and housing for the recipients.

**Punjab Govt. presents largest budget of province**

RAWALPINDI: Despite financial constraint and other difficulties including Coronavirus, the Punjab government has presented the largest development budget in the history of the province with special focus to eliminate poverty and unemployment.

The promotion of formal and non-formal, technical and vocational education and the establishment of higher education institutions in every district is another big step towards making the country a state like 'Madina', said Provincial Minister for Literacy and Non-Formal Basic Education Raja Rashid Hafeez. He said, Punjab government had presented a people friendly budget and also laid foundation for bright future of Pakistan. Commenting on the budget of Punjab, the minister said that the opposition was looking for some points from the budget with big lenses on the basis of which they could criticize the government. - APP

**CDA passes law for residents to grow plants**

ISLAMABAD: CDA management in order to enhance the greenery and beauty of Islamabad has passed the law which will require every plot owner irrespective of size and usage to have specific types and numbers of plants. This law will be implemented on existing houses as well. The object to increase tree cover in Islamabad. This will apply to Govt buildings and schools as well as colleges. To jump start activity management has instructed every wing to provide trees to Govt institutions and schools. Provision of free saplings to schools will build a sense of responsibility among students and also add to tree cover. CDA has been actively pursuing plans and activities to make Islamabad more beautiful and green. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi offering Fatiha for the Pakistani origin victims of the terrorist attack in London, Ontario, Canada, at the residence of their family. DNA

**Cotton sowing targets completed over 1.96 million hectares**

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhr Imam on Monday was told that cotton sowing had been completed over 1.96 million hectares as against the set targets of 2.32 million hectares. The minister chaired a meeting, which was held here in order to discuss cotton intervention price, besides taking stocks of current crop position, besides reviewing the input position, said a press release. The meeting was attended by senior officials of the Ministry of National Food Security and Research and representatives of all provincial ministries and allied departments. The meeting was appraised about the cotton cultivation across the potential areas of all four provinces and informed that Punjab had completed crop sowing over 1.35 million hectares as against the set target of 1.6 million hectares. Meanwhile, the Sindh province had completed its task on 0.533 million hectares out of its set targets of 0.64 million hectares during the current crop sowing season. The meeting was informed that cotton sowing so far had been completed over 1.96 million hectares of land as against the set target of 2.32 million hectares of land, adding that about 84 percent targets for current season had so far been achieved and figures would be expected to further increase during days to come. Representatives of the Agriculture Ministry of Sindh informed the meeting that due to the shortage of irrigation water during season cotton sowing remained less than its actual potential and stressed the need for taking measures to enhance area under cotton production.

**WASA officers to address water scarcity**

RAWALPINDI:

All available resources should be utilized to improve the performance of Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) besides accelerating the work on ongoing projects to address water scarcity. This was stated by Vice Chairman WASA/RDA Haroon Kamal Hashmi at a meeting of WASA officers held here on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by Managing Director (MD) WASA Raja Shaikat Mehmood, Deputy Managing Director Muhammad Saleem Ashraf, Directors, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors of WASA. Briefing on the occasion, Raja Shaikat Mehmood said that WASA was supplying water to its customers from three sources including Rawal Dam, Khanpur Dam and 460 tube wells. Nearly 54 million gallons per day water is being supplied to the citizens against the demand of 68 million gallons. - APP

**Govt to face Rs 50 billion loss by abolishing FED**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's steel industry strongly protests moving the steel sector from the FED to GST sales tax regime and warns the PTI government that this will have disastrous consequences for the industry and economy. "The government will have to bear a revenue decrease of PKR 50 Billion per annum as loss on sales tax by this move. There has been no stakeholder consultation by the government and there remains no incentive to remain in the tax net after such a rash move by the government." Meanwhile, steel units in the FATA / PATA areas enjoyed various tax incentives, the entire thought behind levying FED in GST mode on the steel industry was to ensure that output sales tax would be levied on units located

in FATA / PATA. This was a necessity because the government is unable to restrict the tax exempt goods within the FATA / PATA area, creating unfair competition, price distortion and undercutting of the formal and documented industry players. As such, there was massive abuse of the law that allowed large quantities of tax-exempt goods to creep into markets across the country. The industry raised hue and cry over such foul practice and the FBR responded over the past 12 months to tighten administrative control and restrict the abuse of law to enable a level playing field in the industry. However, with tightening administrative control, the steel sector in FATA/PATA moved their political muscle to get an outright exemption of sales tax by removing the entire sector from the FED mode in the recent budget

announcement on June 11, 2021. All stakeholders including the PTI government, FBR and industry know that the government does not have the capacity to restrict tax exempt goods to the tribal areas as per law. In essence, by removing the steel sector from FED mode, the PTI government is creating an imbalance in the sector that will allow undocumented players to flourish at the expense of those that are paying full taxes, complying with quality standards and working towards enabling the Naya Pakistan Housing Scheme, infrastructure and housing projects. Moreover, "The current installed capacity in FATA has almost reached 1 million tons per annum whereas the consumption cannot be more than 180,000 tons per annum as per the population (approximately 5 Million) and national per capita consumption (35 Kgs) of the area.

**NATO committed to future stability of Afghanistan**

Educationist and women's rights activist from Afghanistan Ms. Deeda Shakeb Azami expressed her concern about the human rights situation in Afghanistan and its future prospects, especially the rights of women

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Pierluigi Barberini, Security and Defence Analyst at the Rome-based Centro Studi Internazionali (Ce.S.I.), stated that NATO was committed to the future stability of Afghanistan despite troop withdrawal. He was speaking at a webinar titled "Future of Afghanistan: Challenges and Prospects" jointly organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) and Ce.S.I. here on Tuesday. Barberini shared that there were four main dimensions to future NATO engagement in Afghanistan. First, NATO will continue to financially support the Afghan National Army (ANA) through the ANA Trust

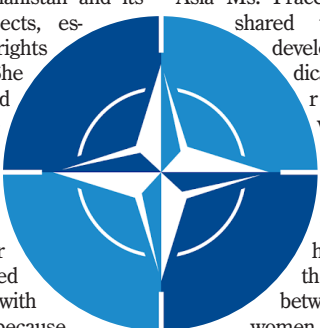
Fund established in 2007. He added that the NATO financial commitment was in addition to the US commitment to the separate Afghanistan National Security Fund, which will contribute \$3.3 billion annually to the ANA. Second, NATO will continue to provide training to the Afghan security forces, especially to small groups of Afghan Special Forces in various European locations. Third, NATO will continue to support Afghanistan from the civilian perspective. Fourth, NATO will continue to provide protection of critical infrastructure, such as the Kabul airport. He added that this made the role of the US and Turkey essential, since the two armies were responsible for securing the airport.

Educationist and women's rights activist from Afghanistan Ms. Deeda Shakeb Azami expressed her concern about the human rights situation in Afghanistan and its future prospects, especially the rights of women. She maintained that urban Afghan women were fearing the protection of their rights after a negotiated settlement with the Taliban because women were not allowed to go to school and work under Taliban rule in Afghanistan in the past. She emphasized that the refusal of the Taliban

to discuss the future of women in Afghanistan was compounding the fears of Afghan women. Ce.S.I.'s Senior Analyst for Asia Ms. Francesca Manenti shared that human development indicators (HDI) remained very low for Afghanistan. She further emphasized that not only highlighted the differences between men and women in Afghanistan in terms of access to basic facilities. She added that Afghanistan still had a long way to go to ensure an equitable situation for the vulner-

able segments of the society, especially women. She urged taking a non-traditional security approach to the ongoing dialogue with the Taliban, which, she argued could bind the Taliban to certain human rights commitments for the future of Afghanistan. Founder of the Islamabad-based not-for-profit organization CODE PAKISTAN Mr Dilawar Khan stated that repatriation of Afghan refugees was the top preference for Pakistan but the numbers of refugees repatriating were quickly declining. Sharing data about the Afghan refugees in Pakistan, he highlighted the role played by Pakistan in hosting such a large concentration of refugees for such a long time. He shared

that several Afghan refugees who were born and raised in Pakistan associated more with Pakistan than Afghanistan, which was an inhibiting factor when it came to their repatriation. He added that safety concerns of the refugees remained the primary factor in the refugees' decision to repatriate to Afghanistan. Gabriele Iacovino, Director C.e.S.I. who was moderating the discussion, said that stability in Afghanistan was important not only for the region but the whole world. Earlier, in his welcome remarks, President IRS Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz highlighted the importance of peace and stability in Afghanistan for the future peace and prosperity of the entire region.





## Briefs

## Islamabad reports lowest daily cases

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Tuesday reported only 31 new coronavirus cases in the federal capital during the last 24 hours, making it the lowest single-day tally in six months.

With the new cases, the total number of infections in the federal capital reached 82,170 of which 79,853 people of all those infected have recovered so far, according to the official data by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC).

As per NCOC data, as many as 40 cases were reported on Monday while 34 cases were reported on Sunday. The virus positivity rate in the country dropped to 2.6 percent on June 13.

The single-day fatalities from the virus have also declined in the past few weeks, with only one death reported over the past 24 hours of the lowest level in six months as the city documented 773 deaths so far. According to an official of the Ministry of National Health Services, the government decided to relax several COVID-19 restrictions, opening schools, restaurants and gyms, after witnessing a significant decline in corona virus cases since early June.

## Good budget presented despite IMF hanging sword: PEW

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Tuesday said the government has discounted the hanging sword of IMF to present a budget that is good for the economy and majority of the population. The government should extend the construction package for one year to improve the economic situation while more taxes should be slapped on tobacco, luxuries, and sugary drinks to use this more for ensuring water security and combat climate change, it said.

Six million shopkeepers are doing business worth trillions of rupees therefore they should be brought into the tax net to increase direct taxation, reduce indirect taxation, and ease dependence on loans, said Chairman Pakistan Economy Watch Brig. (ret'd) Aslam Khan.

In a statement issued here today, he said that reversing taxes on mobile calls, SMS and internet packages is a laudable move as people are now more dependent on these services. Aslam Khan said that taxes should be increased on luxuries and the income should be used to improve climate and ensure water security as climate change is inflicting a minimum loss of Rs1500 billion on the economy per annum but this sector is yet to get the attention of policymakers which can be judged by a little allocation in the budget.

## SPARC celebrates Day against Child Labour

ISLAMABAD: Society for Protection of Rights of the Child (SPARC) celebrated World Day against Child Labour in collaboration with Save the Children.

SPARC held awareness rally, to highlight the problem of child labour and to find ways to eliminate it. Large number of students and trainers from the skill centers established by SPARC participated in the rally.

Childhood is the best period of one's life but it is unfortunate for the children that, despite the ban on child labour, imposed by the government, the practice is still prevalent in our society.

At the event, participants raised banners and placards and intoned slogans to raise their voices against social evil - child labour, condemning child labour. They also had placards about the harmful mental and physical problems faced by children forced into child labour.

## Absolute powers to ITOs to harm business activity

Chairman, Islamabad Founder Group, while referring to the budget presented by the government, said that the government budget is in the interest of the business community but banks should also issue loans to the small sections

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: United Business Group President Zubair Tufail has said that the current budget empowering the Income Tax Officer (ITO) to arrest the taxpayer would not help in promoting healthy commercial and industrial activities in the country. And the trend of investment in the country will end, which is not in the interest of the country.

He expressed these views while addressing a dinner hosted by former FPCCI Vice President Atif Ikram last night in honor of newly elected President of United Business Group Zubair Tufail and Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari. He appreciated the services of the Presidents of the Islamabad Chamber and said that the Islamabad Chamber has always stood by the leadership of UBG.

UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari in his address said that the new leadership under the patronage of SM Munir and Itikhar Ali Malik has become dynamic and active under the leadership of Zubair Tufail and added that he has been serving the traders for last forty years. He is continuing his activities on the mission and Insha'Allah he



has started activities to mobilize and activate the UBG leadership across the country in the future. After Islamabad and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he will visit Karachi and Sindh for a week. Are leaving for a visit. Mian Akram Farid, Chairman, Islamabad Founder Group, while referring to the budget presented by the government, said that the gov-

ernment budget is in the interest of the business community but banks should also issue loans to the small sections. A similar package should be given to the industry and traders. Former FPCCI President Abdul Rauf Alam said that the business community of the federal capital is with UBG in the Federation elections and will be successful in the

next elections.

Commenting on the budget, Ghazanfar Bilour, former president of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, said that customs officials should focus their effective strategy on the border instead of closing shops and providing relief to traders instead of disturbing them, should do.

Expressing his views, FPCCI Vice President Arif Yousuf Jiwa said that we will work with Zubair Tufail and Zafar Bakhtawari to make UBG stronger and more organized.

Expressing his views, newly elected FPCCI Vice President Nasir Qureshi said that UBG was working to solve the problems of traders and industrialists. In the days to come, this group will move the country towards prosperity by solving the problems of the business community.

Rawalpindi Chamber Group Leader Sohail Altaf said on the occasion that the new powers being given to the FBR and customs officials in the current budget would lead to economic and financial crisis in the country.

Former President of Islamabad Chamber Tariq Sadiq said that Islamabad Chamber is working with other chambers to solve the problems of Pakistan's business community. He said that turnover tax of flour mill is increased from 0.5 to 1.5. Which will make flour and other necessities more expensive.

Former FPCCI Vice President Atif Ikram appreciated the services of Zubair Tufail and Zafar Bakhtawari and thanked all the participants. Malik Sohail Hussain and Arham Akram also addressed the dinner.

## NTDC for uplifting of Grid Stations

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: National Transmission and Despatch Company (NTDC) has signed three agreements with M/s. Siemens for extension/ augmentation works at its different 220 kV grid stations in KPK, Punjab and Sindh with an estimated cost of Rs.4.06 billion funded by the World Bank.

A contract signing ceremony was held in Lahore, wherein MD NTDC Engr. Muhammad Ayub and Managing Director Siemens (Pakistan) Mr. Markus Strohmeier signed the agreements, said a press release.

While speaking on the occasion MD NTDC said that NTDC is committed to enhancing and upgrading its transmission network across the country.

The contracts have been signed with Siemens for design, supply and augmentation works of 220kV Samundari Road and 220kV Gakkhar Grid Station (Punjab) along with extension work at 220kV Daud Khel Grid Station and augmentation work at 220kV Bannu Grid Station (KPK).

Whereas, design, supply and installation of extension works at 220kV Rohri Grid Station and augmentation works will also be carried out at 220 kV Grid station Dharki (Sindh) and 220 kV Bahawalpur Grid station.

Engr. Muhammad Ayub appreciated the quality work carried out earlier by Siemens with NTDC and especially at GIS University Grid station Islamabad and said that the augmentation and extension works will improve the voltage profile and provide better supply to the consumers and will also strengthen the NTDC network.

## IPS, UMT sign MoU to bolster joint research

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad and University of Management & Technology (UMT), Lahore to foster joint efforts in the areas of research, dialogue and publications on policy related affairs; especially IPS' hallmark Understanding Africa program. The signing ceremony, which was held via video link, was attended by Ambassador (r) Tajammul Altaf, senior IPS associate, Naufal Shahruckh, GM Operations, IPS, Dr. Mohammad Shoaib Pervaiz, HoD department of political science and IR, UMT Lahore, Dr. Abee-da Qureshi, assistant professor, department of political science and IR, UMT Lahore, Shafaq Sarfarz, manager outreach IPS, and Kulsom Belal, research officer at IPS.

Speaking on the occasion, Shahruckh said that having strong linkages with strategic institutions and policy circles, IPS can serve as a conduit facilitating researchers from UMT to carry out research in a bid to promote policy-oriented research through Pakistani lenses on topics which have meaningful contribution in the policy arena.

## Govt committed to uplift standard of citizens

ISLAMABAD: Senator Faisal Javed on Tuesday said that fiscal budget 2021-22 budget was a poor friendly and the government was committed to uplift the living standard of common man.

Talking to a news channel, he said that there was no new tax imposed on common people and subsidies of billions of rupees announced for them.

It was the need of the hour to educate and train the youth at the international labour market standard to reduce the pressure of unemployment, he said, adding that in that regard various projects had been launched at local level.

To a question, he said that Prime Minister Imran Khan had stressed at national forums to facilitate maximum low income segments of the society for development of the state.

MNA Shahida Rehmani pointed out that the fiscal budget would promote tourism industry. She said that the development of tourism sector would create jobs and provide opportunities to the local for lucrative business. - APP



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi being briefed about the role of Wafaqi Mohtasib, at Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat. - DNA

## Academia-industry linkages crucial for national needs

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan during his visit to National University of Science and Technology (NUST) on Tuesday acknowledged its landmark research and development initiatives and called for strengthening industry-academia linkages for meeting national needs.

He was heading a high-level delegation from the commission to observe the progress of some of the flagship projects of NUST. Speaking during his visit, he said many developed economies globally owe their development paradigm to their higher education institutions that have emerged as economic nerve centres through knowledge creation, disruptive innovation and culture of enterprise.

The precedent NUST has set vis-a-vis promotion of quality higher education and cutting-edge research, in conformance with social and in-

dustrial needs, is a yardstick for universities across Pakistan if we are to put the country on the path of economic prosperity, he said.

Eulogising the university for its coveted standing in the global academia and trailblazing initiatives, such as the establishment of the country's first Science and Technology park, the National Science and Technology Park and Innovative Health Technologies (the facility for indigenous production of cardiac stents and life-supporting medical devices), he emphasised the need to reinforce the country's exports by drawing upon technologies and products being developed at universities like NUST, particularly in the fields of Electronics, Agriculture, Automobiles, etc. He also underlined the significance of enhancing the budget for Research and Development, and, at the same time, stressed the need for building strong academia-industry linkages in order to meet current and impending national needs.

## Ehsaas scholarships worth Rs6.53 bln awarded

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A total of 69,130 Ehsaas scholarships worth Rs6.53 billion are being awarded including 51 percent scholarships to girls and four percent to minorities in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-22. The need cum merit based Ehsaas scholarship covers 100 percent tuition fee and a living stipend.

According to the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Sania Nishtar, "Ehsaas is fully determined that no deserving student gets deprived of higher education." She emphasized to ensure that programme holistically benefits girls, minorities, students as well as those from disadvantaged areas who applied for scholarship.

She said Higher Education Commission (HEC) has also been urged to expedite and complete the payment process to universities and students before June 30, 2021.

## Govt urged to restore IT on turnover of flour mills

He urged the Shaukat Tareen to revisit increase in income tax rate for flour mills and the imposition of sales tax on bran

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Tuesday urged the government to restore 0.25 percent income tax on the turnover of flour mills in order to provide relief to general public and providing them flour on affordable prices across the country.

Addressing a meeting of the business community Vice President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Abdul Rehman Khan said that the government in current budget has proposed to increase the income tax rate on the turnover of flour mills from 0.25 to 1.25 percent, which would increase flour price. Therefore, he urged the government to withdraw the increase in income tax rate in turnover of flour mills to save the general public from inflation, said

a press release. Former Senior Vice Presidents ICCI Khalid Chaudhry, Naveed Malik, former Executive Member ICCI Chaudhry Mazhar and others were also present in the meeting. Abdul Rehman Khan said



that the sales tax on bran was abolished four years ago which was welcomed by the flour millers but in the current budget a sales tax of 17 percent has been imposed on bran which will also give rise to inflation. "Flour is a basic need of the people and the high cost of flour has a direct

impact on the life of the common man," he added. He urged the Finance Minister Shaukat Tareen to revisit increase in income tax rate for flour mills and the imposition of sales tax on bran in the budget to reduce the price of flour and provided relief to common man.

The ICCI Vice President further urged the government to ensure availability of wheat in market for keeping demand, supply at smooth level and providing flour on sustainable prices in local markets. He also urged the government to focus on controlling the hoarding of the commodity, besides making movement of wheat loaded trucks smooth to maintain local wheat and flour prices.

He urged the government to restore the income tax rate on the turnover of flour mills to 0.25 percent and also withdraw 17 percent sales tax on bran.

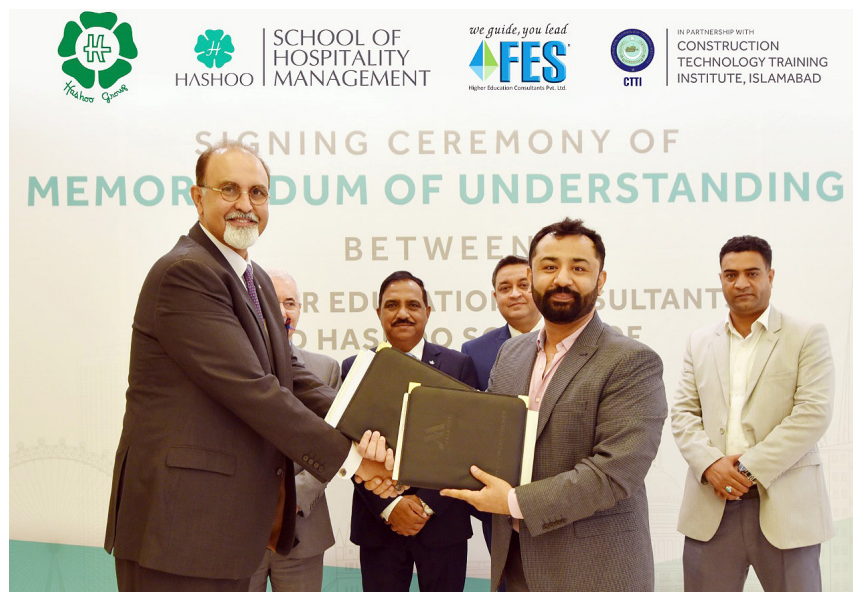
## HSHM joins hands with FES Higher Education Consultants

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Hashoo School of Hospitality Management (HSHM) has collaborated with FES Higher Education Consultants to promote its premium hospitality school in Pakistan.

In this connection, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Mr. Haseeb Gardezi, Chief Operating Officer Hashoo Group Hospitality and Education Division, and Mr. Syed Tehsin Shah, Chief Executive Officer of FES Higher Education Consultants in Islamabad Marriott Hotel. HSHM is Pakistan's first premier hospitality and tourism management school in collaboration with Sheffield Hallam University, UK, and in partnership with Construction Technology Training Institute (CTTI). HSHM's first campus is located on IJP Road Islamabad, and is now accepting admissions for fall semester 2021.

FES Higher Education Consultants is a leading consultancy firm providing educational guidance and consultancy services



to students wishing to study abroad. FES has offices across Pakistan and in the

UAE, UK, and Malaysia. Speaking at the ceremony Mr. Haseeb

Gardezi said "Students upon their graduation from HSHM will be offered confirmed job placements at Hashoo Group hotels. Hashoo Group owns and operates the largest chain of hotels in Pakistan and are expanding aggressively. There will be a huge demand of specialized hospitality professionals in Pakistan, and we will prefer graduates from our own school".

After having studied for two years at HSHM, qualifying students will have the option to study the third academic year at Sheffield Hallam University in the UK to complete their BSc Hons degree.

This is a golden opportunity for students who want to save a substantial cost while obtaining an international hospitality degree that is recognised worldwide along with landing a confirmed job as soon as they graduate.



## Middle East's plight

THE Middle East is geopolitically and economically perhaps the most important region of the world, home to much of the globe's energy supplies, and also one of its most unstable areas. In the postcolonial era it has hardly seen peace, with one war after the other shattering any chance of normality. Much of these disturbances are due to the involvement of the erstwhile colonisers, such as the UK or France, or of new 'empires', such as the US, the world's sole superpower, or its regional clients, namely Israel. Moreover, a lack of representative rule in most states has created a dystopian situation, with the region's people craving political and social freedom. Much of this ferment gave way to 2011's Arab Spring, though the people's desire for democracy was quickly snuffed out by the anciens régimes, in many cases backed by the self-declared champions of democracy in the West.

Perhaps the sorry plight of the people of the Middle East, particularly the Arabs, was best illustrated by the merciless pounding of Gaza by Israel last month, when Tel Aviv unleashed its brute force against the defenceless Palestinians in full view of a global audience. This sad spectacle has become a recurring nightmare for the Palestinians, with few states having the courage to confront Israel for its brazen crimes. While Benjamin Netanyahu, who oversaw the recent butchery in Gaza, was sent packing on Sunday due to internal tumult in Israeli politics, will Naftali Bennett, his successor as prime minister, prove to be a peacemaker? One should not bet on it; after all the American-origin Mr Bennett is a major advocate of illegal settlements, alongside being a hawk where the Palestinians are concerned.

The fact is that unless Israel's patrons in the West, as well as its newfound friends in the Arab world, put pressure on the Zionist state to stop indulging in the mass murder of Palestinians every few years, there will be little chance of reviving the long-dead Arab-Israeli peace process. And unless the Palestinian question is resolved judiciously, the cycle of violence will continue indefinitely. Israel must also be reined in and prevented from violating the sovereignty of regional states such as Syria and Lebanon, where Tel Aviv feels it has to target Iranian forces and their proxies. However, such foolhardy behaviour on the part of Israel can spark a much bigger confrontation, which is why the international community must keep an eye on Tel Aviv's trigger-happy activities and prevent it from spoiling regional peace. Apart from restraining Israel, the states of the Middle East should themselves agree to respect each other's sovereignty and prevent outsiders from meddling in the region's affairs. Saudi Arabia and Iran can lead this effort, which could help stabilise Iraq, Yemen, Syria and Lebanon, where both sides have been indulging in proxy conflicts.

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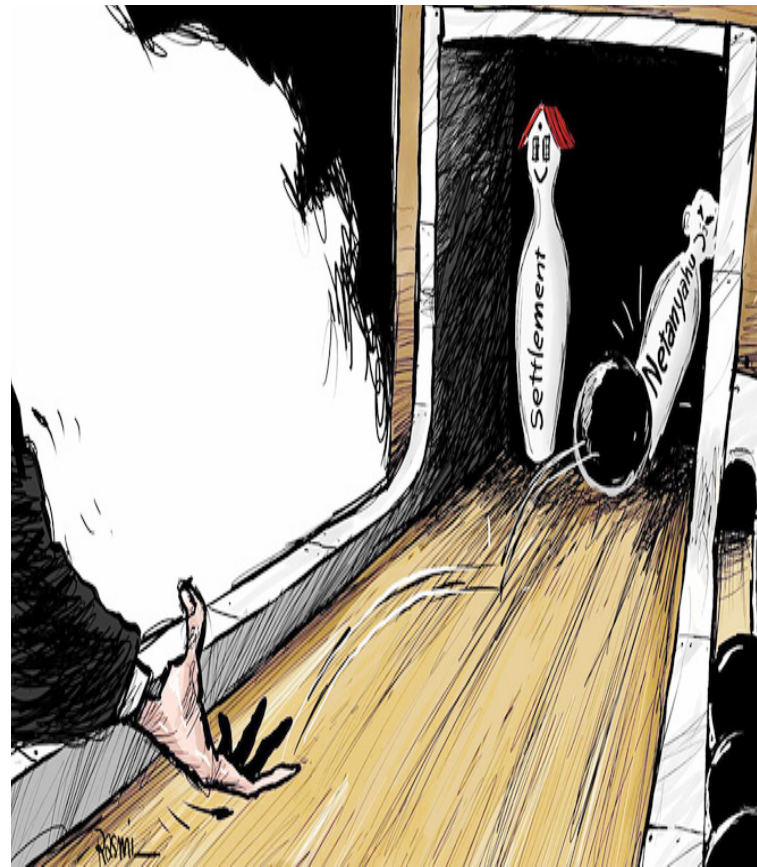
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## Cinema 'industry'?

THE vast gap that often exists between the state's intentions and its actual efficiency was evident in the third Pakistan International Film Festival, held over the weekend at Karachi's Frere Hall. Arranged by the Karachi Film Society, the festival was tag-lined 'Women's Edition, 2021' as befits contemporary discourse.

A pity, then, that since all the films to be screened date from pre-Covid days, they rather disingenuously had little to offer with regard to either focusing on women beyond the usual, or contributing to the debate on women's empowerment in its current iteration. Further, somewhat bizarrely, none of the screenings scheduled were held at all, reportedly because of Covid protocols. What did take place were panel and general discussions – lofty speeches comprising mainly rhetoric. Senator Faisal Javed, for example, said in the inaugural speech that the prime minister has approved an entertainment and film policy that is "soon to be launched".

He raised the facts that finances, and the low number of cinema houses, are amongst the hurdles but did not explain any government plan.

He pointed out that Pakistan has no dearth of talent; again, though, there were no specifics – such as, theoretically, setting up film departments in major educational institutions, or a specialised film academy focusing on the academic and practical aspects of the discipline.

Yet the matters discussed did contain kernels of hard truths that need reflection. In addition to investment, training, and screening capacity, what the industry needs first, as the senator mentioned, is for it to be treated as precisely this, and therefore be made the recipient of incentives and facilities that are offered to other industry sectors on the state's priority list. Similarly, rules to ensure royalties were mentioned – a long-time demand of industry professionals, as yet largely unmet. The potential is there, but harnessing and jump-starting it will require a multipronged, cohesive effort.

Till the state is prepared to put in this effort, perhaps it would be better if the rhetoric were kept to the minimum.

# No, America should not 'accept and move on'

Patrick Gathara



Something disturbingly similar coming from the US media in its insistence that the conduct of the election must not be queried. Those who raise issue with the conduct of the poll, even when they are politicians who opted to certify result, are easily accused of fanning the "Big Lie" about electoral fraud that led to violence

THE 2020 election may not have been fraudulent, but the fact that millions of Americans think it was requires action. "Accept and move on" is a phrase that rears its head every time Kenya has elections. It is an ugly, dismissive phrase that tells people that regardless of the problems they may have with the officially declared outcome of an election, they should just suck it up and carry on. For a country that has always been deathly afraid of elections and the chaos and violence they bring, the legitimacy of polls has always played second fiddle to the impetus to maintain the peace and not rock the boat too much.

Today, I'm hearing something disturbingly similar coming from the US media in its insistence that the conduct of the election must not be queried. Those who raise issue with the conduct of the poll, even when they are politicians who opted to certify the result, are easily accused of fanning the "Big Lie" about electoral fraud that led to violence. It is all too reminiscent of how Kenyan media shut down dissent in the aftermath of the last two elections.

Of course, there are crucial differences. Where in Kenya, it was the opposition claiming fraud by the government in favour of one candidate, in the US it was the incumbent president making claims that were refuted even by his own officials. His claims of rigging have been thrown out of dozens of courts, undermining their credibility, while in Kenya's case, only the Supreme Court has jurisdiction to hear a dispute over the presidential election.

Yet two similarities stand out: the fact that millions of people believe the election was stolen, and that this presents an escalating probability of violence. This is not how election systems

are supposed to work. The goal should be to deliver not just truth, that is they should be free and fair, but also legitimacy, that is they should leave people, especially those on the losing side, convinced that they were free and fair. When a significant portion of the electorate is convinced elections have been stolen, however kooky one may think that belief is, then to that extent, the system has failed and there should be a serious effort undertaken to address the failure.

However, this is not the narrative coming out of the US. One common argument is that the people claiming fraud are bad faith actors who have essentially managed to convince hordes of gullible and stupid folks into regurgitating a bunch of lies. There is thus no convincing these people with facts and argument and therefore little point in trying. Yet, when one has to share a country and institutions with "these" people and their increasing alienation can lead to violence, simply writing them off is not an option. For those interested in preserving future peace, regaining the trust of the disaffected must be a priority.

In Kenya, in the aftermath of the 2007 elections, there was a recognition that the problems could not be resolved merely by technical fixes to the election – though these are indispensable. The distrust was rooted in historical grievances that were inflamed by opaque election practices. Commissions were established to inquire into these and develop recommendations. However, once the crisis passed, the momentum for change was lost and many of those reports and recommendations are gathering dust while elections continue to be arenas of terror and death. There's a lesson here for the US. Strike while the iron is hot. Fix the real kinks in the system

– gerrymandering, voter suppression, and partisan management of elections, to name a few. However, also recognise that disputes over the outcome and conduct of the election are rarely only about the actual numbers, but also about deeper societal fractures that need to be healed, and that opportunities to do that do not last for very long. By all accounts, the US has a deeply polarised population. "We live in two universes. One universe is a lie... The other universe is where we are, and that's where reality reigns supreme and we deal with it. And seldom do these two universes ever overlap," as Rush Limbaugh, the rightwing radio talk show host, declared more than a decade ago. Things have worsened considerably since then. These divisions are now inflamed by an antiquated, gerrymandered, opaque electoral system overseen by partisan officials that has proven to be no match for demagoguery. That should give US media pause for thought. In effect, the US electoral system has suffered an attack from Trump and his allies and has proven to be very vulnerable. In the aftermath of that attack, telling the victims to simply accept that Joe Biden won and move on will do little to calm resentment. It also spurns a crucial opportunity to audit the vulnerability as well as foster a comprehensive national conversation about what ails society. And that goes beyond simply rebutting allegations of fraud. It requires asking the same questions that would be asked when other national systems failed and then instituting the necessary reforms to make the system more resilient.

The Writer is a Communications consultant, writer, and award-winning political cartoonist based in Nairobi.

# UK police for Muslim mental health a terrorism flag

Hilary Aked



As a pre-crime programme, referrals to Prevent are made on the basis of suspicion and speculation alone. Yet police refuse to see these statistics for what they almost certainly reflect: widespread Islamophobia which associates Muslims with terrorism, combined with a longstanding stigma that portrays people with mental health problems as dangerous

THE perception and representation of Muslims as a "suspect community" when it comes to national security and counterterrorism in the United Kingdom is well-established. But a more recent turn within these operations towards mental health is creating new, dangerous practices.

Last month, Medact released a report in which it exposed a mental health project run by UK counterterrorism police called "Vulnerability Support Hubs". Despite the name, these hubs are not about care. Instead, they enable police to surveil, manage perceived risk, and access confidential health information more easily.

The hubs were established in 2016 because police noticed that approximately half of the people reported to its counter-extremism programme, Prevent, appeared to have a mental health condition. Racialised groups, especially Muslims, are also referred at a grossly disproportionate rate.

As a pre-crime programme, referrals to Prevent are made on the basis of suspicion and speculation alone. Yet police refuse to see these statistics for what they almost certainly reflect: widespread Islamophobia which associates Muslims with terrorism, combined with a longstanding stigma that portrays people with mental health problems as dangerous. Instead, police interpreted these statistics as supporting evidence of a presumed – but never robustly evidenced – link between poor mental health and terrorism. Not just anyone with poor mental health is suspect, however. Muslims with mental health problems, in particular, fall under the scrutiny of this programme.

This means that these so-called "Vulnerability Support Hubs" – which operated in near-total secrecy for five years – may be harming people with genuine mental health conditions, and criminalising, or rendering suspect, poor mental health among Muslims.

This happens because, at the hubs, people who have been referred to Prevent and are suspected of having a mental health condition are assessed by NHS mental health professionals embedded within counterterrorism units. These assessments often appear to happen alongside police or Prevent officers: security personnel whose presence alone may impact clinical diagnosis and the therapeutic encounter.

On top of this, the hubs provide a vehicle through which counterterrorism police can influence mental healthcare providers who are already treating patients. Risk assessments are a standard part of psychiatrists' duties, but Prevent's pre-crime approach brings vague and racialised factors into play.

For example, one case study in the report details how police sought to "secure admission and prevent discharge" of a man experiencing psychosis who had previously been receiving home treatment, on the basis of "unacceptable unknowns". In two other cases, police listed conversion to Islam as a relevant concern.

A perhaps even more disturbing possibility is that these "Vulnerability Support Hubs" may be pathologising Muslim political agency and dissent. Many of the people assessed by the hubs do not have diagnosable mental illnesses and are therefore deemed "unsuitable for mainstream services". But the hubs operate with such broad definitions of "mental health", "complex needs" and "behavioural and emotional difficulties" that – in contrast to mainstream mental health services – their thresholds are extremely low.

This becomes worrying when considering the potential for medicine to be misused as a tool for social control. In the Soviet Union, political dissidents were labelled as suffering from "sluggish schizophrenia" and often incarcerated for long periods.

Such systematic abuse of psychiatry was the

reason codes of ethics were developed for the profession.

Documents obtained via Freedom of Information requests on which we based our report suggest that mental health practitioners may be engaging in what is effectively "deradicalisation" – a practice well beyond their healthcare remit. Especially given the dubious scientific validity and efficacy of such concepts and practices, the Royal College of Psychiatrists' warning that so-called radicalisation is "not a mental illness" should be heeded.

The hubs raise a host of other serious ethical concerns that epitomise wider problems with the Prevent policy in healthcare and beyond. They pose questions about potential coercion and the apparent use of medicine as a security device to enforce cooperation with the police deradicalisation scheme Channel.

They highlight the neoliberal state's withdrawal from adequately funding mental healthcare at the very same time that invasive surveillance is stepped up. They underline just how deeply racism is institutionalised, why we should not be surprised that racialised minorities distrust healthcare services, and why racialised health inequalities will only deepen with time – unless policies like Prevent and the hostile environment are dismantled.

Despite the lack of an independent evaluation, "Vulnerability Support Hubs" are currently being rolled out nationwide under what police call "Project Cicero".

Having previously only operated in England and Wales, they were recently introduced in Scotland too.

Since the UK is a leading exporter of innovations in the field of counter extremism, the hubs may well augur a troubling direction for counterterrorism policing and pre-crime policing across the world.

The writer is a UK-based writer and investigative researcher.



## Briefs

## Wells joins Zalmi, Zahoor replaces Russell

SPORTS DESK

ABU DHABI: Peshawar Zalmi has roped in Australia's batsman Jonathan Wells while UAE fast bowler Zahoor Khan has been drafted in the Quetta Gladiators squad in place of West Indian all-rounder Andre Russell. Zalmi's trio of David Miller, Fabian Allen and Fidel Edwards' left as they will be joining their teams ahead of the West Indies-South Africa T20I series. Zalmi have added Afghanistan's Hazratullah Zazai with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Sameen Gul and Khalid Usman as reserve players in their squad while Zalmi all-rounder Imran Randhawa would not be travelling to Abu Dhabi due to visa delay.

## Saudi FM to visit Pak next month

FROM PAGE 01

his talks with Pakistan leaders would review ties between the two countries, and the situation in the Middle East including Yemen and Palestine and in the region would also be discussed. There would follow up discussion on the agreement reached on various issues between the leadership of two countries last month. Sources said during the visit dates of the visit by Saudi crown prince Prince Muhammad Bin Salman would also finalised. Prime Minister Imran Khan had invited the crown prince to visit Pakistan during his visit to kingdom last month.

## NCOC consider to open more...

FROM PAGE 01

Furthermore, a National Cable Policy was approved, under which digitalisation of cable till take place which will improve the quality of transmission and provide access to more television channels. Chaudhry said the government will also give cable operators the right to purchase content. The cabinet approved appointments of community welfare attache's in seven countries. "On the complaints of overseas Pakistanis, two officers of Pakistani embassy in Saudi Arabia have been called back," the publication reported. The use of Electronic Voting Machines under the electoral reforms was also discussed. He said that the Election Commission of Pakistan was given a presentation on the EVMs. "The EVMs have been developed as per the aspiration of the election commission," he said. Chaudhry added: "It is our desire that the next by-elections be conducted using these electronic voting machines."

## Government promoting..

FROM PAGE 01

Makhdoom Khuro Bakhtiar and Ali Haider Zaidi; Advisor on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood; PM's special assistants Dr Waqar Masood and Dr Moeed Yusuf; CPEC Authority Chairman Lt Gen (ret'd) Asim Saleem Bajwa and senior officers concerned were present in the meeting, which was also attended through video-link by State Bank Governor Reza Baqir. The meeting was told that with the complete redressal of visa issues for Chinese officials coming to Pakistan under CPEC, the Ministry of Interior was disposing of the new cases on daily basis, which was positively impacting the pace of CPEC.

The Board of Investment (BOI) briefed the meeting in detail about the comprehensive strategy for the establishment of export industries in the SEZs. The meeting was apprised of the identification of possible foreign investors from China in different sectors and the incentives being offered to them for direct investment in Pakistan. It was told about the establishment of mobile assembly units by three big international mobile companies in Pakistan as well as their domestic consumption and the positive effects on exports.

## Quetta Gladiators defend 159 against Lahore Qalandars

Khurram Shehzad also struck in his first over as Zeeshan Ashraf was caught behind for 16. Everything was going right for Quetta as Mohammad Nawaz removed his nemesis from previous season, Ben Dunk

SPORTS DESK

ABU DHABI: Quetta Gladiators stay alive in HBL PSL 6 with 18-run win over Lahore Qalandars on Tuesday. Chasing a target of 159, Qalandars suffered an early blow when Usman Shinwari dismissed their captain Sohail Akhtar in the first over. Gladiators continued to exert pressure as Mohammad Hasnain clean bowled Fakhar Zaman for 12. Mohammad Hafeez tried to play a leg glance to Shinwari but could only find a leading edge to a slower ball, which went straight into the hands of Azam Khan, thereby reducing Quetta to 27-3. Khurram Shehzad also struck in his first over as Zeeshan Ashraf was caught behind for 16. Everything was going right for Quetta as Mohammad Nawaz removed his nemesis from previous season, Ben Dunk, early with a ball that turned back sharply and

crashed into the stumps. Nawaz kept bowling straight and reaped dividends as Rashid Khan missed a straight one and was clean bowled for 8. Shehzad picked his second wicket as he dismissed Ahmed Daniyal for 3. As wickets kept falling at the other end, Tim David kept the scoreboard moving for Qalandars through his blistering knock. David was sprinting towards the target, but couldn't take Qalandars over the line as he was caught behind for 46 on the final ball of Shinwari's spell. Earlier, Lahore Qalandars restricted Quetta Gladiators to 158-5 after winning the toss and opting to field first. James Faulkner struck in his first over for Qalandars again as Quetta opener Usman Khan found the only fielder on the fence on the off side and was caught for a duck. Jake Weatherald was initially cautious after losing his opening partner early, but upped the ante in the final over of power

play as he scored 16 runs in Faulkner's third over. The end of powerplay didn't slow down Weatherald as he smashed Harris Rauf for a couple of boundaries. Rashid Khan worked his magic in his first over as Cameron Delport was beaten all ends up and departed after scoring 10. Mohammad Hafeez continued his dominance over left-handers as he brought an end to Weatherald's 48-run knock. Azam Khan made his intentions clear as he smashed Harris Rauf for 18 runs in an over. Azam sprinted to 33 but mistimed a slow delivery from Faulkner straight to Fakhar Zaman. Faulkner finished with his third three-wicket haul in his fourth PSL game as he removed Mohammad Nawaz through a caught and bowled. Gladiators were banking on their captain to provide a strong finish and he responded with an unbeaten 34-run knock from 27 balls, to take his team to a competitive total.



## Zalmi's Amir ruled out of PSL 6

SPORTS DESK

ABU DHABI: Emerging pacer Mohammad Amir Khan, part of the Peshawar Zalmi squad, has been ruled out of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season six due to wrist fracture. The 19-year-old Amir received a blow on his left wrist during the practice session. After the X-ray confirmed the fracture, the doctors instructed him to rest. Amir is out of the bio-secure bubble now and he is being taken care of. It must be noted Peshawar Zalmi are scheduled to take on defending champions Karachi Kings at 11.00 pm.

## Worst ever rowdy scenes...

FROM PAGE 01

He criticised the government's budget, saying that it had failed to provide relief to the masses amid spiralling unemployment and inflation. Speaker Asad Qaiser kept interjecting, requesting lawmakers on the treasury benches to refrain from shouting while the leader of the Opposition spoke. However, no one listened and the Opposition leader continued, wearing headphones to drown out the noise. "They accuse us of generating 'useless power'. If that is the case, why are people suffering from loadshedding these days?" asked Shahbaz. Shahbaz said that during the government of his brother, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan had set up power plants across the country and ended the menace of loadshedding. He said the country was heading towards economic prosperity then, whereas now, everything was on the decline, even the per capita income. As Shahbaz spoke, tempers rose when the government and Opposition lawmakers came face-to-face. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Ali Nawaz Awan can be seen in a video clip, responding in kind to abusive language by a PML-N lawmaker.

A woman lawmaker tried to pull the PTI MNA away from the group of legislators who were shouting each other. He can be seen in the video, throwing a booklet at the PML-N leader and shouting angrily at him. Federal ministers Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Fawad Chaudhry were also seen standing by their seats. Another minister, Ali Amin Gandapur can be seen in another video clip exchanging words with Opposition lawmakers. After Awan's video went viral, the PTI leader posted a rebuttal on Twitter, sharing a video in which a few PML-N lawmakers can be heard chanting abusive slogans against the government.

## Army will continue defending..

FROM PAGE 01

Forum also reviewed progress on transition and uplift of the Newly Merged Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and socio-economic development in Balochistan as a dividend of hard-earned peace and stability. Reviewing the prevailing situation on Eastern Border and latest developments in IIOJ&K, forum expressed complete solidarity with Kashmiri people in their just struggle for the inalienable right to self-determination as enshrined in UNSC Resolutions. Forum was also apprised on Pakistan's meaningful support to Afghan Peace Process and stringent measures being taken for enhancing border security. COAS laid special emphasis on maintaining high standards of operational preparedness along the LOC / Working Boundary and Pak-Afghan International Border in the wake of evolving geo-strategic milieu. COAS appreciated high standard of training displayed by formations during various exercises besides excellent performance of officers and troops participating in international training events and competitions. COAS commended the formations for their constant focus on training and high state of morale which augments their operational readiness.



KABUL: Pakistan ambassador to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmed Khan calls on Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Mirwais Nab today and had constructive discussions for strengthening engagement for promoting bilateral cooperation in various fields. - DNA

## Activists get bail in Delhi riots case

FOREIGN DESK

NEW DELHI: A court in India has granted bail to three young activists arrested under a stringent terror law in connection with the deadly anti-Muslim riots that erupted in the capital New Delhi last year. The bail granted to them on Tuesday relates to a case in which the police alleged they were part of a "larger conspiracy" in the Delhi violence that followed protests against a controversial citizenship law passed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government in 2019. Devangana Kalita and Natasha Narwal, members of a feminist collective, and university student Asif Iqbal Tanha were arrested in May last year under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). First introduced in 1967 as an "anti-terror law", the UAPA allows detention of an accused person for up to 180 days without charges. The law has been made tougher in recent years after a number of amendments gave sweeping powers to law-enforcement agencies, triggering outrage by rights groups and international organisations. In its order granting the three activists bail, the Delhi High Court said the government should be careful of "the line between constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity". "It seems that in its anxiety to suppress dissent, in the mind of the state, the line between constitutionally guaranteed right to protest and terrorist activity seems to be getting somewhat blurred," the court said, according to Indian media reports. "If this mindset gains traction, it would be a sad day for democracy." The three activists were among dozens arrested for protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act, which fast-tracks Indian naturalisation for religious minorities - Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians - from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, but makes no reference to Muslims.

## UN urged to launch probe for Beirut blast

FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: A group of international and regional rights groups have urged the UN Human Rights Council to launch an investigative mission into last year's massive deadly blast at Beirut Port that killed 211 people. On Tuesday, HRW said the call was made in a joint letter by "53 Lebanese, regional, and international groups and individuals, as well as 62 survivors and families of the victims". HRW said it had documented many flaws in the domestic investigation of the explosion, including flagrant political interference, lack of respect for fair trial standards and violations of due process. Nearly 3,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate - a highly explosive material used in fertilisers - had been improperly stored at the port for years. The chemicals ignited in a catastrophic August blast that, in addition to the 211 killed, injured more than 6,000 people and damaged entire neighbourhoods.

## Boeing-Airbus trade row set to end after 17 years

FOREIGN DESK

BRUSSELS: The US and the EU have agreed a truce in a 17-year trade dispute over subsidies for Boeing and Airbus. Under the agreement, both sides will remove taxes on \$11.5bn (£8.2bn) of goods, including wine, cheese and tractors, for five years. Those tariffs, imposed by both sides as punishment in the escalating dispute, had already been suspended in March while they tried to resolve matters. In March the US suspended tariffs on UK imports arising from the dispute. US President Joe Biden had a summit with EU leaders on Tuesday, where he is trying to bolster support for his more assertive stance towards Russia and China, and move away from Trump-era trade rows. "I think we have great opportunities to work closely with the EU as well as NATO and we feel quite good about it," President Biden said. Airbus said it welcomed the truce, adding that the agree-

ment "will provide the basis to create a level-playing field which we have advocated for since the start of this dispute". "It will also avoid lose-lose tariffs that are only adding to the many challenges that our industry faces," the planemaker added. The dispute between the US and EU has escalated over many years, with both sides accusing the other of unfairly propping up their flagship planemakers. In 2019, the World Trade Organization ruled that the EU had illegally provided support to Airbus, clearing the way for the US to respond with tariffs worth up to \$7.5bn (£5.4bn) in annual trade. Roughly one year later, in a parallel case, it ruled that the US benefits to Boeing also violated trade rules, authorising the EU to hit the US with tariffs worth roughly \$4bn. Since then, both sides have taken steps to remove the assistance found at fault. The US and the EU have taken a much more conciliatory stance in the 17-year dispute since President

## Uzbekistan and UAE vow to expand cooperation

Minister Mohammed bin Abdullah al-Gergawi expressed his sincere gratitude for all possible assistance to the activities of Emirati investors in the republic, for the support and participation of Uzbekistan in the Dubai Expo 2021 World Exhibition

DNA

TASHKENT: President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev received a delegation from the United Arab Emirates headed by Minister of Government Affairs Mohammed bin Abdullah al-Gergawi. They discussed issues of further deepening the Uzbek-Emirati multifaceted relations and the development of practical interaction. The head of our state highly appreciated the current level of mutually beneficial and fruitful cooperation between the two countries, achieved through the implementation of agreements at the highest level. In turn, Mohammed bin Abdullah al-Gergawi conveyed greetings and best wishes to the leader of our country on behalf of the President of the UAE Sheikh Khalifa al-Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Sheikh Mohammed al-Nahyan and the Prime Minister of the country, Emir Sheikh Mohammed



al-Maktoum. During the meeting, progress was particularly noted in the implementation of projects for the development of alternative energy and the modernization of energy facilities, the creation of modern agro-industrial

clusters, the launch of an investment company to support business initiatives, as well as in the implementation of a number of significant social programs. The importance of continuing joint work in the field of improving the

efficiency of the public administration system and training qualified specialists, organizing the activities of the office of the Accelerator of Socio-Economic Reforms, which opened today in the city of Tashkent, was emphasized. Minister Mohammed bin Abdullah al-Gergawi expressed his sincere gratitude for all possible assistance to the activities of Emirati investors in the republic, for the support and participation of Uzbekistan in the Dubai Expo 2021 World Exhibition. The Emirates side also presented a new project proposal as part of the implementation of the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan to create a zone of environmental innovations and technologies in the Aral Sea region. As a result of the meeting, an agreement was reached on the adoption of a joint "road map" aimed at the widespread introduction of the best practices of the Emirates in the field of public administration, the formation of a long-term program of transformations and the transition to an innovative path of development.



## Briefs

## S. Korea holds naval drills

WEB DESK

SEOUL: South Korea's military began annual drills on Tuesday around a set of islands also claimed by Japan, days after planned talks between the two countries' leaders were called off amid a spat about an Olympics map. Seoul and Tokyo have been at odds over the sovereignty of the islets called "Dokdo" in South Korea and "Takeshima" in Japan, which lie about halfway between the two countries in the Sea of Japan, also known as the East Sea. The decades-long territorial dispute was rekindled after South Korea lodged a protest about a map on the Tokyo Olympics website marking the islands as Japanese territory. Tokyo rejected Seoul's demand to remove the depiction of the islets in the Olympics map. South Korea asked the International Olympic Committee to mediate the dispute, and some South Korean politicians called for a boycott of the Games. Relations between the two Asian neighbours have been frosty amid feuds over the islets, trade and the issue of compensation for victims who were forced to work in Japanese firms and military brothels during Japan's 1910-45 colonial rule. South Korea's defence ministry said on Tuesday that the drills in the East Sea involved naval, air and coast-guard forces and were being staged with minimal contact between troops due to coronavirus concerns.

## Azerbaijani oil prices increase

DNA

BAKU: The price of Azeri LT CIF Augusta, produced at the Azeri-Chirag-Deepwater Gunashli (ACG) field, rose by 63 cents on June 14 compared to the previous price, reaching \$74.61 per barrel. Trend reports referring to the source from the country's oil and gas market. The price of Azeri LT FOB Ceyhan amounted to \$73.97 per barrel on June 14, also increasing by 63 cents compared to the previous price. Azerbaijan has been producing Azeri LT since 1997 and exporting it via the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) and Baku-Supsa Western Export Pipeline, as well as by rail to the Georgian port of Batumi. Azerbaijan also sells its URALS oil from the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk, delivering it through the Baku-Novorossiysk pipeline. The price of URALS with shipment from the port settled at \$70.4 per barrel on June 14, having grown by 57 cents as compared to the previous price. Meanwhile, the cost of a barrel of Brent Dated oil, produced in the North Sea, amounted to \$72.54 per barrel, an increase of 49 cents compared to the previous price.

## 2.5 mln in Kazakhstan get first vaccine dose

DNA

NURSULTAN: Over 2.5 mln people in Kazakhstan have received their first coronavirus vaccine dose, the country's Health Minister Alexei Tsoi said at a cabinet meeting on Tuesday. "About four million vaccine doses have been administered so far. As many as 2,547,363 people, that is, 25.7% of those subject to vaccination, have received the first dose. A total of 1,435,334 people have been fully vaccinated," he said. A vaccination campaign involving the Sputnik V vaccine produced in Russia kicked off in Kazakhstan on February 1. The distribution of domestically made Sputnik V vaccines began in the country in late February. Kazakhstan began to use its own coronavirus vaccine, QazVax, on April 26. The country also purchased one mln doses of Hayat-Vax produced by China's Sinopharm in late April. The first batch of the CoronaVac vaccine made by China's Sinovac Biotech arrived in Kazakhstan in early June.



SHUSHA: President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan along with his Azerbaijani counterpart observing guard of honor on his arrival in Azerbaijan for an official visit, in Shusha. – DNA

## Azerbaijan, Turkey sign historic Shusha Declaration

This historic document, being the logical result of the mutual coordination of the activity of the two fraternal countries to protect common interests, unite opportunities, as well as in regional and international strategic issues of mutual interest

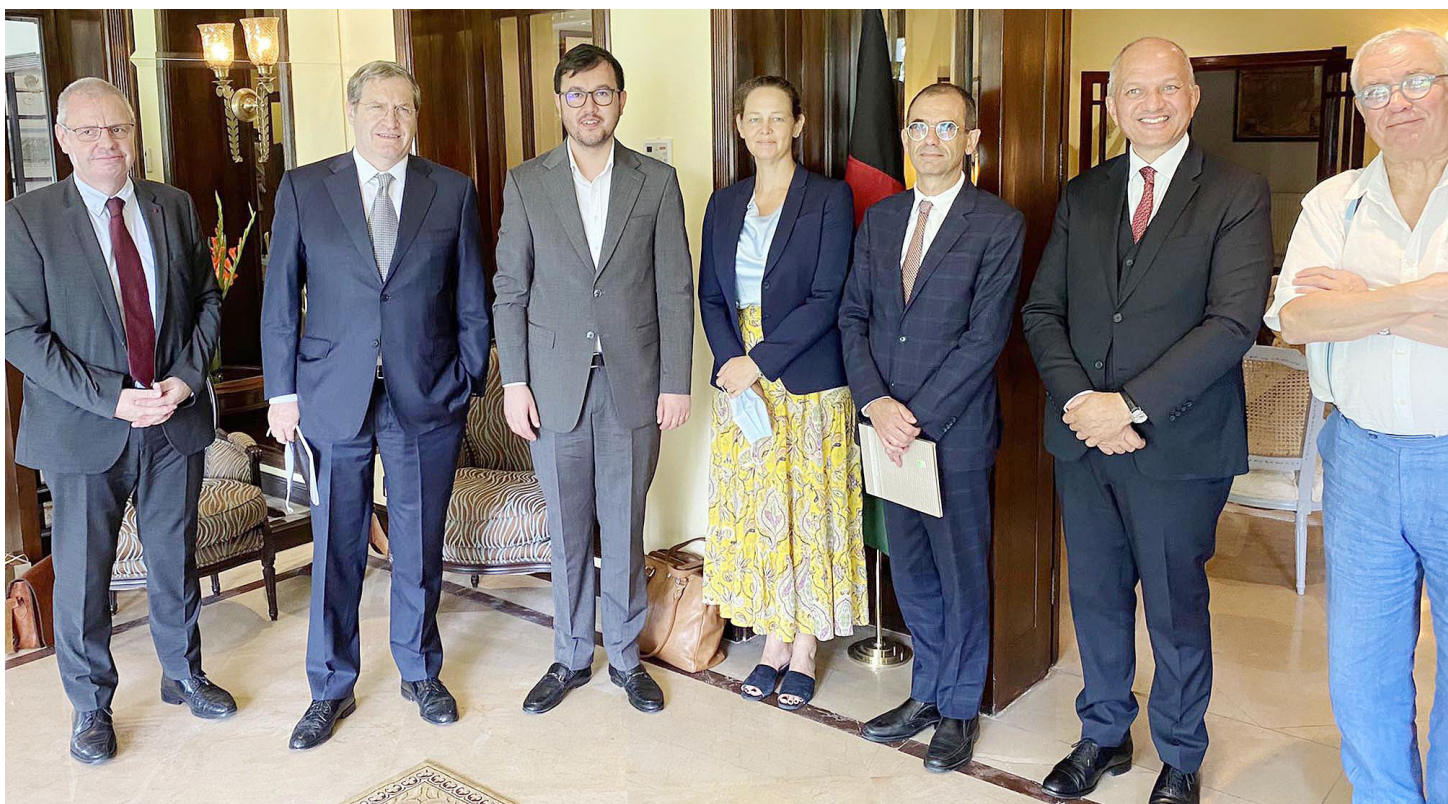
DNA

SHUSHA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan paid a historic visit to the liberated city of Shusha and signed a historical declaration in the heart of the Nagorno-Karabakh region – Shusha on June 15. The Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations was signed between the two fraternal and friendly countries on a very important date for Azerbaijan – June 15 - the National Salvation Day, 100 years after the Treaty of Kars. The Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations

is of exceptional political and historical significance. The Azerbaijani-Turkish relations, characterized by the statements of national leader of the Azerbaijani people Heydar Aliyev "One nation, two states" and founder of the Republic of Turkey Mustafa Kemal Ataturk "The joy of Azerbaijan is our joy, its sorrow is our sorrow", were brought to the highest level and entered into new stage. This historic document, being the logical result of the mutual coordination of the activity of the two fraternal countries to protect common interests, unite opportu-

nities, as well as in regional and international strategic issues of mutual interest, will strengthen the international and regional role of Azerbaijan and Turkey and increase their authority. The joint initiatives of the two countries to strengthen stability and security, restore all economic and transport ties, as well as normalize relations between the regional countries and ensure sustainable peace in the Caucasus region is the best example demonstrating the need for even bigger efforts in this sphere. At the same time, the activity of the Turkish-Russian joint center in the Na-

gorno-Karabakh region attracts attention as an effective mechanism for restoring peace in the region. The Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations, guided by the principles of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of internationally recognized borders, non-interference in the internal affairs of countries, is important from the point of view of strengthening political and legal mechanisms for establishing allied relations from both countries pursuing the independent foreign policy aimed at ensuring and protection of national interests.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors of Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, Portugal, Greece and DHM of France in a group photo with Lotfullah Najafizada. – DNA

## UK and Australia agree first post-Brexit free trade deal

LONDON: The United Kingdom and Australia announced a new trade deal on Tuesday, the first such agreement the UK has negotiated from scratch since it left the European Union. The pact, which will eliminate tariffs and red tape, was hailed by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson as "a new dawn" in the two countries' relations. Johnson's Conservative Party government views the deal as an important element of its post-Brexit strategy to shift the country's economic centre away from Europe and seek out fresh opportunities in higher-growth Indo-Pacific nations. Earlier deals with other countries, including Japan, were built on existing agreements struck by the 27-member bloc. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Johnson overcame sticking points during talks after the G7 meetings in the UK, which Morrison attended as a guest. The UK said the deal will mean products such as cars, Scotch whisky, biscuits and ceramics will be cheaper to sell to Australia, a former British colony. It will also see UK citizens under 35 able to travel and work in Australia more freely. – Web Desk

## Uzbekistan introduces changes to the law on citizenship

The President of Uzbekistan signed the law "On Amendments and Additions to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Citizenship of the Republic of Uzbekistan"

DNA

TASHKENT: Stateless persons born in Uzbekistan no longer need to live in Uzbekistan for five years in a row to obtain citizenship. The President of Uzbekistan signed the law "On Amendments and Additions to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Citizenship of the Repub-

lic of Uzbekistan". The concept of "identification ID-card" was introduced into the Law. According to the amendments, a person registered at the place of permanent residence in Uzbekistan before 1 January 2005 and previously did not have the citizenship of a foreign state, is recognized as a citizen of Uzbekistan in the event of his will. Also, a child is recognized

as a citizen of Uzbekistan, one of whose parents (single father or mother) is recognized as a citizen of Uzbekistan who has not accepted the citizenship of a foreign state and lives in Uzbekistan, in the event of his will. According to the law, now in the absence of documents confirming the facts for recognizing him as a citizen of Uzbekistan, the applicant can establish these facts in court.

## Vote of no confidence begins against Suga's cabinet

TOKYO: Four Japanese opposition parties, including the Constitutional Democratic Party, initiated a vote of no confidence against the government of Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, Kyodo reported Tuesday. The opposition blamed the cabinet for the failure of the coronavirus containment policy. It also demands to extend the current parliamentary session of three months in order to discuss and adopt new measures to combat the pandemic. The ongoing session is supposed to end on June 16. Meanwhile, the ruling Liberal-Democratic Party and its coalition partner, the Komeito, who enjoy the majority in both chambers of the parliament, are expected to reject the draft resolution of no confidence. – Foreign Desk

## Somalia's army camp rocked by suicide attack

WEB DESK

MOGADISHU: At least 15 army recruits have been killed in a suicide bomb attack at a military training camp in Somalia's capital Mogadishu. Army officer Mohamed Adan said the bomber behind Tuesday's attack was disguised among recruits queuing up outside the General Dhegobadan Military Camp when the explosion occurred. "I have counted about 15 new recruits who have been killed in the blast," Adan said, adding that the death toll could be higher. The injured people were taken to Mogadishu's Madina Hospital, according to the Reuters news agency. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, the deadliest in the capital for 18 months. Hotels and security checkpoints are commonly attacked in Somalia. In December 2019, 81 people were killed by a suicide car bomber at a checkpoint in the city centre, while the last significant assault on a hotel killed 11 in August 2020. Somalia has been mired in interlocking crises for the last 30 years, with repeated bouts of civil war, clan conflict, armed rebellion, famine and political instability.

## Kazakhstan recorded 757 new cases of Corona virus

DNA

NURSULTAN: Kazakhstan recorded 757 new cases of the coronavirus infection, the Health Ministry said on June 15. Nur-Sultan city recorded 181 cases, Karaganda - 161, East Kazakhstan region - 67, Almaty - 65. 47 cases were recorded in Pavlodar region, 36 in Akmol region, 33 in Kostanay, 33 in West Kazakhstan region, 30 in Almaty region, 27 in Atyrau region, 22 in Zhambyl region, 18 in Turkestan region, 15 in Kyzylorda region, seven in Mangistau region, six in Aktobe region, five in North Kazakhstan region, and four in Shymkent city. A total of 402,996 cases of coronavirus have been confirmed in the country so far. 1,065 people have recovered from the coronavirus bringing the total recoveries to 378,707 in the country. 9 died of COVID-19 and one person died of coronavirus-pneumonia. The total number of deaths from COVID-19 in Kazakhstan has reached 4,180, and 3,416 from pneumonia.

## US Navy aircraft carrier enters S. China Sea

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: A US aircraft carrier group led by the USS Ronald Reagan has entered the South China Sea as part of a routine mission, the US Navy said, at a time of rising tensions between Washington and Beijing, which claims most of the disputed waterway. The carrier is being accompanied by the guided-missile cruiser USS Shiloh and the guided-missile destroyer USS Halsey, the US Navy said on Tuesday. China frequently objects to US military missions in the South China Sea, saying they do not help promote peace or stability, and the latest mission comes after China condemned the Group of Seven (G7) nations for a statement criticising Beijing over a range of issues. "While in the South China Sea, the strike group is conducting maritime security operations, which include flight operations with fixed and rotary-wing aircraft, maritime strike exercises, and coordinated tactical training between surface and air units," the US Navy said. "Carrier operations in the South China Sea are part of the US Navy's routine presence in the Indo-Pacific." China has ramped up its military presence in the South China Sea in recent years, including building artificial islands and air bases, where it has installed missile systems and other equipment.

## Beatings and arrests ahead of Israeli 'Flag March'

FOREIGN DESK

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: Tensions were high in the occupied Palestinian territory on Tuesday as Israeli nationalists gathered for a controversial march through East Jerusalem. The so-called March of the Flags celebrates the anniversary of Israel's 1967 occupation of the city's eastern part. "The right to demonstrate is a right in all democracies," said Israel's Internal Security Minister Omer Bar-Lev. "The police is ready and we will do everything in our power to preserve the delicate thread of coexistence." Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem since the Six-Day War of 1967 is not recognised by most of the international community, which says the city's final status should be a matter of negotiation between the two sides. The Palestinians claim the city's eastern part as the capital of their future state. Israeli forces closed off roads leading to Damascus Gate in occupied East Jerusalem, as others forced Palestinians on the steps of the gate leading into the Old City to leave. Videos shared on social media showed Israeli police forces setting up metal barricades, blocking off all the paths to the gate. Israeli special forces troops attacked young Palestinian men who were assaulted as they ran away in occupied East Jerusalem. Nearby, an old Palestinian man on crutches and an elderly woman were

also roughed up by police. A video shared on social media showed several Israeli policemen beating up a Palestinian man near Damascus Gate, as they dragged him down a flight of steps. Fatima Khaider, 62, from the Old City, denounced the confiscation of her home by Israeli settlers, and the jailing of her children. "My house was taken by the Israelis. I was assaulted by Israelis," she told Al Jazeera. "There is no international law to protect us – what law is this? I am old, they took my children and put them in prison." Palestinian activists launched incendiary balloons and kites from the Gaza Strip towards areas in southern Israel. "The kites are in response to the provocative flag march in East

Jerusalem on Tuesday," a Palestinian activist who identified himself as Abu Houzayfa told Anadolu Agency. The incendiary balloons or kites contain flammable material or oil-soaked rags that may ignite fires once they land on crops. Palestinian media reported that Israeli police forces prevented Palestinians from reaching Damascus Gate in Jerusalem's Old City. Videos posted on social media showed Israeli police installing metal barricades as Palestinians were blocked from going through the barriers. Laura Wharton, councilwoman in the Jerusalem City Council, told the Associated Press that she considered the planned march "completely ridiculous". "It's a clear provocation of extreme right-wingers who are

dissatisfied with the government, dissatisfied with a lot of things, and are going to vent their frustrations on the residents of the Old City," said Wharton. The march poses an early test for Israel's fragile new government, which was sworn in on Sunday and includes parties from across the political spectrum. Cancelling the march would have opened Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and other right-wing members of the coalition to intense criticism from those who would view it as a capitulation to Gaza's Hamas rulers. Iron Dome missile defense system batteries could be seen in Israel's south, as the army deployed them amid heightened tensions with Palestinians in Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.



**Briefs**

**FIA summons Shahbaz in sugar scandal**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) Lahore wing on Tuesday summoned Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Shahbaz Sharif in its ongoing probe into the sugar scandal that led to shortage and an extraordinary hike in the commodity's prices. The FIA, in the notice, served to the PML-N president, said he would have to appear before the anti-corruption watchdog on June 22, and if he fails to do so, he could be sent to prison. The notice further said that Shahbaz had to answer questions about persons and other low-grade employees of the Al-Arabia Sugar Mills and Ramzan Sugar Mills receiving Rs25 billion. "Are you aware of the deposit and withdrawal of Rs25 billion in fake accounts associated with the Ramzan Sugar Mills, Al-Arabia Sugar Mills, and others?" the notice asked. The notice said that Shahbaz was sent a questionnaire twice and he did not respond. "You (Shahbaz) were sent a notice for the second time in January. You had said that Ata Tarar would respond on your behalf, but he never did."

**Afghanistan: Gunmen kill four polio workers**

NEWS DESK

KABUL: Four polio vaccination workers have been killed and three others injured in separate attacks in Afghanistan's eastern city of Jalalabad, a provincial health department official said, in the latest in a series of attacks against health workers. A wave of assassinations has hit urban centres since peace talks began between the Taliban and the Afghan government last year in Doha, many of them targeting government employees, health workers, media and civil society members. Dr Jan Mohammad, the head of polio immunisation drive in Nangarhar, of which Jalalabad is the main city, on Tuesday said gunmen targeted polio workers in three locations in the city that killed four and wounded three others. "Today was the second day of our operations after three months but we have to suspend it once again," Mohammad told Reuters news agency, adding that all those killed were men. Gunmen killed three female polio vaccination workers in Jalalabad in March this year, which forced the health workers to suspend their operations and assess security.

**Clashes erupted in Karachi**

DNA

KARACHI: Violent clashes erupted on Tuesday between police and protesters gathered to demonstrate against a Supreme Court ordered anti-encroachment operation on Karachi's Rashid Minhas Road. An anti-encroachment drive ordered by the Supreme Court has been underway in various parts of the city. However, it was at the former Aladin Amusement Park which was converted to the Pavilion End Club and where a shopping mall had also been constructed, that the demonstrators had gathered today, to protest against shops being demolished. In a court hearing a day earlier regarding encroachments in the area, the apex court had ordered the Karachi Commissioner to ensure their removal and file a compliance report within two days. When the operation began today, shopkeepers staged a protest on the road which was met with a baton charge by police, resulting in injuries to several people.

**Murad presents Rs1.47 trillion deficit budget**

Opposition lawmakers shout slogans, taunt CM Murad during his speech. Sindh Cabinet approves an increase of 20% in the salary of government employees and set minimum wage at Rs25,000

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah Tuesday presented a Rs1477.9 billion deficit budget with a Rs329.303 billion development portfolios here on the floor of the provincial assembly on Tuesday. Murad Ali Shah said that the size of the next budget, 2021-22 has been estimated at Rs1477.903 billion against which the total receipts, including federal transfers and the provincial would be Rs1452.168 billion which showed a deficit of Rs25.738 billion. At the outset of his speech, he thanked people of the province for reposing trust in PPP government and it was upon the incumbent to live up to their expectations. "Ever since Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has been founded, People have always supported its program, he said and added "People of Sindh have recognized and validated our services for the province by trusting the reigns of governance into our hands in successive elections, especially in General Election 2018 where we secured highest number of seats and we feel this responsibility to serve more than ever before." Mr Shah said that the Budget of 2021-22 has been prepared in consonance with the collective vision of our leaders which also meets the moment. The Chief Minister said that Pakistan Peoples Party has ensured that the people of Sindh have a say in



setting out priorities of the government. For this purpose, this year's Budget has also been set out in the spirit of participatory governance, aimed at establishing a just, equitable, and egalitarian society, he said and added "we believe in the politics of inclusion and participation." "Our aim is the empowerment of people through policies and programs that can facilitate growth and development; and help us move towards medium- and long-term economic growth - a growth which is not for the few but for the many," Murad Shah said and he thanked all MPAs, both from the treasury and opposition benches, for their support and looked forward to their cooperation in future. The chief minister said that a year ago, he had announced initial response to coronavirus. "What was originally thought to be a temporary disruption to our way of life has fundamentally altered it," he said and added "people are still being told

to stay in their homes; businesses have been ordered to close early; thousands of people are in hospitals - much has changed, but one thing has stayed the same. "I said we would do whatever it takes; we have done; and we will do so". BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021-22: Presenting budget for next financial year, 2021-22, the chief minister said "the total receipts of province for Year 2021-22 are estimated at Rs.1.452 trillion against budget estimate of Rs.1.22 trillion for current financial year, showing overall increase of 19 percent," he added "receipts from Federal Government on account of revenue assignment, straight transfers and grants are estimated at Rs.869.68 billion, which constitute 72.5 percent of total receipts of the province, showing an increase of 12.6 percent, over estimates of Rs.760.3 billion last year. The budget estimates of straight transfers for next financial year have decreased substantially by ap-

**Opposition creates ruckus in Assembly**

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah is presented the budget for the fiscal year 2021-22 at the provincial assembly Tuesday, as Opposition lawmakers shout slogans and taunt the chief minister. The total volume of the Sindh budget is Rs1.4 trillion. Wearing headphones as he gripped a microphone in his hand, the chief minister shouted to drown out the reverberating shouts of Opposition lawmakers, who did their utmost to disrupt the chief minister. Speaking about the pandemic, the chief minister said a comprehensive response by the provincial government had been prepared to battle the pandemic. He announced that the Sindh government was allocating Rs24.72bn to counter the adverse impact of the coronavirus pandemic. He said that Rs18.32bn have been recommended to buy medicines throughout the year, adding that the provincial government has also agreed to create 964 new posts for the health sector. The chief minister announced that the Sindh government had allocated Rs2bn to procure PPE and PCR testing kits.

proximately 20.6 percent to Rs.49.5 billion from the budget estimates of Rs.62.34 billions of current financial year, he said and added that the receipts of Federal PSDP were estimated at Rs.5.37 billion. The CM said that the receipts on account of Foreign Project Assistance (FPA), budgetary support loans and grants were estimated at Rs.71 billion. And added receipts from provincial own sources on account of tax and non-tax receipts were estimated at Rs.329.033 billion, which constituted 27.5 percent of total receipts. "This is an increase of 4.8 percent over estimates of Rs.313.4 billion of cur-

rent financial year," he said. The total budget outlay for Financial Year 2021-22 is estimated at Rs.1.477 trillion, as against budget estimate of Rs.1.241 trillion for Current financial year, showing overall increase of 19 percent, the CM said. He added the current expenditure of the province was projected at Rs.1.14 trillion, which included current revenue expenditure of Rs.1.089 trillion and current capital expenditure of Rs.59.49 billion. "This is 78 percent of total expenditure of the province and showed an increase of 14 percent over estimates of Rs.1 trillion for last year," he said.

**March of the Flags continuation of Israeli terrorism, says PNC**

The Council called on the international community, in particular the UN Security Council and the world's parliaments, to stop "the Israeli madness"

NEWS DESK

RAMALLAH: Palestine National Council (PNC) has said that the insistence on organizing the so-called "March of the Flags" in the occupied city of Jerusalem is a call for the continuation of persecution, terrorism and aggression against our people in the city and its Islamic and Christian holy sites. In a statement issued by PNC Speaker, Mr. Saleem Al-Za'anoun, said that Palestinian people, Muslims and Christians, are capable of confronting and thwarting this process, just as they have thwarted with their defenseless body and solid will all previous attempts that targeted Christian and

Islamic sanctities, especially the attacks on the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque. The prelude of the new Israeli occupation government, which is headed by the first supporter of settlements, who is one of the sponsors of the draft law to execute Palestinian prisoners in 2018, allowed these terrorist groups of settlers to organize this aggressive march in the vicinity of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, and will provide security to protect the terrorist settlers, PNC confirmed. In return the Palestinians in Jerusalem are subjected to harassment, oppression and suppression. PNC held the Israeli occupying government fully responsible - in accordance

with its legal responsibilities as an occupying power - for all the repercussions that may result from this March, including the attacks on Palestinian people in the city of Jerusalem, and the safety of their lives and property. The Council called on the international community, in particular the UN Security Council and the world's parliaments, to stop "the Israeli madness, led by terrorist groups from settlers, who have the full protection and support of the occupying government, which will lead to more instability in the region". The policies of the Israeli occupation over 54 years of Judaization operations have failed to obliterate

the features of the Arab Islamic and Christian city and its civilized identity, PNC added, and will not succeed in changing the legal status of the city of Jerusalem as an occupied Palestinian city, the capital of the Palestinian state, in accordance with the historical right of Palestinian people, and in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy related, the latest of which is UN Security Council Resolution 2334 of 2016. It is worth noting that the settlers "March of the Flags" is carried out annually by the settlers under the protection of the Israeli occupation forces on the anniversary of the occupation of Jerusalem in 1967.

**Qatar envoy calls on Air Chief**

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Qatar H.E. Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force in his office today. During the meeting, both the dignitaries discussed matters of professional and mutual interest. Ambassador H.E. Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani commended the

professionalism of PAF and acknowledged its rising indigenous capacity in aviation industry. The Air Chief said that Pakistan and Qatar had longstanding religious, cultural and historical bonds which were manifested through strong ties between Qatar Air Force and Pakistan Air Force. The Air Chief also emphasised upon the significance of further deepening the relations between the two Air Forces.

**Induction of MILGEM to improve capabilities of PN**

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: The steel cutting ceremony of fourth MILGEM-Class Corvette ship being constructed for Pakistan Navy was held at Karachi shipyard today (Tuesday). Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi was the chief guest of the ceremony. On the Occasion, Chief of the Naval Staff lauded the

mutual cooperation between Ministry of Defence Production, Pakistan Navy, Karachi Shipyard and Turkish Company for the construction of battle ships. He said the ship will be equipped with the latest weapons and sensors. Naval Chief said induction of MILGEM-class corvette ships will further improve the capabilities of Pakistan Navy to cope with the conventional and non-conventional threats.

**China accuses NATO of 'Cold War mentality'**

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: China has urged NATO to stop exaggerating what it called the "China threat theory" after the 30-nation transatlantic security alliance pledged to counter the "systemic challenges" posed by Beijing's policies. China's response on Tuesday came a day after NATO leaders met in Brussels and issued a communique

criticising Beijing's nuclear arsenal as well as its space and cyberwarfare capabilities. "China's stated ambitions and assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to alliance security," the communique said. NATO's forceful stance on China marked a diplomatic victory for US President Joe Biden, who had urged his fellow leaders to stand

up to China's absolute rule and growing military might - a fundamental change of focus for an alliance created to defend Europe from the Soviet Union during the Cold War. In an angry response, the Chinese mission to the European Union called for NATO to "view China's development rationally, stop exaggerating various forms of 'China threat theory' and not to use China's legitimate interests and

legal rights as excuses for manipulating group politics (while) artificially creating confrontations". NATO's accusations "slandered" China's peaceful development, misjudged the international situation, and represented a "continuation of the Cold War mentality", the statement added. "We will not pose a 'systemic challenge' to anyone, but if anyone wants to pose a 'systemic challenge' to us, we will not remain indifferent."



ISLAMABAD: Iran ambassador to Pakistan Sayed Muhammad Ali Hussaini met with European Union Special Envoy on Afghanistan, Tomas Niklasson and ambassador of the European Union to the Pakistan Androulla Kaminara. - DNA

**IHC adjourns proceedings in Jadhav case after govt's plea**

ISLAMABAD: Federal government on Tuesday asked the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to adjourn proceedings of a case pertaining to the appointment of a counsel for Indian spy Kulbushan Jadhav. The attorney general of Pakistan represented the government during the proceedings and sought a delay in the proceedings of a case heard by a three-member bench comprising Chief Justice IHC Athar Minallah, Justice Aamer Farooq, and Justice Mian Hassan. The IHC accepted the plea and adjourned the hearing for October 05. During the

last proceedings, the court issued notice to the counsel of the Indian High Commission to appear before the court. It is pertinent to mention here that in April this year, the Indian High Commission has filed a plea for the appointment of a counsel for its spy Kulbushan Jadhav before the Islamabad High Court (IHC). The Indian authorities have previously avoided responding in the Kulbushan Jadhav case and for the time approached the court saying that they have the right to provide a legal counsel to the Indian citizen. - DNA

**El-Sisi invites Qatari emir to visit Egypt**

FOREIGN DESK

CAIRO: Egypt's President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi has invited Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad to visit his country at the earliest as two countries seek to boost bilateral cooperation following the signing of the AIULA Declaration on Jan. 5 this year. Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, who is currently on an official visit to Qatar, delivered a letter on Tuesday from El-Sisi to Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim that included an invitation to visit Egypt. The letter focuses on the positive developments with regard to Egyptian-Qatari relations, according to the spokesman of the Egyptian foreign ministry. The letter also expresses Egypt's aspiration to take further measures to advance the priority areas of bilateral cooperation to achieve the interests of the two countries and their citizens, the spokesman added. Shoukry is visiting Qatar for the first time after the AIULA agreement that ended a three-year-long boycott of Doha by Egypt along with Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates. The Egyptian foreign minister will participate in the consultative meeting of Arab foreign ministers in Doha on Tuesday.

**Four PAF officers promoted to AVM**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government has promoted 04 PAF officers to the rank of Air Vice Marshal. The promoted officers include Air Vice Marshal Shahid Mansoor Jehangiri, Air Vice Marshal Kashif Qamar, Air Vice Marshal Asim Rashid Malik and Air Vice Marshal Syed Hasan Kashif. Air Vice Marshal Shahid Mansoor Jehangiri was commissioned in GD (P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in May, 1991. He has also served as Deputy Director General Air Intelligence at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military). Air Vice Marshal Kashif Qamar was commissioned in GD (P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in May, 1991. He has also served as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Safety) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military). Air Vice Marshal Asim Rashid Malik was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in December, 1991. He has also served as Managing Director Mirage Rebuilding Factory, Kamra. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military). Air Vice Marshal Syed Hasan Kashif was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in December, 1991. He has also served as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Electronics Engineering) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

**TI conferred upon two officers of Pak Emb. Beijing**

BEIJING: Two officers of Pakistan Embassy Beijing were conferred upon Tamgha-e-Imtiaz at a special investiture ceremony held at the Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing, here on Tuesday. Pakistan Ambassador to China Moinul Haque, on behalf of the President of Pakistan, conferred the civil award upon Second Secretary Muhammad Junaid Raza and Education Attaché, Muhammad Suleman Mahsud in recognition of their outstanding services for Pakistani students and community stranded in Wuhan during the lockdown imposed in wake of COVID-19 pandemic in early last year. The two officers led a special solidarity mission to the epicenter of pandemic and spent 53 days in the locked down in Hubei province. They provided support and reassurance to the members of Pakistani community particularly students during the lockdown. - APP