



# Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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### Post pandemic Poland: crisis-proof, equitable, Op-ed by Polish PM

Detailed News On Page-05

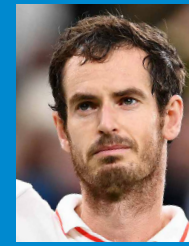
### Pakistan-China friendship a valuable asset

Detailed News On Page-08



### Murray past second round at Wimbledon

Detailed News On Page-06



## Briefs

### Food security a challenge

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday said that food security was a great challenge for Pakistan which could even become a national security issue if timely measures were not taken. "The country is faced with new challenges...The population size is growing fast. We need to prepare in advance as how to grow food during next 10 to 15 years," the prime minister said addressing the Kisan Convention here which marked the launch of Agriculture Transformation Plan.

### Isolating Russia wrong for Europe

NEWS DESK

BERLIN: German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas warned against breaking off economic relations with Russia during his visit to Poland on Thursday, amid a dispute about the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. "Fundamentally, I'm of the opinion that it would put us in Europe in a difficult position if economic relations with Russia were no longer possible," Maas said. He cautioned it could drive Russia and China closer together. "It is not only wrong but also dangerous for our security interests in Europe," Maas added. Maas was meeting with his Polish counterpart Zbigniew Rau on Thursday in the Polish capital, Warsaw.

### CPEC IT joint working group on cards

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar Thursday said that new joint working group for information technology was being established under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework. "It has been agreed to start a new joint working group for information technology under the CPEC framework," the minister tweeted.

## DG ISI briefs lawmakers on security issues

### Members briefed on internal and external security paradigm in the ever evolving environment, PM Imran did not attend the meeting

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: A special in-camera session of the Parliamentary Defence Committee on National Security was held with Speaker National Assembly in the chair. Besides members of the committee, representatives of all major political parties were also invited for the briefing. DG ISI comprehensively briefed the members on internal and external national security paradigm in the ever evolving geo-political / strategic environment. The meeting was told that Pakistan had honestly played a "very positive and responsible" role in the Afghan peace process, according to a statement released by the information ministry. "Due to Pakistan's efforts, not only was the path paved for talks between different Afghan factions and warring groups, but meaningful dialogue between the United States and Taliban was also started," the lawmakers were told. "We believe in the fact that lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan will actually result in stability in South Asia," the ministry's press release added. The meeting was told that Pakistan will welcome the true representative government of the people in Afghanistan "at every level" and continue its role for the Afghan peace process.

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### Opposition satisfied with the briefing

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Opposition in the NA Shahbaz Sharif, talking to media during a break, said he was satisfied by the briefing given during the meeting, but refrained from sharing any details. Shahbaz, responding to a question on whether Gen Bajwa answered questions asked during the meeting, said: "Yes, he did." Speaking to media at the Parliament House, former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said Shahbaz had spoken on behalf of the PML-N. "We were not informed that US has demanded a base," said the prime minister. "Nobody is going to give anyone any bases and neither has anybody asked for them," he added.

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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada pays a farewell call on President Dr. Arif Alvi. - DNA

## Pak-Azerbaijan ties are of high value: President

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday said Pakistan and Azerbaijan could further enhance bilateral and economic cooperation by taking concrete measures including exchange of trade delegations. Talking to the outgoing Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada who paid a farewell call on him here at the Awwan-e-Sadr, the President said Pakistan highly valued

### "The President lauded the contribution of Ambassador Alizada towards cementing bilateral relations"

its ties with Azerbaijan which are based on strong historic, cultural and religious bonds. The President said the two countries enjoyed excellent cooperation at various international forums which needed to be further expanded in

the areas of trade, economy and culture for the mutual benefit of the two sides. He congratulated the Ambassador on the liberation of Nagorno-Karabakh from Armenia. The President also appreciated Azerbaijan's

support to Prime Minister Imran Khan's Global Initiative on Debt Relief and the charity work of Heydar Aliyev Foundation in Pakistan, under the patronage of the First Lady of Azerbaijan. Ali Alizada emphasized on the need to increase cooperation in the areas of trade, tourism and promote people-to-people contacts so as to bring the two brotherly countries further closer. The President lauded the contribution of the outgoing Ambassador towards cementing bilateral relations.

## COAS praises UN mission's services



NEHAL MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, New York called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ Thursday.

According to an ISPR press release, matters of mutual interests, overall regional security situation including Afghanistan reconciliation process and Kashmir dispute were discussed during the meeting. COAS appreciated the mission's role and efforts in the service of Pakistan.

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### 'Pak wants working relationship with US'

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Foreign Office Spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri on Thursday said that Pakistan wanted to enhance working relationship with the US as both countries are working together in Afghanistan. Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Romania Mr. Nicolae Gola, calls on Federal Minister for Defence, Pervez Khattak. - DNA

### Daily cases surpass 1000 after 5 days

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's daily coronavirus case load went back over the 1,000 cases in a day mark after the country reported 1,037 new cases Thursday morning. The daily case count has been under 1,000 since a week now. The country last reported 1,052 cases in a day on June 25. Another 40 people died of coronavirus in Pakistan in the last 24 hours, pushing the national death tally since the pandemic started to 22,321. Latest data issued by the National Command and Operation Centre Thursday morning shows that after 46,145 tests were conducted on June 30, 1,037 people tested positive for coronavirus. Pakistan's positivity rate is currently 2.2%. A day earlier, Pakistan's positivity rate ticked back up to 2.3% after the country reported a rate under 2% before that. The total active COVID-19 cases in Pakistan are currently 31,767. According to a province-wise breakdown, the total cases reported in Sindh so far are 337,674, in Punjab 346,301, in KPK 138,068, in ICT 82,706, in Balochistan 27,178, in GB 6,138 and in AJK 20,343.

### Use of technology vital in disaster management: Envoy

### Experts highlighted practical features of European Earth observation Copernicus

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: EU experts highlighted practical features of the European Earth observation programme Copernicus in a webinar convened by the Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan. Copernicus is key component of the new EU Space Programme. Its task is to monitor the Earth, its environment and ecosystem. It also seeks to ensure preparedness for crises and natural as well as man-made disasters. Programme specialists from the European Union introduced the Copernicus system, including its architecture, thematic services, benefits, as well as means of application within and outside of the EU. Discussion particularly focused on disaster management and emergencies during humanitarian crisis and opportunities to make use of the Copernicus programme, as its Sentinel data and services are available in a free, full and open manner to Paki-



stani stakeholders. The webinar was well attended by representatives and experts from the federal and provincial governments and agencies, as well as educational and research institutions. The Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, Androulla Kaminara, stressed the importance of making technology work for people. She added that close collaboration between services and countries leads to shared learning and exploring opportunities to work together, as satellite imagery has many

Continued on Page 06

### Pak, India exchange prisoner's lists

DNA

LAHORE: The Government of Pakistan shared with the Indian High Commission in Islamabad a list of 609 Indian prisoners in Pakistan including 51 civilians and 558 fishermen. This step is consistent with the clause (i) of the Agreement on Consular Access between Pakistan and India, signed on 21st May 2008, under which both countries are required to exchange lists of prisoners in each other's custody twice a year, on 1st January and 1st July, respectively. The Indian Government also simultaneously shared the list of 345 Pakistani prisoners in India including 271 civilians and 74 fishermen with the High Commission for Pakistan in New Delhi.

### France offers asylum to Afghan allies

DNA

PARIS: As anxiety grows in Afghanistan ahead of the US forces pullout, an initiative by the French foreign ministry to grant asylum to Afghans who worked for French organisations has sparked an exodus, reported France24 on Wednesday. However, the French foreign ministry's move to grant asylum to employees of governmental and non-governmental organisations has invited criticism, seen as sending the wrong signal at a crucial time. Officials and volunteers at the NGO Afrane are anxious about their operations in Afghanistan. "The situation in Afghanistan has become extremely worrying," said vice-president Afrane, adding, "The departure of Afrane's Afghan staff is imminent."

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## WHO urges West to recognise Chinese vaccines

### In addition to vaccines by Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna Inc, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson, the WHO has also given the green light to the two Chinese jabs, made by Sinovac and Sinopharm

MONITORING DESK

GENEVA: The World Health Organisation (WHO) said on Thursday that any Covid-19 vaccines it has authorised for emergency use should be recognised by countries as they open up their borders to inoculated travellers. The move could challenge Western countries to broaden their acceptance of two apparently less effective Chinese vaccines, which the UN health agency has licensed but most European and North American countries have not. In addition to vaccines by Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna Inc, Astra-

### Islamabad faces acute shortage of vaccines

ISLAMABAD: Amid the country's ramped up mass coronavirus vaccination drive, a shortage of several vaccines is being witnessed in the federal capital, media reported Thursday. Per report, vaccine doses from AstraZeneca, Pfizer, and CanSino Bio have run out of supply. Several vaccination centres have displayed banners saying that the said vaccines are not available. Meanwhile, China's Sinopharm vaccine is only available to those seeking the second dose. As mass vaccination continues, only Chinese vaccines are available for those seeking both the first and the second doses, especially Sinovac. On the other hand, the National Command Operations Centre (NCOC) said two days ago that it is "satisfied" with the coronavirus vaccine availability in the country. The development came during an NCOC session held in Islamabad, with National Coordinator Lt Gen Hamood-uz-Zaman Khan in the chair. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Health Dr Faisal Sultan and Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lt Gen Akhtar Nawaz Satti were in attendance. - DNA

Zeneca and Johnson & Johnson, the WHO has also given the green light to the two Chinese jabs, made by Sinovac and Sinopharm. In its aim to restore travel across Europe, the European Union (EU) said in May that it would only recognise people as vaccinated if they had received shots licensed by the European Medicines Agency - although it's up to individual countries if they wish to

## Inside...

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UEFA slammed over Euro 2020 crowd numbers - Page 06

Xi says no more 'bullying' as China marks party centenary - Page 07

Pak-China ties won't change despite pressure: PM Imran - Page 08



## Briefs

## UAE envoy calls on finance minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Alzaabi, Ambassador of United Arab Emirates to Pakistan called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Mr. Shaukat Tarin at Finance Division on Thursday. His Excellency Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Alzaabi, Ambassador of United Arab Emirates and Federal Minister for Finance Mr. Shaukat Tarin discussed the various aspects of bilateral relations. Both the dignitaries expressed their satisfaction over the current status of the strong ties between the two countries and pledged to further cement the mutual relationship. His Excellency Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Alzaabi and Mr. Shaukat Tarin further agreed that the ties between the two countries are based on strong foundations of religious brotherhood and cultural homogeneity. The bilateral ties have become strategic with the passage of time. The emerging challenges at the world stage have further necessitated the even closer working relationship between the two countries.

## Government employees barred from bidding

PESHAWAR: District administration Orakzai has barred government employees from direct or indirect involvement in bidding and tendering of developmental projects. A statement issued by office of Deputy Commissioner said that the government employees have been warned against direct or indirect involvement of any kind in bidding and tendering process of developmental projects. It said that punitive action would be taken against government employees found guilty of involvement in bidding or tendering process and awarding of contracts. The statement said that the contracts being awarded to government employees would be cancelled and inquiry would be launched against them. - APP

## Karim given responsibility as Focal Person on Investment

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has given additional responsibilities to Special Assistant on Industries and Commerce, Abdul Karim Khan and has nominated him as Focal Person for investment and its related activities. According to an official hand-out issued here on Thursday, the additional responsibility has been conferred on him due to his outstanding performance in promotion of investment and attracting investors to the province as well as in industrial sector. Special Assistant to KP CM on Industries and Commerce, Abdul Karim Khan is taking practical steps for attracting foreign investors and promotion of industrial sector of the province. In this connection, he has several achievements to his credit. Special Assistant will now also assist Chief Minister on matters relating to investment and other related activities. - APP

## 544,417 persons vaccinated against virus

FAISALABAD: As many as 544,417 people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in Faisalabad district. District Health Officer Dr. Ataul Mun'im said on Thursday that 427,460 people had been given the first dose while 76,995 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He further said that 25,872 health workers were also given the first dose while 14,090 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of anti-coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As of now 36,278 first doses and 24,185 second doses were in the stock at Faisalabad. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Alzaabi, Ambassador of United Arab Emirates to Pakistan calls on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Mr. Shaukat Tarin. - DNA

## DC for solving public issues regarding revenue matters

Deputy Commissioner said that the problems of the people's under one roof are being addressed by listening to the problems related to the revenue department

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: On the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar, under the Revenue Awami Khidmat Services the problems of public regarding revenue were listening on first working day of every month and in this regard the monthly services was held at DC office and Corona SoPs was implemented on this occasion. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali listen the public complaints regarding revenue matters and directed the revenue officers for speedy solution of the applicants. ADCs Fazal e Rabi, Khurram Perwaiz, Revenue Department officers, Assistant Director Land Record City and the Sadar, Tehsildar, Niab Tehsildar and Patwaris were also present. Deputy Commissioner said that the delay in the matters of public would not tolerated and responsible revenue officer and staff would be accountable.



He said that the Department of Revenue was at the forefront of public service and holding Revenue Awami Public Service would not only solve the problems of the people but also increase their confidence.

Deputy Commissioner said that the problems of the people's under one roof are being addressed by listening to the problems related to the revenue department. He said that speedy solution of issues and grievances related to the revenue department including issuance of domicile, farad, registry, income certificate and other revenue matters are being solved on spot. He said that officers of the revenue

department including Assistant commissioners and revenue officers and ADLRs were also directed to ensure attendance in the court. Citizens can approach the concerned Tehsil Office on the first working day of every month for resolving revenue related issues. He also went to the applicants and took feedback to them about solution of their complaints.

He said that the monitoring officers appointed by SMBR have also inspected the process of listening public complaints. During the Revenue Awami Khidmat Services a total of 61 applicants identified the problems in Tehsil City and Sadar out of which 44 were solved on spot while the remaining applications were directed to be processed and reported within three days.

The Revenue Awami Khidmat Services were also held at Tehsil Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandlianwala and Chak Jhumra.

## Punjab entering new era of development: CM

LAHORE: Punjab province was entering a new era of development and prosperity due to the prudent economic policies of the PTI government. In a statement, Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar said a 66 per cent increase had been made in the development budget valuing Rs. 560 billion and a composite roadmap of genuine development introduced. Parliamentarians were also consulted to finalize the annual development programme and Rs.25 billion had been allocated for mega projects through public-private partnership mode, he added. The CM announced to provide free health insurance to 100 per cent population in Punjab adding that universal health insurance was a flagship initiative of the PTI government. Similarly, the CM said that a 10 per cent increase was made in the pays and pensions of government employees along with a 25 per cent special allowance for grade 1 to 19 employees. He regretted that the opposition was not interested in the development of the people and pointed out that development was only shown in papers while the masses yearned for development around them. The past rulers had bankrupted the province with their wrong policies and exhibitory projects, he said. The PTI inherited a devastated economy in 2018 and had to make difficult decisions to stabilize the economy. These steps were yielding positive results now, concluded the CM. - APP



LAHORE: Vice Chancellor is presenting a souvenir to Punjab Governor Chaudhry Sarwar at a seminar organized by Palestine Society at GC University. - DNA

## Business community hails PM's bold stand on foreign, defence policy

Iftikhar Ali Malik said that business community also lauds another dauntless stance of Prime Minister for not joining any US led alliance against China which he added is all the times tested

ISLAMABAD: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Thursday hailed the policy statement by Prime Minister Imran Khan on foreign relations and defence of the country by terming it a milestone for protecting the national interests, integrity and sovereignty. In a press statement President SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry Iftikhar Ali Malik said entire business community was proud of Prime Minister Imran Khan for taking National Assembly and nation into confidence in the larger national interests on the cornerstone of foreign policy. He said in given circumstances, it was a judicious decision to categorically not allowing any Pakistan air base and

its territory for action in Afghanistan. He said earlier decisions landed Pakistan in trouble besides causing irreparable loss to national economy in addition to destroying its infrastructure. He said this historic decision will restore the goodwill between Pak-Afghan governments and cement the bilateral relations in the days to come. Iftikhar Ali Malik said that business community also lauds another dauntless stance of Prime Minister for not joining any US led alliance against China which he added is all the times tested and trusted friend of Pakistan. He said "We fully support the Prime Minister" in greater national interests for safeguarding sovereignty of

country in a vivid and crystal clear manners. He said that military intervention has never been solution to Afghanistan and it's was praiseworthy decision for not allowing its soil for cross border counter terrorism missions which he added will yield positive impact in future. However Pakistan must be extraordinarily vigilant over tense mounted situations cropping up after the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan. He quoted USSR which was ultimately dismembered after attack on Afghanistan. He said Imran Khan was wise enough to welcome politically elected government in Afghanistan which reflected the aspirations of its people.

## KP govt enhanced sense of security among women

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Law Minister, Fazal Shakoor Khan has said, the present provincial government has increased sense of security among working women by appointing a female ombudsman. Women present their issues to the female ombudsman in a confident manner through which social issues confronted by them are rapidly being resolved, he added. He expressed these views during a meeting with Provincial Ombudsman, Rakhshanda Naz in Peshawar. Law minister said that the provincial government was taking steps to ensure and enforce the Protection of Women Against Harassment at Workplace Act 2019, adding that the powers of the committees to detect, monitor and investigate sexual harassment complaints should be enhanced. Efforts are being made to decrease the number of cases of sexual harassment and to create public awareness about the existing judicial system. He said that it is time to create awareness among the people, especially women, about the laws. There is an important need, so that they can use the existing rules for themselves when needed. He said that in this way justice would be achieved. The provincial law minister said that women constitute half of the population and are playing an important role in every sphere of life. It is the responsibility of the government to ensure their safety so we are focusing on legislation in this regard. - APP

## Budget approved for KTH

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Minister Taimur Saleem Jhagra Thursday said that the government has approved Rs 3.5 billion budget for Khyber Teaching Hospital with an aim to increase and improve the services at the hospital. Addressing an orientation session with 142 newly inducted junior officers at KTH, he said that for the first time in the history of the province the government has released 100 percent development budget by July 1. He said the government has planned to increase the number of services at KTH and renovation of building work adding that role of Board of Governors of the hospital was highly laudable in providing essential health services to the people of the province. Earlier addressing the newly inducted graduates and house officers, he said the graduates were the future of the medical society where they would serve the humanity in every way. He emphasized upon the participants of the session that they should bring positive changes in their lives and show something new, think positive, set a goal of their life and struggle to achieve these goals. He mentioned the example of Prime Minister Imran Khan and said that captain of national cricket team is the Prime Minister of this country today and serving the nation. He advised them to work dedicatedly and help improve the department and serve the patients with care and professionally. - APP

## 'Teachers, parents must help curb corruption

FAISALABAD: Teachers, parents and other stakeholders will have to play a role in curbing corruption, which is badly distorting social, financial and moral fabric of society. This was stated by University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Dr Anas Sarwar Qureshi at a seminar, arranged by the university and the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). He said that one must understand the difference between halal and forbidden, he said, adding that "we will have to devote our energies to make halal earning". NAB Director Muhammad Hasnain told the audience about different methods of corruption including bribery, embezzlement and nepotism. He said NAB was all out to eliminate corruption through three-pronged strategy including enforcement, prevention and awareness. Convener Character-Building Society Prof Dr Tahir Zahoor said that lack of commitment in shouldering responsibilities was also a form of corruption. Deputy Director NAB Binish Nauman said NAB was a credible, effective, efficient and dynamic anti-corruption organisation, which created an enabling environment for a corruption-free society. - APP

## CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

## PUBLIC NOTICE

As per provisions of S.R.O.1575(I)/2019 approval of the Layout Plan & Building Plan is mandatory for construction & marketing of commercial projects astride major roads in Islamabad. The General Public is hereby cautioned to refrain from making any booking/sale/purchase of any unit in a building project (residential/commercial) for which the sponsors do not have approval of Building Plan from CDA. The information regarding approval of Building Plan of any project/multistory project can be obtained from the office of Director BC-II, CDA.

AL BARI GROUP Pvt Ltd has proposed a commercial project namely, The Aquatic Mall on G.T., Road Mouza Humak, Zone-V, Islamabad for which CDA has not issued any approval/NOC. The Sponsors/management of this Building have been asked to stop any kind of development/marketing prior to approval of authority & M/s IESCO, SNGPL & PTCL have also been requested to abstain from providing utility connections, without CDA's NOC for the subject Project. General Public is hereby informed to refrain from making any investment and further, to provide information/claim to this office regarding sale/purchase in the subject project with documentary evidence (Booking receipts, allotment or provisional allotment letters, any other documents etc) enclosing certified copy of his/her CNIC related to his claim/objection within 15 days from the publication here off through registered post A.D. in the name of Director MP/HS (051-9252494) and

## PLANNING &amp; DESIGN WING, CDA

Director BC-II, CDA (051-9252102).

PID (I) No.15/21



## Briefs

### ITP resolves 96 percent complaints on PM Portal

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) resolved more than 96 percent complaints by taking prompt action on them which were received on Prime Minister Portal during the last 20 days. According to details, IGP Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman and DIG (Security) Waqar Uddin Syed directed to immediately resolve the traffic related complaints received on PM portal and SSP (Traffic) Syed Karar Hussain promptly resolved them. SSP (Traffic) said that a total of 136 complaints related to traffic police were received on PM portal during June 11, 2021 and June 30, 2021 of which 100 were immediately resolved while feedback has been received on 36 complaints and these would be addressed soon. Overall, 96.2 percent citizens got satisfied after redressal of the issues highlighted by them while people have appreciated the prompt action of the traffic police. Moreover, ITP also resolved the complaints received to it through social media tools including twitter, Facebook an Instagram.

### Committed to resolve citizens' complaints

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Syed Gulzar Hussain Shah on Thursday said that the district administration was committed to resolve complaints of the citizens. Addressing a 'revenue Khuli Kutcheri' here at Raja Bazar he said on the directives of Punjab government, Deputy Commissioners and all the revenue staff would hold 'revenue Khuli Kutcheries' under one roof on first working day of every month and ensure on the spot resolution of the complaints. The Commissioner listened to the complaints of the citizens and issued on the spot orders to the field officers concerned of revenue and land record. He said, unjustified delay in the provision of revenue services by the officials concerned would not be tolerated and strict departmental action would be taken against negligent staff. The 'Khuli Kutcheri' was attended among others by a large number of citizens while on this occasion, Additional Deputy Commissioner, General, Capt. Qasim Ijaz, Assistant Commissioner, City, Waqas Sikandari, Sub-Registrar Zulqarnain Abbas and revenue officials concerned were also present. — APP

### DC directs to improve cleanliness in hospital

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner Amir Aiq Khan on Thursday paid a surprise visit to Tehsil Headquarter Hospital, Gujjar Khan and inspected the facilities being provided to the patients. He interacted with the patients admitted at the hospital and directed the officials to provide the maximum possible facilities to the patients reaching the hospital. He directed the Medical Superintendent of the Hospital to improve cleanliness and ensure the smooth functioning of the air conditioner and fans at the hospital keeping in view the scorching heat. Amir also checked the attendance register and medicine record at the hospital. The DC also asked the administration of the hospital to follow standard operating procedures regarding the COVID-19 including maintaining social distancing, use of masks and washing hands with sanitizer. Meanwhile, Assistant Commissioner Kotli Sattian during his visit to Tehsil Headquarter Hospital directed the concerned officials to set up a regular system of queuing and tokens to deal with the rush of patients.

# Role of UKPBC lauded in promotion of Pak-UK ties

## UK Pakistan Business Council Organizes a reception in honor of the Council of Economic and Energy Journalists



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: UK Pakistan Business Council Organized a reception in honor of the Council of Economic and Energy Journalists, chief guest Chairman Standing Committee on Commerce Zeeshan Khanzada, President Council of Economic & energy journalist Raja Kamran, Group leader Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sohail Altaf, President Rawalpindi

Chamber of Commerce and Industry Muhammad Nasir Mirza, journalists, business community attended. Chairman Standing Committee on Commerce Zeeshan Khanzada said that we welcomed delegation of Council of Economic and Energy Journalists in Islamabad. He added that such councils are helpful for the government in which the best strategy is adopted under the guidance of media experts. He said that there is a huge potential for bi-

lateral trade between Pakistan and the UK. The role of UK-Pakistan Business Council is commendable for reaping the full benefits. Group Leader Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industries Sohail Altaf said that with the generous policies of the Government of Pakistan for infrastructure development country is progressing. President, Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry Nasir Mirza, said that the national economy has been strengthened in providing business opportunities to

the people, especially export opportunities and especially in the development of industry and trade in Pakistan. That the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry is working for the welfare of the business community at all levels. President of the Pakistan Chapter of the UK-Pakistan Business Council Khurshid Barlas said that UK Pakistan Business Council will continue to do everything possible for the development of Pakistan in which the media will play an important role.

### WASA urges citizens for judiciously water usage

RAWALPINDI: The Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Rawalpindi on Thursday urged the citizens to use water judiciously as the agency was facing water shortage due to intense heatwaves, increase in demand and unscheduled power load-shedding. Chairing a meeting, Managing Director (MD) WASA, Raja Shoukat Mehmood directed the officers concerned to get the power load-shedding schedule of WAPDA on daily basis and make all possible arrangements to ensure water supply in affected areas through tube wells. He said, most affected areas of the city were Sadiqabad, Muslim Town, Pirwadhai, Dhoke Hassu, Dhoke Matkal and some areas of Khayaban-e-Sir Syed. Though, water supply from Rawal Dam and Khanpur Dam was as per the routine schedule and the water level of Rawal Dam was at satisfactory level but, unscheduled load-shedding affecting the operation of the pumping stations. He expressed the optimism that there would be no acute water shortage as water, available in the reservoirs was enough to meet demand of next three months. He said, the rains of monsoon season would help improve the water level in the reservoirs. — APP

### 15,872 persons receive COVID shots

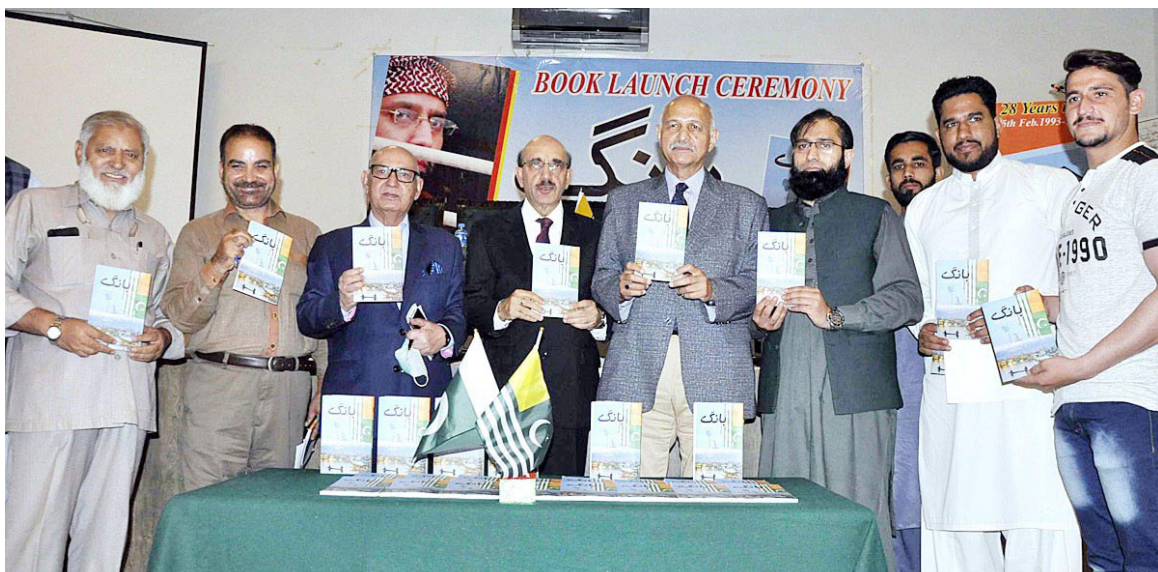
STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The total district tally of coronavirus vaccination Thursday reached 730,866 with the inoculation of 15,872 more persons against the deadly virus during the last 24 hours. According to fresh data released by the District Health Authority, 31,456 health workers while 699,410 other people including senior citizens have received their dose so far. The report said that the district health authority has registered 17 new infections during the last 24 hours including 16 of Rawalpindi and one from outside the district. It updated that patients reported during the last 24 hours, 3 belonged to Rawal Town, 4 Potohar town, 8 Rawalpindi Cantt, 2 Taxila, and one Chakwal. "Presently 34 confirmed patients were admitted to various facilities of the city including 10 in Holy Family Hospital, 5 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 9 in Institute of Urology and 10 in Fauji Foundation Hospital" he added. The report elaborated that one patient was on the ventilator in critical condition, 9 were stable and 24 were in moderate condition.

### Two drug peddlers held, Hashish recovered

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Police in their ongoing drive against drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and arrested two accused besides recovering 2320 grams Hashish (Marijuana) from their possession. According to a police spokesman, New Town police arrested a drug peddler named Muhammad Nadeem besides recovering 1200 grams kg Hashish from his possession. Pirwadhai police held Adeel Hussain for possessing 1120 grams Hashish. Separate cases have been registered against both the accused under Narcotics Control Act while further investigations are underway, he added. Superintendent Police (SP) Rawal appreciated the performance of police teams and directed to continue raids against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other lawbreakers.



ISLAMABAD: President of AJK, Sardar Masood Khan along with other dignitaries launching the book Baang authored by Dr. Qasim Factoo, victim of political vendetta at AJK House. —APP

## President appoints new Managing body of PRCS

KHAYAM ABBAS

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has appointed new Managing Body of Pakistan Red Crescent Society and a notification in this regard has been issued by the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination.

According to the notification, the president has approved the members of Managing Body of PRCS in terms of Rule 10 (a) of PRCS Rules-1976 in exercise of powers conferred un-

der the Section 3(ii) of Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Act read with Rule 9 (a) of PRCS Rules-1976. Mr. Asif Bajwa, Dr. Irshad Muhammad, Syed Hashim A Hassan, Dr. Parvez Ghafar Rajwani, Brig (r) Abdul Hadi and Brig (r) Dr. Mowdat Hussain Rana are among the new members of PRCS Managing Body. Other members of the Managing Body include Chairmen/Chairpersons of PRCS Branch Committees of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Merged Areas, Balochistan and Azad

Jammu & Kashmir. Secretary Finance Division, Secretary National Health Services Regulations & Coordination and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Capital Territory have been approved as member of PRCS managing body and the appointments of all members are made as per the PRCS rules, according to the notification. The newly appointed members of the PRCS managing body has vast experience and expertise in management, health and among them some have even

served at key positions in government bureaucracy. It is pertinent to mention here that the new Managing Body of PRCS was unanimously elected at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) held at the National Headquarters in Islamabad on March 31 this year. Punjab Governor Ch Muhammad Sarwar, Sindh Governor Imran Ismail and Gilgit-Baltistan Governor Raja Jalal Hussain Maqpoon had virtually attended the EGM as president of respective provincial branches of the PRCS.

## TVET staff for training under TF-NAVTTTC-ITEES

ISLAMABAD: National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) under the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training is providing latest technological skills to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) leaders and instructors in its efforts to affiliate/accredit Pakistani institutes with reputed international organizations. For this NAVTTTC has signed a MoU with world renowned Institute of Technical Education Services

(ITEES) Singapore. For the first batch of TVET leadership training Singapore's Temasek Foundation will be providing funding for training by Singapore ITEES. It is pertinent to mention that NAVTTTC is establishing 75 high-tech skill centers across Pakistan for providing the latest technological skills to Pakistani youth. These high-tech skill centers will be equipped with all latest facilities like distance learning, smart labs, job placement centers etc. — DNA

## CDA to start plantation campaign in ICT

ISLAMABAD: To make the capital city greener, the CDA has made a comprehensive plan for a tree planting campaign before the coming monsoon. An important meeting was held on Thursday under the chairmanship of Amir Ali Ahmed, Chairman Capital Development Authority in which all the directors of the Environment Directorate briefed Chairman CDA regarding tree planting in monsoon. The CDA chairman, while issuing orders, said that more than three and a half lakh saplings should be planted in the city

this year, which should be 6 feet in length. F-9 Park, Park Enclave, Diplomatic Enclave, Srinagar Highway, 9th Avenue, 10th Avenue, 11th Avenue, Margalla Road, Margalla Hills, National Park and Islamabad Highway have been selected for tree planting. The Department of Environment will plant flowers and plants in all the highways, green belts, roadside slopes, intersections of Islamabad for which a comprehensive plan has been drawn up and duties have also been distributed among the concerned staff. — DNA

## Pak has no coordination with Israel: Ashrafi

### Anti-Pakistan forces are worried following the improvement of Pakistan's relations with the Arab Islamic countries, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has no ties with Israel and propaganda is being used to put pressure on the state of Pakistan to create internal chaos, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council, Special Aide to Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and Middle East. Talking to national and international media representatives here on Thursday, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi said that neither United Arab Emirates nor Saudi Arabia has asked to recognize Israel. Anti-Pakistan forces are worried following the improvement of Pakistan's relations with the Arab

Islamic countries, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi. He said that Pakistan's relations with Arab Islamic countries including Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Egypt, Bahrain, Amman and Iraq are improving with practical cooperation in different areas and sectors. Contacts are underway with Saudi officials on the issue of repatriation of Pakistanis, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi. Prime Minister Imran Khan has announced Pakistan's policy in the National Assembly that we want friendship, not slavery, said Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi adding that if there is a civil war in Afghanistan, it will affect the entire world. Pakistan can be facilitator for peace in Afghanistan but not for anarchy and conflict.



Afghan groups should take the path of dialogue for reconciliation, said Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi. He said that the declaration of Pak-Afghan Ulema Conference with the cooperation of Saudi Arabia is an appeal for peace and reconciliation and not a fatwa against anyone.

Muslim leaders should thought how long the blood of innocent Muslims will continue to flow; Kashmir, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, there is blood everywhere and this bloody game must come to an end now, Ashrafi maintained. Responding to a question, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi said that no killing on the grounds of religion or sect has taken place in Pakistan for the last six months. The situation of inter-faith harmony in Pakistan is much better than many other countries in the region and world, said Tahir Ashrafi. On the instructions of Prime Minister Imran Khan, consultation process is underway with leadership of all religious schools of thought and respec-

tive security agencies and provincial governments for the establishment of law and order situation and for interfaith tolerance and harmony during the month of Muharram-ul-Haram. The peace committees and interfaith harmony councils in the country are being fully activated and organized ahead of Muharram-ul-Haram to promote inter-faith harmony and tolerance in the country. Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi announced that important leaders of Arab Islamic countries would visit Pakistan within the next three months and delegations from Pakistan would also visit Arab Islamic countries. Pakistan is strengthening relations with the Brother Islamic countries in all areas of cooperation, said Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi.



## Briefs

## CIA held four drug dealers

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Crime Investigation Agency (CIA) of Islamabad Police have arrested four drug dealers and recovered 8.400 kilogram hashish from their possession.

According to a news release on Thursday, DIG (Operations), Afzaal Ahmad Kausar has categorically directed all the police officers to accelerate efforts to curb crime in the city.

Following the DIG directions, SSP (Investigation) Atta ur-Rehman constituted police teams under the supervision of DSP CIA. A team comprising sub-inspector Inaam Ullah, ASI Muhammad Ishaq and others arrested four drug dealers namely Feroz, Imran, Khalid and Muhammad Sabeel. More-over another team comprising ASI Waaseem Haider along with others arrested a wanted member of house burglars gang identified as Chan Zaib resident of Dhoke Abbasi, Tarnol and recovered 17 stolen mobile phones, LEDs, SSTV, DVR and parts of stolen motorbike from him. Cases have been registered against the nabbed person and further investigation underway.

## CDA demolishes 250 illegal structures

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) Thursday demolished over 250 structures in Sangjani, an area in the outskirts of Islamabad in its ongoing anti-encroachment drive across the city.

The city managers continued taking action against land grabbers and retrieved land worth billions of rupees during the last two days, its spokesman told APP. He said the operations were being conducted by the enforcement teams of federal apex agency in collaboration with civil administration and federal capital police.

In another operation the authority dismantled an under construction plaza in Sarae Madu, situated near grand trunk road. Similarly, seven boundary walls, five rooms, two gates and a foundation wall located in Shah Maidan and Dhok Tali, areas of Bari Imam were demolished. One room each in Mohalla Chajjaar and Lalaji Sarkar were also destroyed.

A residential house in Margalla Town, and an illegal grill were demolished. An under construction wall in Hansa Colony in Sector G-8 was also dismantled during the drive. — APP

## SECP for new trading system at Stock Exchange

DNA

ISLAMABAD: For boost to capital market by making it very attractive to investors through policy and structure reforms, three bills — Companies Bill, Corporate Restructuring Bill and Secure Transactions Bill — have been passed by the National Assembly which have been tabled in the Senate, the Upper House.

In an interactive session with visiting delegation of Council of Economic and Energy Journalists (CEEJ) Karachi, here at Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, Chairman SECP Amir Khan told that the new companies' bill had some very significant changes relating to ease of doing business, protection of minority shareholders and to facilitate start-ups etc.

As part of the capital market reforms programme on July 12, 2021 the commission would also introduce new trading system at Pakistan Stock Exchange and a strong surveillance system by the end of this year. The CEEJ delegation was led by President Raja Kamran and Secretary Kashif Muneer.

ECP Chairman said that with the launch of secure transactions system soon Pakistan would stand amongst 60 countries in the world having this modern trading system in practice.

## President ICCI and Saudi envoy discuss trade ties

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan stressed the importance of promoting direct business linkages between the private sectors of both countries to explore new avenues of mutual cooperation

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) along with Muhammad Aslam Khokhar, ICCI Executive Member visited the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia and held with Nawaf Saeed Al-Malkiy, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to explore the new prospects for further improving bilateral trade between the two brotherly countries. They also reviewed the progress on the MoU that was signed between the two institutions to expand and strengthen trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan stressed the importance of promoting direct business linkages between the private sectors of both countries to explore new avenues of mutual cooperation and said that for this purpose, ICCI has planned to take a business delegation of major exporters & importers from across Pakistan to Saudi Arabia to connect them with Saudi counterparts for business collaborations.

The delegation would represent various sectors including textiles & garments, pharmaceuticals, IT,



agro products including Halal food products, dairy goods, rice, fruits & vegetables, cooking oil, surgical instruments, sportswear, leather goods, marble & granite, steel, cement etc. He said that the facilitation and support of Saudi embassy was very important to make its visit successful.

ICCI President also shared a list of major exporters and importers

of Pakistan with Saudi Ambassador for sharing it with Saudi counterparts so that the overlooked sectors could be tapped for bilateral trade promotion and businesses of both countries would prosper together.

He said that the delegation would also explore the opportunities of JVs and investment between the two countries, which would fur-

ther strengthen their strategic alliance. He said that Saudi Arabia has always supported Pakistan in difficult times and said that bringing the private sectors of both countries closer would further deepen their growing relations.

Speaking at the occasion, Nawaf Saeed Al-Malkiy, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia welcomed Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President ICCI and

Muhammad Aslam Khokhar Executive Member ICCI and appreciated the proactive role of ICCI in promoting business activities. He said that Saudi Arabia wanted to see Pakistan as a growing economy as it was a very important country for the whole Muslim Ummah. He said that the Saudi Arabia was interested in closer commercial and investment cooperation with Pakistan.

He said that Pakistan has a lot of potential for economic growth that should be highlighted more effectively to attract foreign investors. He said that there was a need to focus on projecting the positive things of Pakistan to highlight its true potential.

He assured that Saudi Embassy would facilitate ICCI delegation in visiting Saudi Arabia as exchange of business delegations between the two countries was the best way to explore all untapped areas of mutual collaboration.

He further assured that he would continue to work for further promoting trade cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia that would bring progress and prosperity for both nations. Both sides also exchanged views on speeding up the work for realizing the key objectives of MoU that was signed by them in January this year.



ISLAMABAD: Hamid Asghar Khan, Pakistan ambassador Morocco calls on the Minister for Information Fawad Chaudry. News sharing agreement between Pakistan and Morocco is finalised. — DNA

## AIOU to establish 4 excellence centers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Executive Council of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) in its meeting held the other day at the main campus approved establishment of Centers of Excellence for Sufi Studies, Seerat Studies, Iqbal Chair of Muslim Thoughts, and an Archives which will be based on series of interviews of living legends.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, Vice-Chancellor (AIOU). While briefing the meeting about the objectives of setting up these centers he said that the aim to

establish these centers would be the department of an excellence-based knowledge hub primarily to carry out Sufi dialogue, research on Seerat-un-Nabi and unveil the hidden corners of Iqbal's Muslim Thoughts.

He further said that the Seerat studies center will contribute to create, transfer, and dissemination of knowledge by taking examples from the life of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and to extend co-operation understanding and professional linkages among the institutions working for promotion and implementation of social justice & welfare in the society.

## SECP for Shari'ah Compliant Developmental REIT Scheme

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) Thursday accorded approval for registration of the first Shariah Compliant Developmental Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) Scheme in Pakistan under the revamped REIT regulatory framework.

Earlier this year, SECP had significantly revamped the REIT Regulation, 2015, said a press release issued here. This signifies that the amendments introduced after an exhaustive stakeholder consultation process have proven to act as the much-needed catalyst for the REIT sector.

The REIT sector was previously relatively dormant, with the launch of



only one REIT Scheme since 2008. Amendments to the REIT Regulations in 2015 only yielded launch of one rental REIT Scheme, whereas successive amendments in 2018 could not provide desired outcome of mobilizing further REIT Schemes within the country.

The REIT Scheme envisages invest-

ment in un-developed land in Karachi, aiming to uplift the area and develop the real estate, including construction and sale of apartments and commercial units by REIT Management Company for generating income for unit holders.

Pursuant to registration of the REIT Scheme and approval for issuance of units, the REIT Scheme can raise funds through offer of units to Private Investors for acquisition and development of the proposed real estate. Growth in the REITs sector will be led to better documentation, formalization, governance, and transparency and investor protection in the real estate sector and provide opportunity to small investors to benefit from growth in the real estate sector.

## Fixing climate policies, gender issues gap crucial

“We need to acknowledge that the troubles that women face during the climate action is different from those that are faced by men

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Climate Change Ms. Zartaj Gul Wazir has said that a gap between climate change policies and gender issues still exists that needs to be redressed properly.

She was speaking at the launch of a study titled: ‘Climate induced migration among women: stories from Muzaffargarh and Tharparkar districts, Pakistan’, held under the auspices of Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here on Thursday.

“We need to acknowledge that the troubles that women face during the climate action is different from those that are faced by men, so the level of struggle to cope with climate issues between genders is different,” the minister maintained.

Commenting on the findings of the study, she said that women empowerment is impossible without

equipping them with education and financial independence, so there is an urgent need to include women in workforce and employment in addition to providing them access to school and agricultural trainings.

“Climate induced migration with a gender lens must be included in Pakistan's climate change policy,” she said, adding that her ministry is working to achieve this objective. She further said that the implementation of laws to protect women from gender-based violence should be ensured while working with law-enforcement agencies at provincial and district level.

Director Climate Action Network in South Asia (CANSA) Mr. Sanjay Vahist emphasized that we must look at this climate induced migration from a regional and international perspective. Sharing his presentation, he said that climate change will severely impact agriculture, water resources, ecosystems, food security, health, and energy production



to international levels, he added.

Ms. Raus Marija, a representative from International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), while appreciating the importance of the study, said that we need to focus on migration and long-term effects of climate change as well as devising possible strategies and tools on climate migration. She said Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable and disaster-prone regions to climate change and thus, making data collection on climate migration should be a priority area in future.

Head of ICMPD Pakistan office, Ms. Raana Rahim, opined that since the study has highlighted that how the negative impact of climate change disproportionately affects the poorer and less educated fragments of society, particularly women, and the response must also be gender responsive with taking these needs into consideration.

Earlier, Mr. Danish Hasan Ansari, Visiting Researcher at SDPI, pre-

sented his research findings. He highlighted that the economic empowerment is necessary to boost women's decision-making power. Moreover, we need to launch awareness campaigns on climate change impact for communities at grass root level and health and hygiene needs of the women and girls, especially during the crisis time. Khansa Naeem, Project Assistant and by Maryam Shabbir Abbasi, Environmentalist at SDPI, also shared various aspects of the issue with the audience, including a high risk of sexual violence for women, who are internally displaced due to climate change.

The study also comprised stories from local women on their experiences with climate migration, the challenges they faced, its impact on their health and well-being, financial constraints and lack of access to clean drinking water and food, and impact on children's education due to migration, especially for girls.

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## CPO issues transfer orders to change SHOs

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ahsan Younas has issued transfer orders of Stations House Officers (SHOs) of six Police Stations of Rawalpindi District.

According to details, Sub-Inspector Muhammad Naseer-Ur-Rehman has been posted as SHO Saddar Wah Police Station while former SHO Saddar Wah, Amjad Pervez has been transferred to Police Line.

Sub-Inspector Adeel Khan has been posted as SHO Wah Cantt while former SHO Wah Cantt Sub-Inspector Muhammad Arshad has been posted Incharge Investigation Officer, Chowki Trat. Sub-Inspector Masroor Ali Akbar has been transferred from Kotli Sattian and posted SHO Taxila. Former SHO Taxila Sub-Inspector Ghazanfar Abbas has been transferred to Police line due to medical leave.

Sub-Inspector Zaheeruddin Babar has been posted as SHO Cantt and Sub-Inspector Qaiser Naseem has been posted as Acting SHO Kotli Satyan.

Orders have been issued to appoint Sub-Inspector Shajeeel Ahmed as SHO Gujjar Khan Police Station.

Former SHO Gujjar Khan Inspector Zaheer Ahmed Butt has been transferred to police line due to the retirement application, Rawalpindi police spokesman said.

## NCA to hold camp for enthusiasts

ISLAMABAD: National College of Arts (NCA) has planned to hold a two week Summer Camp in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore from July 05 to engage the art lovers in creative skills based activities.

An official of NCA told APP that the summer camp is being offered in the fields of Drawing, Oil Painting, Water Color Painting, Fashion Illustration, Calligraphy, Graphic Design, Animation and Digital Photography in Islamabad. While the courses including Drawing, Painting and Graphic Design are being offered in Rawalpindi. In Lahore, the courses including Drawing, Oil Painting, Water Color Painting, fashion illustration, Sculpture, Graphic Design, Calligraphy, Animation, Write Shoot and Edit (Short Film) and Digital Photography are being offered. — APP

## AOB revokes registration of audit firm

ISLAMABAD: Audit Oversight Board (AOB) Thursday revoked the registration of an audit firm and barred it from carrying out audit of public interest companies.

The proceedings took place against Nauman Javed Hasnain Rashid, Chartered Accountants, said a press release issued here by AOB. The firm had failed to submit form A and pay the annual registration fee despite several reminders on email and postal addresses earlier provided by the firm.

A show cause notice was then issued by AOB to the firm to explain its position in writing and in person. However, the firm did not reply to the reminders or the show cause notice.

The action was then taken by AOB after providing an opportunity of being heard to the firm. A copy of the Order can be viewed on AOB's website: www.aob.gov.pk

AOB is the independent regulator in Pakistan established by the parliament in 2016 to protect public interest by overseeing the quality of the audit of Financial Statements of public interest companies (PICs).

There are more than 1000 PICs in Pakistan which include all listed companies and non-listed public sector companies.

Out of over 550 audit firms in Pakistan, 124 have a satisfactory quality rating 91 are currently registered with AOB. Only the audit firms registered with AOB are authorized to audit the financial statements of a PIC. — APP

## Police arrest four, illegal weapons recovered

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Police, in a crackdown against illegal weapons, rounded up four accused from different areas and recovered four 30-bore pistols and ammunition from their possessions, police spokesman said on Thursday.

He informed that Cantt police on the directives of Rawalpindi City Police Officer (CPO), launched crackdown and arrested two accused namely Sajjad Khan and Saddam and recovered two 30-bore pistols and ammunition from their possession. Sadiqabad police rounded up Zahid for having a 30-bore pistol while New Town police netted Nadir Ali with a 30-bore pistol and ammunition.

Cases have been registered against all of the accused while further investigations are underway, he said.



## Saving children

PAKISTAN'S ambassador to the UN Muneer Akram has asked the UN Security Council to play a more direct role in protecting children caught up in conflict, notably those in Occupied Kashmir. The ambassador pointed out that Indian security forces had since 2019, when the status of Jammu and Kashmir was altered, directly targeted children with pellet guns, leaving some with permanent injuries and blinding others. Apart from this, children have also been among the 922 people whose houses have been demolished by the Indian security forces and have been caught up in all kinds of incidents from which there is no effort to protect them. The image which went viral some months ago of a small boy sitting on the body of his grandfather who had been killed comes to mind.

These are major violations of the UN resolutions on children in armed conflict and also on protecting the best interest of the child under the UN Child Rights Convention. There are also other places where children have been caught up in conflict and these too must be addressed. But Kashmir needs to be made into a priority, and brought into the national debate at a higher and more direct level. The constant detention of persons in Kashmir and the involvement of children in the conflict is something that humanity should not tolerate. For too long young people, including teenagers no more than 13 years of age, have been a part of the uprising against Indian security forces. These children need to be protected and given the security of life that they deserve. The conflict in Kashmir has disrupted their education and their daily lives. They need to be given back their childhood and protected from such brutal action by Indian soldiers who have shown no mercy in acting against them in various ways.

The rights of Kashmiri children are, under the UN conventions, like those of children everywhere in the world. The world should no longer ignore what is happening in Kashmir and how its children are being treated. They must be protected, they must be saved, and even if conflict is to continue in Kashmir, there must be no involvement of children either in direct fighting or attacks by Indian security forces which directly harm them. Already 300 women and children have died in the conflict. This is 300 too many.

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## Settler colonialism

FOLLOWING last month's forced evictions of Palestinian's from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah, Israeli forces are now doing the same in the Silwan neighbourhood of East Jerusalem. Despite the wave of local and international protests against Israeli occupation and illegal settler expansion in the occupied Palestinian territories, Tel Aviv remains undeterred as forces use tear gas and batons to push back residents and activists in order to carry out demolitions.

On June 7, the Jerusalem municipality issued a series of 21-day demolition orders to 13 families of the area. These orders are used a tactic to expel Palestinian residents because if they do not evacuate and demolish their houses within the 21-day period, the families themselves would have to cover the demolition costs—estimated at \$6,000. Compounding the injustice is an Israeli law which makes it difficult for Palestinian families to appeal the demolition orders before the courts.

As the cycle of oppression continues unabated for the Palestinians, the international community has now moved on and is struggling to sustain any kind of pressure against illegal Israeli actions. Such is the tragedy of our times, the bandwidth to engage with these issues is limited to a week before our attention drifts away to other causes populating our Twitter feeds. Meanwhile, international leaders continue to pat themselves on the back by engaging in hollow rhetoric about their "commitment" to a two-state solution.

The two-state solution however is a ruse which is used to gaslight Palestinian's and shirk any kind of responsibility on part of international actors to bring about a just solution to this issue. The US' role in this ongoing tragedy needs to be called out. Besides the occasional verbal rebuke to sustain the façade of being an honest broker, Israel's transgressions have had the backing of the US on various occasions. The two-state solution ceased to exist with the signing of the Oslo accords because the expansion of settlements was not proscribed. Exploiting this lacuna, Israel's settler colonial project has extinguished Palestinian hopes of gaining a contiguous territory for the formation of an independent state.

# Post pandemic Poland: crisis-proof, equitable

Mateusz Morawiecki



The COVID-19 pandemic might well have taken Poland back to the 1990s. It is enough to look at the terrible economic data coming from some countries—including European ones—to understand that the worst-case scenario was not the stuff of disaster films

POLAND will use the time after the pandemic to refashion its economic and social system so that it is more crisis-proof and equitable, setting the country on a new path of development.

We live in amazing times. The last dozen or so months have been marked by health concerns and fears about the future. A lot of Poles wondered not only whether they would be able to avoid the coronavirus, but also whether they would still have a job to provide for their families and make sure that their children would not have abandon hope of a better life.

The COVID-19 pandemic might well have taken Poland back to the 1990s. It is enough to look at the terrible economic data coming from some countries—including European ones—to understand that the worst-case scenario was not the stuff of disaster films. Fortunately, the scenario has not materialised because, as opposed to the 1990s, Poles could count on the state that got actively involved in helping all those in need. The unprecedented support offered as part of the Anti-Crisis Shield and Financial Shield enabled us to slow down the disastrous consequences of the pandemic and stop the fall in GDP for 2020 at the level of 3%, a result that was third best in Europe and unmatched in the group of large countries with a population of over 10 million. Even more impressively, like no other country in the EU, we have managed to keep the unemployment rate at around 3%.

Other data confirm that Polish economy has coped quite well during the crisis. Export figures registered an all-time record in March 2021, reaching over PLN110 bn. In May, the PMI exceeded 57 points, the best result since the index started to be measured. A few months before, the European Commission said that Poland, as one of just 4 EU member states, ensured the stability of its public finance in the short and long-term perspective. In a situation like that there is only one mistake that can be made: decide that everything is going well and stop doing anything.

**Time of crisis—opportunity or disaster?**

A crisis from which no lessons are learnt is a disaster. Properly recognised and understood, however, it becomes an opportunity as well as a catalyst for change. The two sentences sum up the philosophy behind the Polish Deal. The current crisis is exceptional in that it cannot be re-

solved by textbook solutions. Whether we look for them in Hayek or in Lassalle, no theory of economic crisis has foreseen a situation where the economic and social activity is paralysed overnight across the globe.

Faced with the crisis of COVID-19, we must act like doctors do when they deal with the virus itself. While we do not have a specific remedy, our experience tells us to treat the symptoms. We also know from history that a crisis, whatever its nature, requires increased presence of the state as it has to be managed rather than left to itself. In 1933, the American President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced the New Deal in response to the Great Depression. The aim of the programme was to recover the economy, boost foreign trade and make enormous public investments: at that time, 120,000 public buildings and 77,000 bridges were constructed. Over the following decade, the USA was criss-crossed by a network of motorways. This is the scenario that inspires Poland today.

**Polish Deal: a new quality**

The objectives of the Polish Deal focus not only on rebuilding Poland after the pandemic, but also on refashioning Polish economic and social system to make it more equitable and crisis-proof so that the country can be set on a new path of development.

A diagnosis of pandemic ailments had to start with the health care system. COVID-19 has pushed the sector to the brink of collapse even in the richest countries. Poland was no exception. Had it not been for a very firm restrictions policy and a network of makeshift hospitals built at an amazing pace, our country would have also experienced a pandemic breakdown. It is hard to image its scale and the ensuing chaos that would have happened if we had not digitalised much of the system before the crisis. Although we have spent over PLN100 bn on health care in the last 5 years, its quality is still not up to the standard expected by the public. This is a clear signal that the current system of health care funding has reached its limit. It is high time we abandoned the philosophy of restructuring. If we want to take a qualitative leap forward to make Poland rise up to the level of Western countries, we must step up our efforts to set aside 7% of GDP for health care.

**Polish taxation paradox**

This requires that we change our model of health care funding and thus our taxation system. So far, Poland was

the only country were part of the health care premium was tax-deductible. The structure of the entire system meant that those who earned the most could optimise their taxes relatively easily. Hence, the Polish tax system, although nominally progressive, became in fact regressive. People of lower income pay proportionally higher taxes than people who earn more.

Besides offending the sense of justice, this taxation disorder also prevented social cohesion. It deepened inequalities that had already been exacerbated during the crisis. Crises are like powerful sea waves. They rock large ships but can sink smaller vessels. Recent studies show clearly that the pandemic year of 2020 aggravated income disparity. The rich got richer regardless of the crisis, whilst the poorest lost precisely because of the difficult circumstances.

**Towards a Poland of true solidarity**

The Polish Deal addresses these challenges because it stems from the spirit of genuine solidarity which should be understood very broadly. It is horizontal in the sense of ensuring social justice, bridging income gaps and supporting those who earn the least. To that end, we increased the income tax threshold to PLN30,000, which is close to the thresholds used in Western countries; it is higher than in France and comparable to Denmark. But the Polish Deal is also about vertical or inter-generational solidarity. On the one hand, we turn towards the past by supporting old people through tax-exempt pensions. We return to the values without which it would be difficult to imagine the future of Polish and European societies. On the other hand, we want to take care of future generations and lay foundations for development that will help our children earn more, work in better conditions and, last but not least, live in an environment where they will breathe fresh air rather than read about it as a luxury for the selected few.

The early 2020s is a crucial time for Poland. We are on the cusp of civilizational changes on an unprecedented scale. Due to historical circumstance, we were only passive witnesses of such changes in the past. Now we can be their active participants. The scenario is ready. All we need to do now is put the Polish Deal in practice. We will try to win the widest possible support for the strategy as it is only with social acceptance that it can be successful.

**The writer is the Prime Minister of Poland.**

# Defying America's conspiracy theory against China

Khalid Taimur Akram



The targets of the G-7 plan fall short by a fair margin by excluding China and encapsulating belligerent narratives like 'rivalry and competition'. The west proposed project can never compete exceptional China Belt & Road initiative. The U.S. is trying to pursue its vile vested interests via coercive diplomatic actions and hostile rhetoric. One should not forget the history of the West as it had colonized Asian-African countries and plundered resources

CHINA has been taking every possible measure to halt the spread of the Coronavirus and curb this 21st Century pandemic. China has prudently dealt with the severe health conditions posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, the country has been providing immense pharmaceutical and vaccine assistance to developing and underdeveloped nations. While observing the contemporary international scenario, it has been clearly witnessed that China has emerged as the global leader to revamped its economy, wisely catered its population out of health hazards, and facilitated other countries to mitigate the devastating impacts of the menace. On the flip side, Washington is busy playing the blame game and giving extra leverage to false propaganda-fake news against China rather than making concrete efforts to address the global peril. Recently, U.S. President Joe Biden has ordered the intelligence agency C.I.A to investigate the origin of the deadly virus, accusing that the Coronavirus was accidentally leaked from a lab, in addition to the prevailing theory that it is an animal transmitted it to humans outside a lab. However, these false allegations have been rejected by international media and seasoned experts. This belligerent move is yet another manifestation of American anti-Chinese propaganda. The article highlights the facts and defies the perpetuated fringe conspiracy theory against China.

**Unveiling the U.S Vicious Motives against Rising superpower China:**

False news and fake rumors circulating on international media are deluging and misleading people regarding the facts concerning the Covid-19 pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) has defined this harmful outbreak of misleading myths as "infodemic". An infodemic is an overabundance of information, both online and offline. It includes deliberate attempts to disseminate wrong information to undermine the public health response and advance alternative agendas of groups or individuals. Thereby, it is necessary that countries must promote healthy behaviors and mitigate the harm from disinformation or misinformation.

The West, especially the U.S., has remained a prominent rival to Chinese-led initiatives. The irresistible rise of China has been tried to curtailed by the U.S. through negative propaganda and media campaigns. In this aspect, U.S. has spread misleading information about the Covid-19 that the virus had been created accidentally or deliberately in a laboratory at the Wuhan Disease Control and Prevention Centre. This false proposition had been made against a government-run lab in Hubei Province of China, the "Wuhan Institute of Virology." However, all these absurd claims were made merely based on speculation. The West international media outlets have fueled the false news, including the Los Angeles Times and the Washington Post.

The false news has been fueled by West international media outlets, including the Los Angeles Times and the Washington Post. Many international public health researchers clearly stated that the Covid-19 had nothing had no natural origin in China.

As per the 2020 report compiled by Chinese researchers from several institutions-no epidemiological links were found between the first patient and later cases. Furthermore, 13 of the 41 cases had no link to the marketplace. Moreover, China fully supports the transparent investigation and facilitates such research processes. According to these research and facts, it is vital to understand that China has not started the Coronavirus, nor are Asians responsible for it. However, the West and U.S. government's false statements and anti-Chinese propaganda cannot harm Chinese popularity and Chinese-led exceptional initiative. The U.S. is politicizing the issue for its own gains. Such myths and claims do not possess any credibility and always misguide people and create chaos. All the allegations amid the Coronavirus origin are meaningless and mere politicizing campaigns against the rising Chinese economy.

The west negative rhetoric and false propaganda have been unveiled before the world. Trade war, banning Chinese cotton, the G-7 rivalry against the Belt & Road Initiative (BRI), and the novel Covid-19 blame games are the clear outcomes of the West's and U.S.A frustration to curtail Chinese rising influence and popularity. The west wants to maintain its hegemony over the world. Thereby, indulged in vicious campaigns because they fear Chinese rising economy. The latest G-7 led Build Back Better World (B3W) has been introduced as a rival to China's BRI. However, a mere analysis of its feasibility for delivering such a financial miracle to match the pace of China's BRI looks like a far cry from reality. The agenda is likely to face many impediments and consensus-building issues. The targets of the G-7 plan fall short by a fair margin by excluding China and encapsulating belligerent narratives like 'rivalry and competition'. The west proposed project can never compete exceptional China Belt & Road initiative. The U.S. is trying to pursue its vile vested interests via coercive diplomatic actions and hostile rhetoric. One should not forget the history of the West as it had colonized Asian-African countries and plundered resources. The marks of their tyrannies and inhuman activities are visible to present times.

Western countries are open to using tricks of sanctions and political manipulation at a frantic pace against China. The Xinjiang cotton ban in the wake of human rights violation has been done by the U.S. particularly to create an anti-China sentiment globally using the Xinjiang Muslims. The west fabricates the stories and continuously has been

indulged in defaming China's image globally. Nevertheless, the greater alliance among the world's countries is significant for the expeditious socio-economic growth of all regions. Under the ambit of the BRI, many states have adopted effective and prudent strategies to modernize and diversify their economies. The result-orientated policies by the visionary Chinese leadership ultimately prove to be a driving force for the amicable resolution of common global menaces and persistent challenges. Moreover, the Belt and Road initiative has perfectly proved its strengths in the last decade through its actual economic dividends. Therefore, it is needless to say that any other project (sponsored by the U.S. or West) may take a lot of time, resources, vigilant deliberations and management before it matches the peaceand success story of the BRI miracle.

**President Xi Jinping's Successful Model of Crisis Management and Conflict Resolution:**

Under the dynamic and visionary leadership of President Xi Jinping, China has been successfully adding to human survival despite baseless conspiracy theories. President Xi has been considered as a top global leader. His practical measures and policies to prevent and defuse major risks associated with the pandemic are worth praising. He has been holding a holistic approach for crisis management since the beginning of the novel Coronavirus. The west has not been disseminating the actual picture and facts related to the startling Chinese strategies/initiatives to curtail the virus. From the beginning, the Chinese leadership adopted the strategy of Contain, Control, and Cure. Thus, China has emerged as the first country in the world to revamped its socio-economic structure in the pandemic time. Moreover, China has shown the highest capability of a great public health model to secure its population. The Chinese government has efficiently used vaccine diplomacy to ensure that all governments can secure their people and economies from the adverse implications of this lethal virus. Within a few months after the pandemic, the public-private partnerships working under the Chinese government's guidelines started to test, produce and supply many vaccines. This shows China's sincere efforts to assist nations across the world. Furthermore, the Chinese government is willing to enhance global paramedical cooperation to combat the pandemic. Comprehending the facts further, it has been clear that China is not responsible for "creating" or "spreading" the deadly Coronavirus rather it was merely the American anti-Chinese campaign. The West and U.S need to stop projecting hostile rhetoric and propaganda against China and revisit their narrative to facilitate and integrate nations worldwide in tackling the virus.

**The writer is the Executive Director, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad**



## Briefs

## Indonesia announces lockdown in Java and Bali

AGENCIES

JAKARTA: Indonesia has announced a lockdown on its main island Java, as well as the tourism destination of Bali. The announcement by President Joko Widodo comes as the country battles multiple outbreaks and an alarming spike in Covid cases. Indonesia recently recorded two million Covid cases, attributed to increased holiday travel and the Delta variant.

The lockdown will last two weeks and aims to reduce the number of cases to below 10,000 a day. The country is currently recording more than 20,000 new cases each day. However, experts warn that the case numbers are potentially much higher, because of severely inadequate testing outside Jakarta.

Under the new rules, all staff working for non-essential businesses will have to work from home, and distance learning will be implemented across schools. Malls, places of worship and public leisure facilities like parks will also be shut, with dining-in banned.

Businesses including those in the health, security and energy industries have been deemed critical and will be allowed to run at 100% capacity, which means all employees can go to work. Others like financial services, which have been deemed essential, can run at 50% capacity. Indonesia has had the worst Covid outbreak in South East Asia, with about 2.1 million positive cases and 57,000 deaths so far.

## 'Pak wants working relationship with US'

FROM PAGE 01

spokesperson in a weekly briefing said that Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood received a telephone call from US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland and both agreed to maintain close coordination with each other on all matters of common interests. Both discussed bilateral relations and key regional issues.

"The Afghan peace process progressed with joint efforts by the US and Pakistan," he added. The foreign ministry spokesman said that Pakistan wants respectful repatriation of the Afghan refugees who have been staying in Pakistan for decades and that is only possible with enduring peace in Afghanistan. He also said, it is the duty of the host country to protect the diplomatic missions and Turkey has been talking about security of the Kabul Airport. The foreign office spokesman said that China is Pakistan's strategic partner and both working on CPEC's infrastructure and also working on three Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Pakistan. MOFA spokesperson said that India is playing a spoiler's role in Afghanistan. On the other hand, he said Iran is an important country of the region and Pakistan and Iran worked together for peace in Afghanistan. The spokesperson reminded India that illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir Valley is a disputed territory and India's one-sided claims and statement would not change it.

He said we will continue to cooperate with the US and the international community towards that end. The Spokesperson said it is desire and hope of Pakistan that the Afghan peace process succeeds and the Afghan parties agree to a common solution which is inclusive, broad based and comprehensive. He reiterated that there is no military solution to the conflict.

When asked to comment on Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's recent statement in Capitol Hill, Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri said instead of indulging in blame game, the Afghan leadership should spend all energy on making the peace process successful. The Foreign Office Spokesperson welcomed the UN Secretary General's recent report which highlights the indiscriminate targeting of Kashmiris with pellet guns in the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He called upon the international community to take cognizance of the plight of oppressed Kashmiri children.

## UEFA slammed over Euro 2020 crowd numbers

Germany has permitted a limited number of fans into Munich's stadium but London's Wembley stadium had more than 40,000 for England's 2-0 win over the Germans in the last-16

SPORTS DESK / AGENCIES

BERLIN: German Minister of the Interior Horst Seehofer has called a decision by European football's governing body UEFA to allow big crowds at Euro 2020 "utterly irresponsible" especially given the spread of the Delta variant of the coronavirus. Seehofer told a news conference on Thursday that UEFA seems to have been driven by commercial considerations, which he said should not rank above health concerns. Germany has permitted a limited number of fans into Munich's stadium but London's Wembley stadium had more than 40,000 for England's 2-0 win over the Germans in the last-16. "I consider the position of UEFA to be absolutely irresponsible," Seehofer said. "We all know that contact avoidance and certain hygiene rules are indispensable to overcome infections."

When you see pictures of "people being

very close to each other" and "celebrating successes with big hugs", Seehofer added, it is "preordained that this will promote the occurrence of infections". For the semi-finals and final at Wembley, 60,000 spectators are to be admitted despite a sharp rise in coronavirus figures in Britain because of the Delta variant. Meanwhile, officials said on Wednesday that nearly 2,000 people who live in Scotland attended a Euro 2020 event while infectious with COVID-19. Thousands of Scots came to London for their team's game against England on June 18. At least 300 Finns who went to cheer on the national team at the tournament have contracted COVID-19, health officials said on Tuesday. The daily infection



rate in Finland has gone up from approximately 50 a day to more than 200 in the past week, and the figure is likely to grow in the coming days, they said.

Last week, Russian authorities blamed the Delta variant for a surge in both new infections and deaths in major cities including St Petersburg which is due to host a quarter-final on Friday.

UEFA and British officials say a high vaccination rate protects most people and testing is meant to stop infected fans from entering the stadium. Commercialism should "not overshadow the protection of the population against infection", Seehofer continued. On Wednesday, Karl Lauterbach, a health expert in the German parliament said: "UEFA is responsible for

the deaths of many people." UEFA's medical chief Daniel Koch was quoted by Britain's PA news agency as saying it "cannot be excluded" that there will be COVID cases linked to matches at Euro 2020. But he said the same applies to any number of gatherings now permitted as restrictions ease across the continent.

He added that UEFA has ruled out any changes to the match schedule or capacity limits. The World Health Organization (WHO) also said on Thursday that host cities need to better monitor the movement of spectators, including before they arrive and after they leave the stadiums.

"We need to look much beyond just the stadium themselves," Catherine Smallwood, Senior Emergency Officer at WHO's European office, told a press conference.

Last month, the WHO said it was concerned about the easing of COVID-19 restrictions by host nations, noting that some were already seeing rising cases.



DERBY: A view of 1st intra-squad 50-over match between Babar Azam XI and Shadab Khan XI. - DNA

## Mirza makes 'difficult decision'

LONDON: Sania Mirza will become the first Indian woman to compete in four Olympic Games but she admitted Thursday it will be "difficult" to be separated from her young son while she is in Tokyo. Family members are banned from going to this month's Games as Japanese authorities aim to reduce the risk from Covid-19 as much as possible. For 34-year-old Mirza, that means Ishaan, her son with husband and former Pakistan cricket captain Shoaib Malik, will stay with family while she is in Tokyo. "We are in difficult times and we have to make difficult decisions," said Mirza. "But never in my mind did I have any doubts about going. I was very sure." - APP

## Lionel Messi's Barcelona contract ends

SPORTS DESK

BARCELONA: Lionel Messi's contract with Barcelona ended on Wednesday with no news from the player or the club about his future. The expectation is that the 34-year-old Messi, who is playing for Argentina at the Copa America, will stay at the Catalan club. He had reportedly been close to reaching a deal to extend his contract for two more years. Messi's future has been a mystery since his request to leave the club was denied at the end of the 2019-2020 season. He ended up staying and said he would reconsider his options when this season was over.

A lot has changed since he announced he wanted to leave the club. That decision was made not long after the team's embarrassing 8-2 loss to Bayern Munich in the quarterfinals of the Champions League, one of the worst defeats in the club's history. But, since then, Barcelona has a new coach in Ronald Koeman and a new president after the resignation of Josep Bartomeu, who was at odds with Messi.

In came Joan Laporta, who won the club's presidential election in part because of his good relationship with the Argentine star. He was the president when Messi's

career started. Laporta said recently he was optimistic that Messi would renew his contract. When asked about Messi's future on Wednesday, he briefly said "don't worry". Messi excelled again this season despite staying against his wishes. He led the Spanish league in scoring with 30 goals and helped the team win the Copa del Rey title.

In Messi's previous contract, signed in 2017, he reportedly earned 138 million euros (\$164m) per season. Playing in Barcelona's favour to keep Messi is the fact the club has been slowly improving financially amid the coronavirus pandemic. Koeman is staying for a second season, and some players are arriving to boost the squad, including Memphis Depay, Sergio Aguero and Eric Garcia.

Messi has won 35 trophies in 17 seasons with Barcelona. He helped the club win the Champions League four times, the Spanish league 10 times, the Copa del Rey seven times and the Spanish Super Cup eight times. While with the club, Messi earned himself a record six Ballon d'Or awards. He is the team's all-time leading scorer with 672 goals in 778 appearances, and the top scorer in the Spanish league with 474 goals in 520 matches.

## Murray past second round at Wimbledon in five set

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Home favorite Andy Murray won a marathon match against German Oscar Otte to reach the men's singles last 32 at the Wimbledon Championships on Wednesday. Murray, 34, was granted a wild card for this year's Wimbledon as the three-time Grand Slam champion has been suffering a few setbacks while trying to return to the tour after hip surgeries. The former world No. 1 spent three and a half hours to see off the 24th seed Nikoloz Basilashvili in the first round on Monday and need to fight 20 minutes longer while facing Otte, who played at the grass-court Grand Slam for the first time. Murray took the first set in 6-3 but Otte came from behind to win the following two sets 6-4, 6-4. The duo seasawed until the center court closed its roof and turn on the lights as Murray wrapped the game



up 6-4, 6-2. Murray said the win meant a lot to him as he had been suffering many setbacks while trying to come back after the injuries.

"It's tough obviously going out and playing matches of that length when you know you have not had many

matches, not had loads of preparation and not played a whole lot of grass court tennis in four years," said Murray, who played for the first time at Wimbledon since 2017.

Murray will lock horns with Canadian 10th seed Denis Shapovalov in the third round as the 22-year-old advanced into the third round at Wimbledon for the first time due to a walkover from Spanish veteran Pablo Andujar. Earlier, men's singles reigning champion Novak Djokovic cruised into the third round by beating Kevin Anderson from South Africa 6-3, 6-3, 6-3. Women's singles second seed Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus came from one set down to defeat host player Katie Boulter 4-6, 6-3, 6-3.

The 41-year-old Venus Williams was ousted by Tunisian Ons Jabeur in straight sets in the second round. Her 39-year-old sister Serena Williams had to retire midway after injuring her leg in Tuesday's first-round match.

## Baig's K2 expedition enters eighth day

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani mountaineer Samina Baig's expedition to scale K2's peak along with her team members entered its eighth day on Thursday. Baig, the first Pakistani female mountaineer to summit Mount Everest, is now determined to wave the green flag on the 8,611-metre high K2. She also holds the honour of scaling the seven highest peaks in the world, known as the Seven Summits. The six-member expedition team has been sponsored by the Special Communication Organization, which is supervising the campaign titled 'SCO K2 Dream'. In 2015, the mountaineer was forced to call off her bid to summit the mountain after suffering an injury while climbing. She had been climbing K-2 on a second rotation to acclimatise to conditions at high altitudes ahead of a summit attempt. The group, however, managed to get back to base camp for doctors to have a better look at the injuries and to treat the arm. The SCO has embarked on a mission to promote non-traditional campaigns in Pakistan. The measure is bound to encourage the youth towards mountaineering and scaling the peaks. It will also help bring more confidence to the local mountaineers. The step would also promote tourism in Pakistan and attract more foreigners from abroad. - APP



## PM Khan felicitate Canadian counterpart on Canada Day

DNA

OTTAWA: Prime Minister Imran Khan, Speaker National Assembly felicitate their Canadian counterparts on Canada Day Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan and Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan have felicitated Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Speaker House of Commons Anthony Rota on the joyous occasion of the National Day of Canada.

In his letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister Imran Khan extended on behalf of the Government and the people of Pakistan as well as on his own behalf best wishes for the personal wellbeing of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the continued progress and prosperity of the people of Canada. The Prime Minister further noted that Pakistan and Canada enjoy cordial ties based on long-standing friendship, mutual understanding and

cooperation. The two countries can further strengthen the bilateral relations by exploring new opportunities in the fields of trade, commerce, investments, education, culture, and

people-to-people exchanges. He expressed the belief that "our relationship will continue to deepen in the years to come".

Meanwhile, in a similar letter, Speaker

of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Asad Qaisar has felicitated Anthony Rota, the Speaker of the House of Commons of Canada, on the National Day of Canada.

In his letter to his Canadian counterpart, Asad Qaisar noted that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Canada as the ties between both countries are based on mutual goodwill and understanding and converging views on important global issues.

"I attach great significance to the value of parliamentary diplomacy and look forward to opportunities to strengthen the bonds between our respective parliamentary institutions," he said, adding that "sharing ideas and experiences not only enhance relations between two countries but also promote cooperation and mutual understanding as we work towards shared goals of peace and prosperity for all".



## DG ISI briefs lawmakers on security issues

FROM PAGE 01

"Pakistan's land is not being used in the conflict going on in Afghanistan and the hope was expressed that Afghanistan's soil will also not be used against Pakistan," according to the statement. Lawmakers were informed that 90 per cent of the fencing at the Afghan border had been completed, while an effective system for customs and border control was being formulated.

Briefing covered the national core interest including Afghanistan and Kashmir besides diplomatic relationships. Members appreciated the efforts of COAS and DG ISI in identifying various challenges and providing clarity on the issues confronted by Pakistan through a detailed and informative briefing. Briefing has helped in building consensus on core challenges confronting the country. Important leaders of the Opposition parties in Parliament had been invited to attend the meeting as they were taken into confidence with regards to the recent developments in Afghanistan and national security, according to Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi. The Opposition leaders included the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate Senator Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, PPP Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, JUI-F Parliamentary leader Maulana Asad Mahmood, and ANP leader Ameer Haider Azam Khan Hoti. Prime Minister Imran Khan did not attend the meeting.

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## Opposition satisfied with the...

FROM PAGE 01

Abbasi said decisions and policy making were not underway during the meeting, rather information was being provided, adding that politics was "not a circus" that one should expect new details every day. The former prime minister said the military brass had put forward its opinion, and now the political leadership would make its decision.

## Use of technology vital in...

FROM PAGE 01

possible uses particularly related to health and environment. As Pakistan remains vulnerable to climatic disasters, the discussion underlined the need to make full use of the available scientific means for better preparedness against natural and man-made calamities. This event builds on the success of a previous webinar organised by the EU Delegation in February this year to address the wider scope of digital space and EU's policies in this regard. EU experiences and expertise were also shared during the event for better understanding for the participants. The initiative is a part of a series of events focussing on digital transition. Copernicus is managed by the European Commission in collaboration with the EU Member States, the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT), the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), EU Agencies and Mercator Ocean.

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## WHO urges West to recognise...

FROM PAGE 01

"It would negatively impact the growth of economies that are already suffering the most."

The WHO said such moves are "undermining confidence in life-saving vaccines that have already been shown to be safe and effective". In its reviews of the two Chinese vaccines, the UN health agency said both were found to significantly reduce the risk of hospitalisations and deaths.

The two Chinese shots are "inactivated" vaccines, made with killed coronavirus, whereas the Western-made shots are made with newer technologies that instead target the "spike" protein that coats the surface of the coronavirus.



## Briefs

USAID  
delivers 131  
tons of food  
to Uzbekistan

DNA

TASHKENT: Today, the United States through its Agency for International Development (USAID), delivered 131 tons of food aid worth US\$399,213 to Uzbekistan. The shipment contains a nutritious vegetable and legume mix for distribution to health and social care settings and vulnerable households. The aid will reach over 30,000 of the most vulnerable citizens of the country in more than 130 health and social protection facilities, including those providing COVID-19 quarantine services, long-term care for patients with multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (TB), orphanages, and psychiatric institutions. "This program demonstrates the ongoing strong partnership between Uzbekistan and the United States of America to improve nutrition and ensure that the most vulnerable have adequate, safe and nutritious food to support a healthy and productive life," Mikaela Meredith, USAID Uzbekistan Mission Director said in her speech.

WHO  
welcomes  
vaccination  
process in  
Azerbaijan

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan's vaccination process is an achievement that can be welcomed, WHO Europe spokesperson told Trend. The spokesperson noted that Azerbaijan started its vaccination rollout early on during the pandemic and has currently reached around 20 percent of the population who have received one dose of vaccine. "This is an achievement that can be welcomed as we know vaccines reduce the risk of severe disease and hospitalization. The number of new cases has been going down since mid-May and there is a general sense of positivity among the population. However, this pandemic is not over yet and we need to continue to be vigilant and practice caution amid the spread of variants of concern in the European Region," the spokesperson noted. WHO Europe spokesperson went on to add that maintaining public health and social measures such as practicing physical distancing, wearing a mask, washing hands and getting vaccinated as soon as it is available provides the greatest protection against infection and the further spread of COVID-19.

Electric  
buses to be  
purchased for  
Tashkent

NEWS DESK

TASHKENT: Electric buses will be purchased for the city of Tashkent. This was reported by the press service of the Ministry of Transport of Uzbekistan. The electric buses will be purchased with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) "Accelerating Attracting Investments into the Air in Less Produced Vehicles with Pollutants". This project is aimed at improving the quality of the environment by introducing the accelerated use of electric transport in urban public transport on the example of the city of Tashkent, and then this experience can be implemented in other cities of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The project envisages the purchase of electric buses for public transport in Tashkent, as well as the introduction of a "green transport corridor" in the city as a pilot project. The project, designed for six years, was approved by donors (UN Development Program and the Global Environment Facility) and stipulates the allocation of funds in the amount of US\$3.9 million.

Xi says no more 'bullying' as  
China marks party centenary

AGENCIES

BEIJING: China's President Xi Jinping told crowds gathered in Beijing that the era of China being "bullied" was over and that anyone who tried to separate the party and the Chinese people was doomed to failure, as the Chinese Communist Party celebrated its centenary. Speaking from the balcony above the portrait of Mao Zedong in Tiananmen Square, Xi spoke for more than an hour of the party's successes since its founding in Shanghai in 1921. In a speech brimming with confidence, accompanied by the party's senior leaders both past and present, he spoke of how the party had freed China from an "exploitative" feudal system, created a "socialist market economy brimming with vitality" and eliminated absolute poverty. "Only socialism can save China, and only socialism with Chinese characteristics can develop China," said Xi, who was dressed in a dark grey Mao-style suit. The Chinese Communist Party defeated the nationalists in the country's civil war in 1949 and Mao Zedong declared the People's Republic of China with the goal of lifting people out of crushing poverty. China is now the

world's second-largest economy and Xi is considered the country's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong. The celebrations came with Beijing has under pressure over trade - where tensions have risen with countries including the United States and Australia - and its policies in the far western region of Xinjiang, as well as Hong Kong and Tibet. There are also questions about the COVID-19 pandemic, which emerged in the central city of Wuhan, and continues to cause havoc around the world. At the head of an increasingly confident party and nation, Xi warned that any attempt to separate the party and the people was "bound to fail". While China "welcome[d] friendly suggestions from all around the world", Xi said the country would not accept "arrogant lectures". The loudest rounds of applause and cheering came when Xi said that Chinese people would "no longer allow any alien powers to bully and oppress us", and that anyone who tried to do so would "be badly battered by the Chinese nation's perseverance". "No one should underestimate the Chinese nation's will and power to fight against foreign power," Xi added. As Xi was delivering his speech in Beijing, social media saw a flurry of celebratory posts.



The landing pages of nearly all social media platforms featured meticulously designed celebratory posters; in WeChat Moments feed, roughly the equivalent of Facebook's news feed, people posted congratulatory messages and photos, with words such as "happy birthday - our great CCP"; and on Weibo, China's Twitter-like social media platform, the CCP centenary topics swept across the trending topic list, with the topic #CCPTurns100Today garnering more than five billion views. The centenary celebrations in Beijing began with a flypast as about 30 military aircraft formed a "100" in the skies above the cheering crowds. There were also trumpets and horns blasting communist songs, and 100-gun salutes fired into the sky in extravagant celebrations of national pride. At airports and train stations, on billboards, on posters and propaganda materials across television and social media, China has been turned the red of the Communist party. In northwestern Gansu province's Longnan, a transit spot for the Chinese Communist Party fighters during the Great March of 1934, party flags were hung on the roof of each household and large statues of the hammer and sickle erected weeks before July 1. The town has become a popular spot for 'red

tourism'. "We are all proud party members and we wanted to come here to pay tribute to the older generation of revolutionaries," Ms Guan, a party member from Shan'xi told Al Jazeera as she posed for a photo with a group of other party members in a tour of the town in front of a giant hammer and sickle. Longnan is not the only town celebrating the country's governing party's birthday. The entire nation has been mobilised to observe the day - from the giant city of Shanghai where the CCP was founded and the first party congress convened - to small towns in Xinjiang where Beijing has been accused of suppressing the rights of the ethnic minority Uighurs. Despite the general mood of exuberance, there have been some complaints that the preparations for the event have obstructed daily life. Special security checks were installed for Beijing-bound travellers ahead of the celebration, roads surrounding Tiananmen were closed for days, and police and paramilitary forces stationed in nearly all corners of the city. Wu, a Shanghai-based music concert gaffer, said that nearly all of her freelance gigs had been called off throughout June and July because of the "special period of time" that requires "vigorous control over what could be allowed".

Azerbaijan  
improves  
its position  
in GCI

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan climbed 15 positions in the global cybersecurity rating and took 40th place among 194 countries, Trend reports citing the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) report of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). According to the report, among the CIS countries, Azerbaijan took 3rd place in the rating. On the 1st and 2nd are Russia and Kazakhstan, respectively. The collection of relevant data for the ranking and determination of the GCI index has been carried out since 2014. The index is designed to assess the level of cybersecurity of countries in five main areas: - legal measures (legislation, regulation, and control) - 20 points; - technical measures (CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team), standards and certification) - 19.19 points; - organizational measures (policy, strategy, responsible organization, and national assessment) - 13.14 points; - activities to strengthen human resources (development of standards, development of human resources and retraining) - 16.99 points; - cooperation (interdepartmental, intradepartmental, public-private and international) - 20 points. Azerbaijan, with a cybersecurity index of 89.31 points, is ahead of such countries as Switzerland (42), Tunisia (45), Ireland (46), Iran (54), Georgia (55), Iceland (58), Romania (62), Slovenia (67), Czech Republic (68), and Ukraine (78).

Chinese solutions set  
to transform saline  
sodic soils in Pakistan

DNA

BEIJING: "Chinese biological solutions hold great potential in transforming saline and sodic soils into fertile land in Pakistan." This was stated by Dr Zhang Huaxin, Director of the Research Centre of Saline and Alkali Land of the National Forestry and Grassland Administration of China, in an exclusive interview with China Economic Net (CEN). According to the Ministry of Climate Change of Pakistan, there are 4.5 million to 5.3 million hectares of saline/sodic soils in Pakistan,

which takes up 5 to 6% of the Pakistani landmass. "In Pakistan, about 14% of irrigated lands have deteriorated with salinity, while 64% yield losses are reported due to salinity," revealed Dr Zhang. Dr Zhang told CEN that China's well-established biological solutions are an ideal candidate for rehabilitating salt-affected soils for agricultural production in Pakistan. "Pakistan and southern Xinjiang share similar climates and salt-affected soil types, so Pakistan can replicate the model of southern Xinjiang by introducing its salt-tolerant plants."

At least  
10 killed in  
DRC's Beni

AGENCIES

BENI: At least 10 people have been killed in an overnight raid in the city of Beni in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, in an attack blamed on the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) armed group. Residents on Thursday said a group of attackers had set several houses on fire in the middle of the night in the city's Beu district, firing upon people as they exited the buildings and attacking some with machetes. There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but officials blamed ADF for the attack in the Rwangoma neighbourhood. "Overnight, there was an attack by ADF enemies. We lost around 10 civilians," lieutenant Anthony Mualushayi told the AFP news agency. An AFP correspondent saw 10 bodies in the morgue of Beni's general hospital. With reports of missing people, there are fears the death toll could rise. The ADF - the most violent of an estimated 122 armed groups in the mineral-rich eastern DRC, many of them a legacy of two regional wars from 1996 to 2003 - has never claimed responsibility for attacks.

European  
Union's  
unemployment  
rises to 7.3%

WEB DESK

ISTANBUL: The EU's unemployment rate rose to 7.3% in May, up 0.5 percentage points year-on-year, the bloc's statistical office reported on Thursday. The eurozone unemployment rate also climbed 0.4 percentage points to 7.9% in May on a yearly basis, Eurostat said in a press release. The eurozone/euro area or EA19 represents member states that use the single currency - euro - while the EU27 includes all member countries of the bloc. Eurostat said nearly 15.3 million men and women in the EU27, including 12.8 million in the euro area, were unemployed as of May. The number of unemployed people was up by 949,000 on a yearly basis in May, across the 27-member bloc. The highest unemployment rates were posted by Greece (15.4%), Spain (15.3%), and Italy (10.5%), and the lowest by the Czech Republic and the Netherlands (both 3.3%).



KABUL: Pakistan ambassador to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmad Khan met Muhammad Azim Moshini MP from Afghanistan's Baghlan province and discussed with him peace efforts for an inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan. - DNA

Fata tax exemptions  
distressing taxed  
areas investors

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Thursday said tax exemptions for erstwhile FATA and PATA has the potential to jeopardize the future of some important industrial sectors in the taxed areas. The exemptions have not gone down well with the investors who are not looking for venues for investment but trying to save their investments, he said. The ghee, cooking oil and steel industry will be worst hit in the taxed areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and up to Jhelum in Punjab province while its impact would be felt as far as Lahore, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President PEW. According to industry experts, the cost of production of one kilogram of ghee and cooking oil will be reduced by Rs44 to Rs 46 in exempted areas while the cost of producing steel will be down by Rs 25 to Rs 27 resulting in the closure of industries. He said that benefiting an area at the cost of other is not a good move as exemptions have always been misused for the profit of a few. The business community is worried that things produced in tribal areas will be sold in settled areas of KP, and Punjab and that there is no justification for repeating the failed experience of Gadoon Industrial Estate. Some elements will establish their industrial units in cities to sell their products labelled as manufactured in tribal areas, he said. - DNA

One step away for Pakistani  
cherries to enter China

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: One step away for Pakistani cherries to enter China, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. In Pakistan, the yield of cherries has witnessed a boost since 2017 according to FAOSTAT (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). Cherry is a fruit endowed with natural advantages. First, it is the first crop of the planting season and covers the input costs of other fruits. Second, it requires less water compared with other fruits. In addition, cherry is high-yielding with a short growth period, and its market value is high. But so far they have not been

able to make any significant entry into the international market, including China where cherries are gaining popularity in recent years as high-end fruit with high prices. It can be seen that China's cherry imports have been on the rise in both volume and value. China mainly imports cherries from New Zealand, Chile, Argentina, and other countries in the Southern Hemisphere due to seasonal differences. Pakistani cherries may be no match in this regard, but their juicy taste, large size, and prime quality make them competitive food to be savored by Chinese consumers. As Pakistani farmers are eyeing this vast market, China Pakistan Agricultural and Industrial Cooperation In-

formation Platform (CPAIC) offers some measures to be taken to expedite cherries' journey to China. According to a report released by CPAIC, Pakistani cherry growers mainly get cherry prices and other information from traders, who are grabbing most of the profits. In this regard, an information management system can be set up to convey relevant market information to all stakeholders more effectively. The lack of access to institutional credit may limit investments, thereby reducing the efficiency of the marketing system. According to a statistical study a few years ago, about 54% of the households have taken credit from informal credit sources, mostly from the local traders or com-

## Seven EU countries approve India's Covishield

Covishield is the Indian-made version of AstraZeneca's Vaxzevria jab, which has been authorised in the EU. The vaccines currently eligible for the green pass have all been approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA)

AGENCIES

BRUSSELS: Seven EU countries have approved India's vaccines for arriving travellers, sources told the BBC. Covishield is now eligible for travel to Austria, Germany, Slovenia, Greece, Ireland and Spain. Iceland and Switzerland too have made the jab eligible for travel to the countries, sources said. Separately, Estonia has confirmed that it will recognise all the vaccines authorised by India for incoming travellers, sources said. Earlier, sources told the BBC that India would not recognise a EU vaccine pass for travellers unless the bloc does the same for India's own vaccine certificate.

The move had come amid reports that Covishield was not yet eligible for EU's digital green certificate set to launch on Thursday. The certificate is currently for EU citizens only. Covishield is the Indian-made version of AstraZeneca's Vaxzevria jab, which has been authorised in the EU. The vaccines currently eligible for the green pass have all been approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA). A source in India's external affairs ministry earlier said India had requested EU states to individually consider extending the exemption to people who had taken Covid-19 vaccines in India - Covishield and Covaxin - and "accept the vaccination certificate" issued by the government.



India had conveyed to EU states that Delhi would "institute a reciprocal policy for recognition of the EU digital Covid certificate," the source said. "Right now, our understanding is

that this certificate is meant for travel within the EU. But it could become the norm for all international travel. Nothing changes currently because most international travel is suspended. These certificates will become important when all travel resumes. We are saying, we will accept each other's certificates reciprocally. Why are you discriminating against our certification?", one of the sources said. The pass will help do away with the need for quarantines or further testing for travellers between the EU's 27 countries and four associated European nations - Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Covishield was listed for emergency use by the WHO in February.

India has so far overwhelmingly administered Covishield jabs - they account for more than 290 million of the 350 or so million vaccinations given so far. With the total case tally of more than 30 million, India is now only behind the United States which has reported over 34 million cases. The number of daily cases has come down to less than 40,000 from the peaks of 400,000 in May. But experts have warned that the threat of a possible third wave still looms. The country has officially recorded close to 400,000 deaths - behind the US and Brazil. Only 4.6% of the people have been fully vaccinated and 21% have received one dose since the beginning of the drive in January.



**Briefs**

**Schedule of Maryam's AJK visit announced**

DNA

LAHORE: The schedule of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Vice-President Maryam Nawaz's visit to the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) where she will lead the party's election campaign has been announced. Maryam Nawaz is due to visit Azad Kashmir from July 8 to July 19. She will address the first public gathering at Muzaffarabad on July 8 followed by two gatherings at Neelum Valley on July 9 and 10. The next venue of PML-N's public gathering is Hatyan where she will deliver a speech on July 11 followed by another one at Kotli on July 13. On July 14, she will be speaking at Rawalakot and Hajeera followed by one speech at Palandri and another at Baloch on the following day, July 15th. Maryam will address public gatherings at Mirpur and Bhimber on July 17th. In this connection, PML-N Azad Kashmir Election Committee has started making preparations.

**Air Chief witnesses Anatolian Eagle-2021**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force Air Chief Marshal Zabeer Ahmed Baber Sidhu Thursday visited the 3rd Main Jet Base in Konya, Turkey to review the multi-national air exercise "Anatolian Eagle-2021". The Air Chief was given a detailed briefing about the conduct of the exercise, said a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) media release. While interacting with the participants, the Air Chief praised the operational readiness and professionalism of the participating aircrew. He also underscored the significance of training in air operations for synergistic and effective employment of assets in a real scenario. He said, "Such exercises contribute immensely in achieving greater synergy and cooperation amongst friendly forces." "Anatolian Eagle" is an annual event held alternately in Turkey and Pakistan.

**Hundreds evacuated as fires add to Canada heat wave**

FOREIGN DESK

VANCOUVER: Hundreds of people were evacuated in western Canada as fires added to the unprecedented heat wave in the region, which for days has been baking in record-breaking temperatures. The village of Lytton, 250 kilometers (155 miles) northeast of Vancouver, was evacuated on Wednesday night because of a fire that spread quickly. The fire came a day after the village, in the province of British Columbia, set a Canadian record high temperature on Tuesday of 49.6 degrees Celsius (121 degrees Fahrenheit) "A fire... is threatening structures and the safety of residents," a statement signed by Mayor Jan Polderman on Wednesday said. "The fire situation is extremely dangerous right now. Emergency crews are doing everything they can to support the people of Lytton," British Columbia premier John Horgan commented on Twitter. The evacuation order was extended Wednesday night to residents of about 100 properties north of Lytton. "An exceptionally strong ridge of high pressure over British Columbia will continue to bring record-breaking temperatures over the next couple of days," Environment Canada said in a bulletin issued early Thursday morning for the Prince George, BC area.

**Pak-China ties won't change despite pressure: PM Imran**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has said Pakistan will not change relations with China under any pressure as China stood by us in every difficult time. While talking to the Chinese media on the occasion of centenary celebrations of Communist Party of China (CPC), Imran Khan said the differences between China and the United States create complications in the region. Pakistan wants to further strengthen economic, trade and political ties with the neighboring country, he added. Imran Khan said the next phase of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is very encouraging for Pakistan. "We are hopeful that the Chinese industry will be interested in the special zones of CPEC," he added. Congratulating China on the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party, Imran Khan said the Chinese president is considered a modern-day politician in Pakistan. Pakistanis are impressed by Chinese president's war against corruption, he stated. "Chinese president's anti-corruption

**Pakistan-China friendship valuable asset: China**

DNA

BEIJING: China on Thursday appreciated Prime Minister Imran Khan who sent a message of felicitation to President Xi Jinping on the centenary of Communist Party of China (CPC) and said the all-weather friendship between Pakistan and China has become a valuable strategic asset. "With all weather friendship and conduct of all round cooperation, our friendship has grown from strong to stronger and it has become a valuable strategic asset," Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokesperson Wang Wenbin said during his regular briefing in response to a question about Prime Minister Imran Khan's congratulatory message on CPC centenary. In his message, Prime Minister Imran Khan felicitated President Xi Jinping on CPC centenary and highlighted the CPC role and sacrifices for China's liberation and subsequent rise. He also appreciated CPC's role in nurturing friendship between Pakistan and China.

campaign remained effective and successful," said Imran Khan adding that the Pak-China relations were very deep and

close. Imran Khan said that media and cultural relations between Pakistan and China were not as close as political relations

and the session was intended at promoting media relations between two countries. Imran Khan further said it was a

great achievement for China to lift a large number of people out of poverty. He said China brought 70 crore people out of poverty in few years. China announced an end to poverty which is an outstanding achievement, he stated.

Imran Khan remarked that changing the prevailing system was very difficult in our society. The Communist Party's success was result of a long-term plan, he added. He said one can only plan for five years in electoral democratic system.

The prime minister said we want cooperation from the neighboring country in the field of agriculture as Pakistan is an agricultural country and we can benefit from China. Imran Khan further said the Chinese president and the prime minister began the struggle at the village level.

"The Chinese president and premier have reached this point after a struggle of 30 years. The US president does not have to go through such hard work and struggle," he added. Imran Khan said by the time the Chinese leadership reaches the top positions, they already have gained a lot of experience.

**Zulfi serves £100m notice to Bilawal**

STAFF REPORT



ISLAMABAD: Former special assistant to the prime minister on overseas Pakistanis Zulfi Bukhari on Thursday sent a £100 million defamation notice to PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Bukhari served the notice after the PPP chairman raised objections over reports of the former SAPM's alleged visit to Israel.

Criticising the government over the move, Bilawal, in a press conference on June 28, said that the government must "reveal the details of Zulfi Bukhari's alleged visit to Israel." "There are reports that an aeroplane flew to Israel from Pakistan, so the government must clarify the details of the route before the nation," said Bilawal.

He questioned: "If a plane had flown to Israel via Pakistan, then who granted permission for that?" He further added that since the Israeli newspaper published the report after approval from the country's defence ministry, there is something suspicious about the entire story. Bukhari, in a tweet, said that after consultations with his legal team, he decided to serve the PPP chairman the defamation notice for his recent "irresponsible remarks". "His poor understanding about most things again made him blurt out things fed to him, provoking issues he knows nothing about," the former aide said.

**'Pakistan not to allow anyone use its land'**

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed says fencing along the Afghan border will be completed within two months. Talking to media in Rawalpindi on Thursday, he said work on fencing along the border with Afghanistan has been done by eighty-eight percent while forty-six percent on the Iranian border.

The Minister said Pakistan is not allowing anyone to use its land against any country, and other countries should also ensure it. He said India would desire that peace is not established in Afghanistan; however, Pakistan has been making sincere efforts for peace in Afghanistan. Sheikh Rashid said Pakistan wants to have good relations with all countries, including India. However, he said, India will have to give right to self-determination to the oppressed Kashmiris. Condemning the Indian Home Ministry for baseless allegation of Pakistan's role in a drone attack in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and

Kashmir, he said India wants to hide its failure in addressing the Covid-19 challenge through such allegations.

Responding to a question, the Interior Minister urged the opposition parties to sit with the government to introduce electoral for transparent elections in the future. Meanwhile, the Interior Minister on Thursday claimed that PTI will form government in Azad Kashmir and said that he hopes several political opponents will take back their nomination papers. Sheikh Rashid predicted that in the future opposition and government are going to work together to adopt a new path for prosperity of the country. He further said that he has been predicting for a long time that PML-N will be divided in two and now divide between Shehbaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz is clearer than ever as both party leaders have very different style of politics.

He also rejected accusations of Pakistan's involvement in drone attack in IIOJK and said that India is blaming Pakistan to hide its own failures.

**6 injured in Quetta's Airport Road blast**

DNA

QUETTA: Six people were left injured after an explosion rocked Quetta's Airport Road on Thursday, police said. Following the blast, the injured have been shifted to the city's Civil Hospital where an emergency has been declared, police said, adding that the bomb disposal squad has been summoned to the site of the blast. Witnesses say the explosion damaged several nearby buildings, while an investigation to find the nature of the explosion is currently underway.



RAWALPINDI: Ambassador of European Union Androulla Kaminara and her spouse visited Eidgah Sharif & met with Pir Muhammad Naqib ur Rehman. - DNA

**Pakistan, Moroccan media co-op discussed**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's envoy to the Kingdom of Morocco Hamid Asghar Khan Thursday called on Federal Minister for Information and broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain. The ambassador briefed the information minister regarding various potential areas of cooperation between Pakistan and Morocco for the mutual benefit of people of both the countries. Fawad authorized the ambas-

sador to ink an information sharing agreement between the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) and Maghreb Arab Press (MAP) on his return to Rabat, said a press release. The MAP is Morocco's national news agency. The minister further asked the ambassador to extend an invitation on his behalf to Khalil Hachmi Idrissi, the distinguished MAP director general to undertake an official visit of Pakistan. The ambassador further informed the minister that Director General Idrissi had

expressed the intention to appoint a local representative of MAP in Islamabad during his visit. The ambassador thanked the minister for his guidance and support and said the measures would lend impetus to the government's important "Engage Africa" policy and the free flow of information between the two national news agencies of Pakistan and Morocco would greatly promote trade, tourism, investment and awareness of opportunities in the two brotherly countries.

**FBR witnesses historic tax collection**

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said on Thursday that despite coronavirus pandemic the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) witnessed a historic Rs. 4732 billion tax collection, exceeding the revised target of Rs. 4691 billion by Rs. 41 billion. In a tweet, the state minister said, the revenue collection of FBR was 18 per cent higher than the corresponding year which was Rs. 3997 billion. - APP

**Pak keen in reconstruction of liberated areas: Qureshi**

Says outgoing Azerbaijan Ambassador Ali Alizada contributed a lot towards promotion of bilateral relations; wishes him best of luck

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada paid for farewell call on the Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. The minister noted progress in bilateral relations and enhanced momentum of bilateral interactions & high-level visits in the last few years. Minister Qureshi also appreciated services and contributions of the outgoing ambassador and wished

him success in future assignments. The Foreign Minister expressed satisfaction on the status of existing ties between the two countries and appreciated Ambassador Alizada's contributions in further strengthening them. The Foreign Minister recalled Pakistan's support to Azerbaijan during the recent conflict on Nagorno-Karabakh and reaffirmed cooperation in reconstruction and rehabilitation of affected areas. The Foreign Minister recalled entire momentum of high-level inter-

actions and noted progress on cooperation in trade and commerce, energy, education and cultural spheres. The Foreign Minister urged that two sides continue deepening bilateral relations built on historic and religious bonds and exceptional good will in all fields of mutual interest. Foreign Minister wished the Ambassador success for his future assignments. Ambassador Alizada arrived in Pakistan in 2016 and is leaving this month upon completion of his diplomatic assignment.



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada meeting with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. Ambassador Alizada is leaving Pakistan after completing his term. - DNA

*Thank You*



**Sarmad Ali**  
President / Jang Group



**Nazafreen Saigol**  
Secretary General/Dawn Group



For Granting APNS Membership to

