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Pakistan-Turkey ties are of utmost value: President Arif Alvi

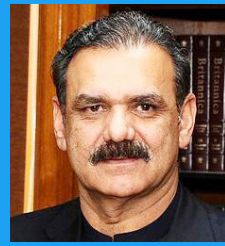
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Amb. Matsuda lauds Pakistan's energy policies

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Gwadar port completely operational

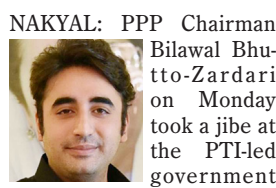
Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

PPP a party of poor masses

DNA



NAKYAL: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Monday took a jibe at the PTI-led government as well as PML-N's regime in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and said that rulers — whether they are in Muzaffarabad or in the federal government — are cowards. Bilawal was addressing a rally in Nakyal, Azad Kashmir, as part of his party's election campaign in the region. Bilawal said that the PPP is the "only party in Pakistan which has the support of the poor masses."

Covid cases increasing in country

ZUBAIR AHMAD



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health Dr. Faisal Sultan on Monday said that there has been a small but noticeable increase in coronavirus cases in the country. Taking to Twitter, the SAPM said that since last week, there has been a "definitive uptick in cases, percentage positivity, and other parameters." Dr. Faisal appealed to the masses to continue following the government's mandated coronavirus standard operating procedures (SOPs), including wearing masks, avoiding crowds and getting vaccinated — all of which can help prevent the spike in cases.

Jeff Bezos steps down as Amazon chief

WEB DESK



WASHINGTON: Twenty-seven years after founding his company Amazon, Jeff Bezos on Monday stepped down from his position as he prepares to blast off into a new career stage. Bezos, 57, will now turn his attention to his private space exploration firm, philanthropy and other endeavours. He will retain a key role, however, as executive chair at the technology and e-commerce colossus. The transition comes after a spectacular streak for Amazon, which has drawn attention for its innovations.

Nation headed in the right direction: PM

The premier addresses an event at Gwadar, says he is considering speaking to the insurgents in Balochistan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GWADAR: Prime Minister Imran Khan said Monday Pakistan is on its way to becoming a great country, PM Imran Khan said, as he shared his vision for the country's future. Addressing an event in Gwadar, he said that some areas in the country are developed, while several others, including Balochistan, have remained underdeveloped. "I dream of Pakistan's future — and I have grown up with Pakistan. This nation is headed towards becoming a great country," he said, adding: "Gwadar is becoming a focal point for Pakistan, which will benefit the country, especially Balochistan." The premier said he was mulling over speaking to the insurgents in Balochistan, as the situation in the province had changed, and Pakistan was moving towards a better future. The premier, addressing an event in Gwadar, said the insurgents might be upset with the state due to some past grievances or India might have used them to spread terror in Pakistan.

Continued on Page 06

Seven countries commit cooperation

DNA

GAWADAR: Seven regional countries including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Kenya and Qatar on Monday expressed their commitment for cooperation on the development of Gwadar. With their respective ambassadors present at a ceremony attended by Prime Minister Imran Khan, the regional countries showed their support for the development of Pakistan's port city. Prime Minister Imran Khan on the occasion also witnessed the signing of two Memoranda of Understanding with the Government of China for carrying out development projects in Gwadar. The accords included the implementation agreement on setting up of 1.2 MGD desalination plant.

Minister for boosting Pak-Uzbek bilateral ties

The Uzbek ambassador said the PIA flight between Lahore and Tashkent has been restored

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, on Monday, has emphasized strengthening the Pak-Uzbek bilateral ties. Addressing the Uzbek Ambassador to Pakistan Aybek Arif Usmanov in Islamabad, he said in order to ensure the Pak-Uzbek ex-

change of citizens in mutual countries, Pakistan has given a special visa facility to Uzbek citizens to visit their brotherly country. "A special service of providing Uzbek citizens with the visa in five days is soon going to be launched", he added. The Uzbek ambassador said the PIA flight between Lahore and Tashkent has been restored to

function since July 2nd. He went on to say that this initiative will help the tourism industry grow and flourish, improving Pak-Uzbek ties to the zenith of unity and harmony. Moreover, special agreements on matters pertaining to law enforcement agencies were carried out to strengthen coordination between mutual countries.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan Aybek Usmanov presenting a portrait to Federal Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed. — DNA



GWADAR: Prime Minister Imran Khan unveils plaque for inauguration of various CPEC projects. Chinese ambassador Nong Rong is also present. — DNA

Afghan security forces plan counter-attack

The Taliban now control roughly a third of all 421 districts in Afghanistan

NEWS DESK

Afghan soldiers flee to Tajikistan

AGENCIES

KABUL: Afghanistan government forces are planning a counteroffensive in the country's northern provinces after losing ground to the Taliban, Russia's RIA news agency has cited an adviser to Afghan President Ashraf Ghani as saying. National security adviser Hamdullah Mohib told RIA in an interview on Monday that government forces had not expected the Taliban offensive but would "absolutely, definitely" counterattack. The Taliban's march through northern Afghanistan gained momentum overnight with the capture of several districts from fleeing Afghan forces, several hundred of whom fled across the border into neighbouring Tajikistan, officials said. The Taliban

DUSHANBE: More than 1,000 Afghan security personnel fled across the border into Tajikistan on Sunday after Taliban advances in northern Afghanistan, the Tajik border guard service said. Taliban captured dozens of other Afghan security personnel. The crossings underscore a rapidly deteriorating situation in the country as foreign troops near a complete withdrawal after 20 years of war in Afghanistan and with peace negotiations stalled. Hundreds of Afghan security force members have fled swift Taliban advances in the north. But Sunday's retreats were the largest confirmed, coming just two days after the United States officially vacated its main base in Afghanistan as part of a plan to withdraw all foreign troops by September 11.

now control roughly a third of all 421 districts and district centers in Afghanistan. The group's most signifi-

cant gains have been in the northern half of the country, a traditional stronghold of the US-allied warlords who

helped defeat them in 2001. Several hundred Afghan troops had already crossed into Tajikistan after the Taliban unleashed its onslaught in early May. The fighters have seized dozens of Afghanistan's districts, raising fears that the Afghan military will collapse once US and international troops complete their withdrawal from the country in September. US President Joe Biden has ordered the departure of all US forces from Afghanistan by this year's 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks that triggered the invasion. Abandoned and empty, families have been forced to flee Kandahar after fierce fighting between the Afghan government forces and the Taliban began, with many Afghans concerned over the security situation once US forces leave.

NCOC warns of strict measures

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operations Centre (NCOC) on Monday warned of strict restrictions as it observed violation of coronavirus SOPs in several sectors following the relaxation of curbs. The NCOC's warning came during a meeting, with Federal Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar in the chair, a statement from the forum said. The forum expressed serious concerns over the violation of SOPs at restaurants, in-door gymnasiums, marriage halls, transportation, markets. — DNA

'Pakistan highly values brotherly ties with Turkey'

NEHAL MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Monday, in his meeting with Commander Turkish Land Forces, said Pakistan highly valued its brotherly relations with Turkey which were deeply rooted in history and entrenched in bilateral cultural and religious affinities. Commander Turkish Land Forces General Umit DUNDAR called on Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa, here at GHQ, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) media release.



During the meeting, matters of mutual and professional interest with special emphasis on defence and security collaboration between the two brotherly countries were discussed. Both sides agreed to further optimize military-to-military ties particularly in training and counter-terrorism domains.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan Army's role for regional peace and stability and contributions towards defeating terrorism. Earlier on arrival, Commander Turkish Land Forces was also presented with a Guard of Honour by a smartly turned out military contingent.

How the diplomats are trapped into wrongdoing (2)

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

“Few years ago, an ambassador of a country was recalled after his involvement was proved in misuse of his house rent facility; another was recalled because of immoral activities”

HERE are some other European missions as well, which have witnessed such kind of thefts or visa scandals. Investigations in above mentioned cases proved that without the involvement of the locals and the embassy staff, especially dealing with the visa affairs, such incidents would have not been possible. Apart from visa thing, certain diplomats, as soon as they arrive in Pakistan, get themselves involved in various other illegal practices such as misuse of liquor quotas; import of duty free cars and in some cases misuse of house rent facility and having illicit affairs with local ladies, to mention a few.

Few years ago, an ambassador was recalled after his involvement was proved in misuse of his house rent facility. The said ambassador got a lavish and spacious house on the Margalla



Road on a cheaper rent but he charged double rent from his headquarters. The extra amount went to his and his Pakistani facilitator's pocket. The Pakistani facilitator, in that case, happened to be a lady who is still around. Similarly quite recently the Bulgarian ambassador's services were terminated after he was found guilty of misusing his diplomatic status.

The said ambassador imported duty free cars by availing diplomatic status but actually he had bought those cars for Pakistani people and accepted huge bribe from them. This is in addition to his misuse of liquor quotas. By the way, when it comes to misuse of liquor quotas, both Muslim and non Muslim embassies have equally benefited, of course with the help of officials from the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs, some of them are now

serving their term behind the bars. Prime Minister Imran Khan recently rebuked the Foreign Office officials for what he called sluggish approach towards various issues. The MOFA bosses, after this statement showed a strong reaction. But Prime Minister was partially right in his criticism of the MOFA administration. Frankly, for last so many years, I have not heard any goods words about our MOFA officers. Most of the complaints pertain to the Protocol Division that still continues to take heavy toll on the foreign missions. Moreover, there have also been instances where local liquor importers used residences of diplomats to store their consignments. Since the diplomatic residences have immunity from being searched or raided therefore some people benefited a lot and made optimum use of their close links with their dip-

lomatic friends. An ambassador of an Asian country, in the recent past, was recalled after it was proved he had facilitated storage of liquor caches at his official residence. Moral turpitude was yet another reason of recalling of that particular top diplomat. So much so, there are many examples of diplomats and defence attaches being called back or investigated for having illicit relations with Pakistani females. In the past, a very senior military officer who was posted in Pakistan as his country's defence adviser was proceeded against back home for having relations with a Pakistani lady and sharing secret information. Interestingly, that lady is still around and continues to lure attention of all and sundry with her 'remaining' charm. Let us play as the devil's advocate. The officers who fall prey to tempta-

tions here in Pakistan otherwise may be honest officers back home. Let us admit that corruption in Pakistan is deep-rooted and systematic. One needs extra-ordinary guts and will power to resist such temptations. It is often said that even angels would fall prey to such temptations if they are posted on a post that involves money!! Summing up, there is no dearth of honest, credible and men of character within the diplomatic community and even in our Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I personally know many diplomats, Pakistani and foreigners, who had the opportunity of making their fortunes through illegal practices but they never did it simply because their dignity and sense of duty never allowed them to do that. Corruption is perhaps the biggest challenge the government of the day is faced with. The Prime Minister has a clear understanding of what this menace has done to this country. The will to nip this malady in the bud is there. The only thing needed is an honest team that could translate prime minister's vision into reality.

Concluded

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Pak to push Dutch companies for joint ventures, investment — Page 07

President confers Nishan-i-Imtiaz on Turkish commander — Page 08

Briefs

Sher Khan,
a real hero
of country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly AsadQaiser on Monday said that Karnal-Sher Khan was real hero of the country and because of heroes like him, the nation was living in peace.

In a message on his 22nd death anniversary, he said Sher Khan was the son of the soil and he fought bravely and achieved martyrdom for the sake of his motherland. He said Sher Khan wrote the indescribable tales of bravery during the Kargil war and with his courage foiled the nefarious designs of the enemy. AsadQaiser said his ultimate sacrifice for the cause of the nation would be remembered forever.

PDWP
approves
education
schemes

PESHAWAR: Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) has approved various education schemes worth Rs 1,557.428 million. The committee meeting was held here Monday under the Chairmanship of Shahab Ali Shah.

The meeting was attended by members of PDWP and concerned departments. The meeting approved schemes of education sector including continuation of Basic Education Community Schools (BECS) and National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) Centers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, continuation of Basic Education Community Schools (BECS) and National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) Centers in Merged Districts (AIP). – APP

Pb govt
taking steps
for quality
education:
Advisor

FAISALABAD: Special Advisor to CM Punjab for Sports Malik Umar Farooq said the Punjab government was taking effective steps for quality education in schools. He said that maximum enrollment of children at schools was the need of hour. He was distributing uniforms and school bags among children during enrollment campaign at Govt Primary School, Chak No 92-GB. Assistant Commissioner Saddar Umar Maqbool and officers of district education authority were also present on the occasion. Malik appealed to the parents to get enrollment of their children at schools so that literacy rate in the province could be increased. He said that an educated society was a guarantee of a bright future and social development. AC Umar Maqbool said that coordination would be extended to tehsil administration for making enrollment campaign successful. Plantation was also made on the occasion under the Clean & Green programme. – APP

‘Govt to
fill up staff
deficiency
in prisons’

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to KP CM on prisons, Shafiullah Khan Monday said that concrete steps are being taken for filling up staff deficiency in prisons across the province.

He expressed these views while talking on the occasion of his visit to Charsadda Jail. The Inspector General of Prisons, Khalid Abbas Khan and other concerned officers also accompanied the special assistant. Special Assistant ruled any deficiency in imparting best training to staffers of prisons and reformation of prisoners to turn them into useful citizens of the country. He vowed to continue surprise visits to jails to review hardships and problems faced by prisoners. During the visit, the Special Assistant also inspected barracks of women and children, control room and kitchen, hospital, new block and food and directed increase in the weight of roti provided to prisoners and ruled out compromise in this regard. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Kuninori Matsuda, Ambassador of Japan called on Federal Minister for Energy Muhammad Hammad Azhar. – DNA

Farrukh asks opposition to
abandon childish politics

The State Minister said that services exports had been catapulted to 31 billion dollars which stood at 24 billion dollars in 2018

DNA

LAHORE: State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said on Monday that opposition parties should abandon childish politics on electoral reforms in the country and embrace the reality of electronic voting machines (EVMs) and right of vote to the overseas Pakistanis. Speaking at 'Meet the Press' of the Lahore Press Club, he said Prime Minister Imran Khan had invited the opposition parties for a dialogue on electoral reforms from the floor of the National Assembly (NA), adding that if the opposition still stays away, the people were forced to believe that there was a mole in thief's beard.

To a question, Farrukh Habib said that Prime Minister Imran

Khan would fulfill all promises made with the masses in election manifesto, adding that the Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) government would woo voters in the next general election 2023 on the basis of its five-year performance. He said the government had strengthened country's economy through various wealth generation policies, adding that country's foreign remittances stand at 29 billion dollars today which was 10 billion dollars higher than what the Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz (PML-N) left in 2018.

The State Minister said that services exports had been catapulted to 31 billion dollars which stood at 24 billion dollars in 2018, adding that the PTI government had breathed a new life in the textile industry although the PML-N government had

turned the Faisalabad industries into a graveyard. He said the PTI government had provided relief to the textile industry and today it was one of the most thriving sectors of the country, adding that all sectors had witnessed progress under the PTI government. Farrukh said that people must bear in mind that PTI government had inherited merely 15 days foreign reserves when it came into power, adding that the PTI was not transferred economies like China, Germany, France and the United States. He said Prime Minister understood the enormity of situation and accepted the challenge of putting the country on the right path.

"The GDP growth was forecast at 1.5 percent but the PTI government has achieved a growth of four

percent while the exports have risen tremendously", he responded, adding that the foreign remittance remained frozen at 19 billion dollars between 2016-18. He said the Prime Minister Imran Khan had introduced 'National Agriculture Transformation Plan' to bring to an end country's dependence on agricultural imports, adding that the country had to import edible oil and pulses from abroad despite being an agricultural economy. He said that Rs 1 billion had been earmarked to increase olive produce. On dearthness, he said dearthness was an international phenomenon and it was its worst high in other parts of the world, adding that the dearthness could not impact Pakistan as worse due to the policies of Prime Minister Imran Khan during the

Covid-19 pandemic.

The State Minister said the government had a comprehensive plan to store water for the crops, adding that 13 million acres agriculture land would be irrigated in the next 10 years through the water reservoirs. He said, 35 percent work had been completed on Mehmud Dam while Dasu, Diamir-Bhasha dams would produce 4500 MW electricity. On improving lives of man in the street, he said 'Kamyab Pakistan Program' would improve the standards of six million families, adding that interest-free loans of Rs 500,000 would be provided while an easy loan of Rs 2 million will be given for building homes. He said the construction of home was a dream while under the Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision a low-income

family could own a home instead of living in a rented house for the rest of life.

He said under the scheme the banks had disbursed home loans of Rs 38 billion to the applicants so far while loan applications of Rs 100 billion were received over the past few months. He said the Ravi Riverfront City would lay the foundation of a new city to meet the future challenges of population and infrastructure, adding that the PTI government was establishing Central Business districts in all major cities including Lahore besides constructing expressway on Nullah-Leh. He said that Press Club and the Information Ministry were closely linked, adding that it was government's priority to strengthen links with the press clubs and the journalist community of the country.



LAHORE: Androulla Kaminara Ambassador of the European Union to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan met with Pakistani visual artist Mughees Riaz. – DNA

Pakistan must build
solar panels locally

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Solar energy is one of the most readily available cheap, environment friendly sources to overcome the energy crisis in Pakistan on a sustained basis. However, Pakistan must acquire this technology to locally manufacture cheap solar panels, said Engineer Ahmad Hassan, Patron In-Chief FCCI (Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry) Standing Committee on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Addressing the third meeting of this standing committee, he said that power houses established under CPEC have played a major role in overcoming the shortage of electricity. Despite many energy projects, Pakistan is currently facing a shortage of 924MW of electricity which could be overcome by capitalizing unlimited sources of solar energy. He said that Pakistan is a lucky country where sunlight is available daily for at least 14

long hours. "It is unlimited and environment friendly source as compare to the fossils fuel which is multiplying urban pollution due to heavy emission of carbon", he said and added that we are expecting increase in the prices of RLNG in coming month and years and hence we must reprioritize our energy policies with a focus on solar potential.

Mr. Tahir Yaqoob chairman FCCI standing committee underlined the importance of CPEC in Pak economy and said that we must encourage joint ventures with developed countries in order to switch over from primary to hi-tech projects. He particularly mentioned his visit to Turkey and said that many Turkish companies are willing to launch joint ventures with Pakistan in the hi-tech sector. "It will have a trickle down effect and encourage units currently using old and redundant technologies to switch over to sophisticated and emerging technologies. He said that corona was a major

handicap in materializing this proposal; however now the situation is returning back to normal and we must expedite follow up of this Turkish offer.

Dr. Khurram Tariq briefed the participants about the 600KV solar system installed in his factory. He said that an online grid is the most viable and cost effective option as the component of batteries is excluded in it. Former President FCCI Muzmil Sultan said that Pakistan's future is directly linked with solar energy and we must introduce new policies for the commercialization of it. He said that like car financing, our financial institutions must promote and finance solar projects at individual, collective, commercial and industrial levels. Former Vice President FCCI Ranalnam Afzal Khan said that the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) is changing net-metering rules which will certainly discourage solar power producers.

574,453
persons
vaccinated
against
corona

FAISALABAD: As many as 574,453 people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in Faisalabad district. District Health Officer Dr. AtaulMun'im said on Monday that 453,011 citizens had been given the first dose while 81,092 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He said that 26,099 health workers were also given the first dose while 14,251 received the second dose of vaccine.

He said that sufficient stock of anti-coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As of now 34,297 first doses and 22,864 second doses were in the stock at Faisalabad. He said that 34 vaccination centers were operational in Faisalabad where registered persons were also getting anti-coronavirus vaccine doses.

To facilitate the people these centers had been established in various areas of the city. He said that timing of the vaccination centers was 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. except for Sports Complex Samanabadcentre, which would remain open round-the-clock. – APP

15 criminals
arrested in
Tank district

PESHAWAR: District Police Officer (DPO) Tank, Sajjad Ahmad Sahibzada Monday said, 15 extortionists have been arrested in different areas of the district and handed over to Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Dera Ismail Khan.

Addressing a press conference at his office in Tank, the DPO said that the police with the support of Intelligence and CTD have arrested 15 extortionists who were calling people for demand of extortion.

He said that the extortionists were using the names of banned TTP and other organizations to collect extortion from people. He said that some extortionists have been arrested in a short time demanding Rs5 millions extortion from residents.

DPO informed media that timely intervention by traffic officials in Tank saved many people as two rival groups accidentally came across each other at a tea and snack shop in main bazaar and were going to resort on exchange of fire from both sides. Traffic Police forthwith apprised Police emergency and rushed to the site to save precious lives by arresting the pistol toting rivals, DPO added. – APP

Health
community
urged to help
for corona
vaccination

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Kamran Bangash Monday said that convincing people of the province for corona vaccination was still a big challenge and urged the health community to play its pivotal role in this regard.

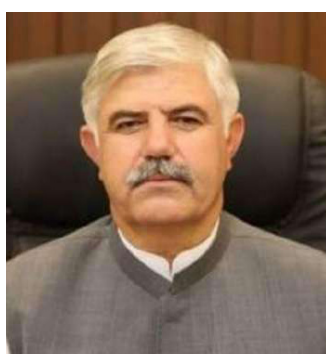
Addressing the inaugural of a training program for health professionals here at Provincial Health Services Academy, he acknowledged the efforts of health professionals in curbing spread of corona infection, adding that the health professionals made history by rendering services during pandemic. He said all the health professionals including doctors, para-medics and other relevant staff sacrificed their lives to protect the masses from coronavirus. He paid tribute to the health professionals and urged them to play their important role in convincing people to get anti corona jab. Bangash on behalf of the provincial government expressed gratitude to the health staff and offered the role of KP information department to highlight the services of heroes of the health community. The imperative training program started here at the health services academy for 20 officers of the health department who got promotions in grade 20. – APP

KP CM directs land acquisition for Mingora Project

Chief minister directed Commissioner Malakand to visit the proposed site jointly with respective elected public representatives, district administration and authorities of local government and come up with solid proposals in consultation with land owners to resolve the issue as soon as possible

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has directed the authorities concerned for taking necessary steps to complete acquisition of land for the proposed Mingora Greater Water Supply Project and a realistic way-forward be devised to address the genuine reservations of the land owners. He was chairing a progress review meeting on various developmental schemes of district Swat, said an official hand-out issued here on Monday. Member National Assembly Dr. Haider Ali, MPA Fazal Hakim, Commissioner Malakand Division, Deputy Commissioner Swat and high ups of relevant provincial departments attended the meeting. Chief minister directed Commis-

sioner Malakand to visit the proposed site jointly with respective elected public representatives, district administration and authorities of local government and come up with solid proposals in consultation with land owners to resolve the issue as soon as possible. He urged upon the authorities that the grievances of land owners should be addressed on top priority so that the project could be initiated in an efficient and pleasant manner. He termed this project as of vital importance for the city and added that the project on completion would provide all time solution to the long standing issue of water scarcity in Mingora City. Briefing about the Mingora Gravity Water Supply Scheme, the



meeting was informed that the project would be completed with the financial assistance of Asian Development Bank under Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cities Improvement Project (KPCIP), adding that the project would have 20 kilometers

long pipeline and state of the art Water Treatment Plant. It was informed that under this gravity based water project, 85% water would be supplied from pure gravity whereas 15% of water would be provided through solar pumping. The project has been devised keeping in view the requirements of the City for next 25 years.

The participants were also briefed about the progress so far made on various projects of establishing Colleges in district Swat, and it was informed that work was in full swing on establishment of Government Degree Colleges Vanai, Shamozai and BaghDheri which would be completed within the current financial year. Similarly,

PC-1s for establishment of Government Degree Colleges Saidu Sharif and Charbagh have also been approved by relevant forum whereas tenders of these two projects will be floated very soon. Similarly, projects for strengthening Post Graduate College Matta and Government Degree College Madyan would also be completed during the year 2021-22. The meeting also reviewed the proposed Fatehpur irrigation channel's Extension and Improvement Project and was told that, on completion of the 30 kilometers long extension project, additional 18 cusecs of water would be available which would irrigate around two thousand acres additional land of the area. – APP

Briefs

2 week long summer camp at NCA starts

ISLAMABAD: A two-week long Summer Camp has started here on Monday arranged by National Council of the Arts (NCA) ensuring young generation to be able to showcase their hidden talent in various activities. Talking to APP, Executive Director Lok Virsa and Senior Professor NCA Talha Ali said different activities was being performed including painting, calligraphy, sculpturing, photography, and drawing in the camp. He said this was platform where youth could participate and showcase their skills by getting techniques from competent faculty of NCA. The primary purpose of many camps was educational, athletic, or cultural development he said, adding a summer camp environment gave ways to youth to learn new skills in a safe and nurturing environment. He said the summer camp experience could have a lasting psychological impact on the development of a youth. – APP

NAB's decision for freezing assets lauded

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Monday endorsed the decision of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) for freezing assets of former secretary of Sindh Energy Department Agha Wasif in Noriabad power project reference against Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and others. AC-III Judge Syed Asghar Ali heard the case lodged by anti-graft body regarding the above matter, which was also connected with money laundering scam. The accused Agha Wasif, however, submitted objections against the freezing of his property and banks accounts by the NAB. NAB prosecutor took the stance that accused Wasif sent a summary to install transmission line to connect the project with K-Electric. The purpose of the summary was to benefit the main accused persons through giving a legal cover, he said. He further informed the court that the department had found suspect transactions in account of the wife of former secretary including a government cheque. The accused and his wife were given opportunity to appear before NAB and clarify the matter but they didn't appear before investigation team. The prosecutor said that the chairman NAB had approved the request to freeze accounts and property of the accused. He prayed the court to endorse the NAB decision in this regard.

CM appealed to scale up gradation

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Foresters and Forest Guard Association has appealed to Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar to resolve the issue of their scale up gradation, which has been pending for the last four years, and to provide them with facilities for effective protection of forests. This appeal was made by PFFGA President Hafiz Sajjad and Vice President Mian Imran in a meeting of the body held here on Sunday. They said the field workers of Punjab Forest Department were playing a leading role in making the PM's 10 Billion tree Tsunami project a success but they were facing a number of problems rest with government to be resolved. Mian Imran said that the Cabinet Committee of Punjab government was not paying heed towards our scale up gradation. "Since last four years, we are eyeing on the action rests with this committee but our hopes haven't turned into reality yet", he added. He appealed to CM Punjab to ask the committee concerned to resolve this issue at an earliest.

Many injured, shops gutted in cylinder blast in G-8 Markaz

The cause of the cylinder blast was gas leakage, which suddenly caused a fire eruption, according to rescue sources

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: A cylinder blast occurred in a local restaurant adjacent to the head office of Islamabad Post on Monday evening. The cause of the cylinder blast was gas leakage, which suddenly caused a fire eruption, according to rescue sources. No fatalities were reported, however two people suffered minor burns, and were taken to PIMS right away. The nearby buildings were evacuated and the traffic was temporarily suspended. Firefighters rushed to the spot and controlled the fire after an hour's struggle. The customers and hotel management acknowledged



the efforts of fire fighters in this regard. Meanwhile, the residents of residential flats have raised

their concerns over use of gas cylinders in commercial multi-story plazas, which can lead to a disaster. Au-

thorities are urged to take this matter into notice and take precautionary measures to avoid any mishap.



‘Establishment of MBCCI step towards development’



SUJJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General, United Business Group, said that the establishment of Mandi Bahauddin Chamber of Commerce and Industry would be a significant step forward for the development and prosperity of the region and Mr.Bakht-

awari further said that the new chamber of Mandi Bahauddin should focus on rice export and agro based industry especially kinnow which is very important for the future of the country . He expressed these views during a meeting with a delegation of Mandi Bahauddin Chamber in Islamabad today, which was specially chaired by Haider Raza Naq-

vi, President of bahauddin Chamber. The delegation included Vice President Irfan Tarar, Capt. (Retd) Taimoor Ahmed and Mian Zahid. President of Mandi Bahauddin Chamber Haider Raza Naqvi said that we are with United Business Group and express full confidence in the leadership of UBG for the promotion of better industrial

and commercial activities in the country. He also invited UBG delegation to visit Mandi Bahauddin. UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, Mandi Bahauddin Chamber President Haider Raza Naqvi, Vice President Irfan Tarar, Capt. (Retd) Taimoor Ahmed, Mian Zahid and Asma Zafar Bakhtawari in a group photo after meeting in Islamabad.

Estate office vacates houses from WAPDA employees

DNA

ISLAMABAD:The Estate Office has vacated as many as ten government houses from the employees of Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) during the last year. "The rest of the government accommodations will revert back to the pools of Estate Office by December 2021," an official in the Ministry of Housing and Works told APP. He said the mechanism has

1,378 houses from illegal and unauthorized occupants in the federal capital with the help of local administration during the last two and half years. To streamlining the allotment process, the official said that as many as 2,245 houses were allotted to the government employees on merit basis. After the judgment of Supreme Court, he said the allotment of government houses and quarters were being made strictly on merit and maturity of turn on respective general waiting list of the federal gov-



been decided by the Ministry of Housing and Works and WAPDA authorities amicably in a meeting during last year in this regard. However the allottees who had been allotted accommodation prior to the promulgation of Accommodation Allocation Rules-2002 would be allowed to retain the government accommodation till their date of superannuation, he added. To a question, he said the Estate Office has vacated some

ernment servants under rule 6 & 7 of Accommodation Allocation Rules, 2002. He said that general waiting list was being maintained and updated by Estate Office regularly which has been established by the information technology department of Estate Office. The official said the federal government employees may apply online or through mail for registration on general waiting list which was also available in the Estate Office website www.estate-office.gov.pk.

HSHM joins hands with Bluesky Students Consultancy Services

ISLAMABAD: Hashoo School of Hospitality Management (HSHM) has collaborated Bluesky Students Consultancy Services to promote its premium hospitality school in Pakistan. In this connection, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Maj (Retd) Faisal Naem Khan, Director Education, Hashoo School of Hospitality Management and Mr. Mumtaz Khan, Country Head Bluesky Students Consultancy Services in PC Hotel, Lahore. HSHM is Pakistan's first premier hospitality and tourism management school in collaboration with Sheffield Hallam University, UK, and in partnership with Construction Technology Training Institute (CTTI). HSHM's first campus is located on IJP Road Islamabad, and is now accepting admissions for fall semester 2021. Bluesky Students Consultancy Services is a leading consultancy firm providing educational guidance and consultancy services to students wishing to study abroad. They have their presence across Pakistan and in Australia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, and Malaysia. Hashoo Group owns and operates the largest



chain of hotels in Pakistan and are expanding aggressively. There will be a huge demand of specialized hospitality professionals in Pakistan. Hashoo Group will prefer graduates from its own school and will offer them guaranteed job placements. HSHM also plans to expand its campuses to Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar very soon. After having studied for two years at HSHM, qualifying students will have the option to study the third academic year at Sheffield Hallam University in the UK to complete their BSc Hons degree. This is a golden opportunity for students who want to save a substantial cost while obtaining an international hospitality degree that is recognised worldwide along with landing a confirmed job as soon as they graduate. Mr. Mumtaz Khan added, "We are very glad to join hands with the largest hospitality group of Pakistan. HSHM is offering a golden opportunity for students who can't afford to study three years from UK but can afford the final years study at a prestigious university like Sheffield Hallam University who have been teaching hospitality and tourism for past 25 years". – DNA

ICCI calls for withdrawal of new tax on voice calls

The delegation members said that the tax has been imposed without consulting the stakeholders

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the representatives of cellular service providers visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and during a meeting with Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President ICCI expressed grave concerns over the levy of 75 paisa tax on voice calls above 5 minutes duration in Budget 2021-22 as it was an anti-poor tax and would increase the cost of 5 minutes call from current Rs.1.97 to Rs.2.72 putting more financial burden on the consumers besides affecting the business of telecoms. They strongly demanded that the government should immediately withdraw this tax to save the telecoms and the consumers from further troubles. Asif Aziz Chief

Commercial Officer Jazz, Naveed Khalid Butt Group Chief Regulatory Officer Ufone, Bilal Khan Deputy Director Financial Control Zong, Bilal Maroof from Telenor and others were in the delegation. Fatma Azim Senior Vice President, Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President, Ejaz Abbasi former President ICCI were also present at the occasion.

The delegation members said that the tax has been imposed without consulting the stakeholders. They said the proposed tax is not implementable as the charging structure is not linear and is based on bundle offers to facilitate the prepaid users which account for 98% of overall cellular subscribers in Pakistan. They said that this regressive tax will play havoc with the prepaid bundles being enjoyed by the low-



est segment of society. They said that the voice and hybrid bundles will have to be withdrawn to implement this regressive tax and the existing telecom service model will be seriously hampered. They said that such usage based taxes have not been implemented so far and it is nearly next to

impossible to implement these changes in existing billing systems of telcos. Therefore, they stressed that the government should immediately withdraw the proposed tax to save the economy from its negative impact. Addressing the delegation, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the current government was determined to promote digital economy, but such anti-poor taxes would create hurdles in realizing such cherished goals. He said that the move is totally unprecedented regionally or globally, and will make the poor mobile users pay for the tax gaps. He said that the hardest hit will be the lowest segment of the society, who can't afford to make WhatsApp calls. He said

that currently, close to 85 million Pakistanis are using 2G enabled feature phones and have no access to the Internet. He said that the users will quickly learn to redial before 5 minutes to avoid the charge of proposed levy hence it may bring nothing to the government but add to the complexity for the telecom sector and operators besides causing massive inconvenience to the telecom users. He said that there would be severe backlash from the telecom users, urging the government to urgently reassess the decision and withdraw it. He hoped that remaining true to its mandate of facilitating the poor, the government will review this regressive move and withdraw this tax in the larger interest of telecom service users.

CPEC reliable project: Rameez

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PML-Q Punjab Deputy Secretary Information Khawaja Rameez Hassan in a press release said that Pak-China friendship is getting stronger with the passage of time.He said,CPEC is the only multi-purpose project in history that has a real existence. The West, disturbed by the importance of this project, makes unsuccessful attempts to create a competitive atmosphere with Rose G-7 and various similar advertising projects

Lok Virsa conducts painting classes

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (NIFTH) on Monday conducted a miniature painting classes in association with the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC). Talking to APP, Executive Director Lok Virsa Talha Ali said that the painting classes held at newly restored art gallery. He said that NCA artists taught youngsters about the miniature painting besides music performance and other art activities where youth was interested. – APP

IRSA releases 252,600 cusecs water

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Monday released 252,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 267,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1436.54 feet, which was 52.54 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. The water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 144,900 and 132,500 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1154.55 feet, which was 116.55 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 42,100 and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 161,700, 144,000 and 31,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 34,500 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 11,600 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.

Anti-measles drive kicks off

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A week-long anti-measles drive kicked off here on Monday to administer the injection to children between six months to five years of age in 35 Union councils of the district. Chief Executive Officer District Health Authority Dr. Faiza Kanwal said that drive had been started in eight UC of Rawalpindi city,7 UCs of tehsil Rawalpindi, 8 UC of Rawalpindi Cantt,9 UC of tehsil Taxila,2 UC of tehsil Murree and one UC of tehsil kotli sattian. She said that the campaign would be continued till July 10. The CEO urged the citizens, particularly the parents, to play their role in eliminating the disease from the society. "The parents should co-operate with the special teams so that the set target could be achieved," she added. Dr. Faiza said that a healthy child was essential for a healthy society and this message should be conveyed in every nook and corner of the district.

Briefs

AIUOU
announces
to upgrade
Medical
Center

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In order to provide public health unit facilities for its employees and their families, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIUOU) is upgrading and expanding existing medical centre.

According to the AIUOU, male and female wards will be established, minor OT, emergency, and doctor's rooms are also being set up. More doctors and other medical staff will be hired to provide immediate relief to the employees. The medical center will be equipped with all medical facilities and will also provide OPD, emergency and minor OT facilities in the evening shift to facilitate university employees, especially those living in residential colony with their families.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, has approved the up-gradation of the Medical Center to provide first aid treatment facilities to the employees and their families on campus and instructed the Project Director, Engineer Shareef Ullah to complete the expansion as soon as possible. Our staff is working day and night to ensure the completion of the work on time, added Project Director. Vice Chancellor has also provided the facility to the employees to reimburse the expenses incurred in case of emergency admission in the public and private sector hospitals across Pakistan.

No flood
situation in
any of main
rivers: FFC

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that, at present, there is no flood situation in any of the main rivers of Indus River System. According to daily FFC report on Monday, in this year, main river inflows and outflows are much less compared to the last year. The combined Live Storage of three main reservoirs is just 20.90% of the existing Combined Live Storage (i.e.13.516 MAF). Last year today's (July 5, 2020) Combined Live Storage was 54.81% of 13.516 MAF. As per FFD, Lahore, Western Wave trough continues to prevail over Kashmir and adjoining areas with Seasonal Low presently lying over Northeastern Balochistan. Dust thunderstorm/rain of light to moderate intensity may occur at isolated places over Punjab, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Northeastern Balochistan during the ensuing 24 hours.

For the same period isolated thunderstorm/rain of light to moderate intensity is also expected over the upper catchments of all main rivers.

WAPDA
generates 37b
units' hydel
electricity

ISLAMABAD: The hydel power stations of Pakistan Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) cumulatively generated 37.147 billion units of low-cost and environment-friendly electricity during fiscal year 2020-21. The hydel generation by WAPDA is almost equal to that of fiscal year 2019-20 and 3.08 billion units more if compared with the average annual hydel generation during the last 10 years.

According to data of WAPDA hydel power generation in 2020-21, Tarbela Hydel Power Station generated 12.61 billion units, Tarbela 4th Extension 3.42 billion units, Ghazi Barotha 6.89 billion units, Mangla 5.40 billion units, and Neelum-Jhelum Hydel Power Station generated 4.79 billion units. While, rest of the generation i.e. 4.03 billion units - was contributed by other hydel power stations of WAPDA.

It is worth mentioning here that hydel generation is the cheapest electricity, produced in the country. That is why, it plays a pivotal role for development in economic and social sectors by stabilizing the overall power tariff for the consumers.— APP

Integration of locals, private sector vital for CPEC success

Ambassador Javed shrugged off the impression that Chabahar and Gwadar, Dubai, and Dammam were the strategic rivals

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: 'Pakistan needs to work on greater integration of locals, private sectors as well as the overseas Pakistanis into the CPEC projects', said Ambassador Syed Hassan Javed, Director Chinese Study Centre, NUST. While speaking at the webinar on the 'Regional Integration and CPEC: The Case of Gwadar Port' organized by the Institute of Regional Studies, Amb. Javed stressed that the need to adopt an innovative approach for the second phase of CPEC to un-tap huge multi-sectoral potentials between the two countries. On Afghanistan's inclusion into the CPEC, Ambassador Javed said 'it would be a welcoming development since China will serve as the stabilizing factor in Afghanistan.'

Ambassador Javed shrugged off the impression that Chabahar and Gwadar, Dubai, and Dammam were the strategic rivals. He was of the view that those ports were complementary to CPEC, which he called the 'sister ports of CPEC'. While comparing the Chinese investments in

Pakistan with the west, Amb. Javed said that 'Chinese FDI stood very high in comparison to western and eastern countries' investments altogether'. In another comparison of port capacity, Amb. Javed said that Gwadar Port alone can handle load up to 400 million tons cargo annually once it was completely operationalized, adding that 'it was almost near to India's total capacity of all ports'.

While speaking on the occasion, Dr. Mir Sadaat Baloch, Asst. Professor at the University of Baluchistan, called for the inclusion of Azad Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan into the CPEC projects, adding that manufacturing, information, and communication technology also need to be incorporated in the second phase. In terms of establishing the Economic Zones, Dr. Baloch said we were lagging as we were only able to operationalize the one zone so far. He regretted losing energy-related projects in the CPEC which he thought were the 'backbone of CPEC'. He was of the view that the shortcomings of the first phase had actually led us to the IMF, adding that in the second phase the focus

should be towards local participations wherein he suggested giving contracts to the local contractors. He also said that we need to invest in enhancing labor skills which he argued were crucial for the success of CPEC projects and equally important for social integration and public support. In his closing remarks, he called the regional integration process to be 'policy oriented' rather idiosyncratic.

Major Gen. (ret'd) Muhammad Samraiz Malik, former DG ISSRA, NDU, in his presentation pointed out the battle of ports in the Indian Ocean. Since the region was shifting from Indian centrality to Chinese centrality there was a battle of ports going on in the Indian Ocean where China has acquired fifteen ports and India nine so far, said Dr. Malik. He apprised that audience about India's 'Necklace of Diamonds' strategy in contrast to the Chinese 'Spring of Pearls' to encircle China's assertiveness in the Indian Ocean. 'Chabahar was one of the diamonds that India was heavily investing in but the China-Iran cooperation has substantially reduced New Delhi's chances to acquire', said Dr. Malik.

He argued that the rise of China was very much linked to the development of Gwadar Port, as the port was critical to CPEC which was essentially a part of the Belt and Road Initiative, and these altogether linked to China's ascendancy. For that reason, he opined that Gwadar has immense importance for the Chinese long-term goals. He was of the view that the CPEC was not just about building a network of roads rather it was bringing regional connectivity, integration of civilizations, cultural exchanges, and sharing of resources. In the end, Dr. Malik cautioned about the rising contentions, regional rivalries, and renewed interest of extra-regional powers with the growth of CPEC.

While closing the session, Ms. Nabila Jaffer of IRS maintained that domestic economic activities were essentially required to be exploited for optimal utilization of infrastructure development, intra-regional industrial, and agricultural development of Pakistan in the larger framework of CPEC. Ms. Jaffer called for greater use of maritime industrial and economic potentials to modernize Pakistan's maritime industry.



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister for Youth Affairs, Usman Dar meets with Australian High Commissioner, Jeffery Shaw to promote cultural exchange between Australia and Pakistan. —DNA

CTP arrest
2515 beggars

RAWALPINDI: City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi have geared up their ongoing operation against professional beggars and rounded up 2515 from different city roads.

According to incharge CTP Anti-begging squad Asif, several FIRs were lodged against professional beggars during June while 13 beggar children arrested from the city roads were handed over to Child Protection Welfare Bureau (CPWB).

He said that special anti-beggars squads had been constituted to nab the professional beggars. He said, the squad on the directives of Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) had launched grand operation and rounded up over 2515.

Traffic Police were trying to eliminate begging from the city roads and during their efforts, professional beggars were being sent behind the bars, he added.

Out of total nearly 80 percent beggars roaming in the city are professional. 60 percent beggars caught from city roads were healthy and fit while only 20 percent were disabled persons and 20 were drug addicts, he informed. A large number of beggars were brought to Rawalpindi from far-flung areas of the country and operating through contractors, he said adding, the anti-beggars squad of CTP and Rawalpindi district police were conducting raids at different roads and intersections. — APP

PTCL, CISCO
sign agreement

Under this partnership, both companies aim to work collectively and modernize the IT infrastructure



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) and CISCO have announced a strategic partnership to deliver services to businesses in Pakistan through signing a Service Provider Partnership agreement. Under this partnership, both companies aim to work collectively and modernize the IT infrastructure by offering cost-effective and innovative services. This will, not only be limited to technology, but will also include providing strategic guidance and roadmap to successfully navigate the customer's digital transformation journey. On the occasion, Zarrar Hasham Khan, Chief Business Services Officer, PTCL, said: "This partnership with Cisco will allow PTCL to serve our customers across the geographic and demographic boundaries to exceed their expectations. It will also be instrumental in supporting Pakistan in the digital transformation jour-

ney, as it will be facilitating the creation of a holistic digital workspace and lifestyle. We will be able to provide our corporate customers with a technological foundation that is secure and integrates connectivity, automation and analytics for better collaboration across the entire business value-chain."

On the occasion, Kashif Ul Haque, Country General Manager, Cisco, said, "Together Cisco and PTCL will be able to transform the way businesses are carried out in Pakistan. Our focus is on being the catalyst for change through SPaaS (Service Provider as a Channel) that will be utilized in the most optimized and efficient manner. We truly appreciate this partnership that will enable us to transform our customers' networks into a software-based and more agile platform." PTCL remains at the forefront to take such initiatives that will pave the way for latest Cloud-based solutions and managed services, enabling our corporate customers across Pakistan.

Month-long Police summer
camp kicks off

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A month-long police summer camp kicked off at police lines headquarters on Monday, aimed at reaching out to children, aged 4-14, of the federal capital through community policing. It was stated by Islamabad Police chief Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman while addressing at inauguration ceremony of the camp. The IGP said that the Islamabad Police believes in continuity of efforts to promote friendly police ecology. In this regard, he pointed out that it had started a summer school back in 2002 to boost the public-friendly image of

the police. The school, he said, has been held every year since for the past 19 years. The children from the age of four to 14 would participate in the 18th ICT Police summer school where classes and lectures have been arranged for them. IGP Rehman said that during the course, students would be taught to swim, horse riding, martial arts, gymnastics, archery and obstacle crossing by trained instructors. This year lectures included on self-protection, and child protection. The youngsters would be informed about the functioning of Islamabad safe city project and its benefits, he added.

Moreover, he said children would be provided pick and drop facility to ensure their maximum participation from all major parts of the city. The IGP said that students would be sensitized about basics of observing traffic laws and personal safety tips. "Children are our next generation and good image of the police department in their minds is crucial for strengthening bonds while the friendly attitude of Islamabad police will be reflected during training in this Summer School," he added. Hence, one of the key objectives of the camp was to teach the children about the efforts police makes to keep

the society safe and the important public cooperation has in that combination. He hoped that the summer school would continue to be held by successive police chiefs in the city with students of the city actively participating in it. Parents of the children appreciated the capital police for arranging the programme and hoped that liaison of police with the public would be further enhanced in future to inculcate friendly police ecology in the city. DIG headquarters, Kamran Aadi, AIG establishment, Dr Naveed Atif, SSP headquarters, Omer Khan and parents of Participating children were also present on the occasion.



ISLAMABAD: A view of extension work of Islamabad Expressway underway near PWD during development work. — APP

NA body seeks Naulong Dam's deducted amount

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly Standing Committee on Water Resources on Monday asked the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to pay Rs. 1,916 million deducted from the account of Naulong Dam. The Committee which met with Nawab Muhammad Yousuf Talpur in the Chair also asked the provincial governments of Balochistan and Sindh to pay the outstanding dues of water charges to Hub Dam. The Committee was informed that Federal Government approved the project of Naulong Dam in 2009. Thereafter all the formalities were fulfilled and when funds were released for the Naulong Dam, the FBR de-

ducted Rs. 1,916 million from the account of Naulong Dam without any legitimate ground and adjusted the amount against the receivables from WAPDA. Consequently, the work of Naulong Dam could not be started. So, an important national project has been delayed.

The representative of FBR was of the view that Naulong Dam was a project of WAPDA. So, the receivables from WAPDA could be deducted from hundreds of accounts of WAPDA. Hence, FBR deducted and received the amount from the account of Naulong Dam. The Standing Committee showed serious displeasure and declared that FBR should not deduct funds from the Public Sector Development Projects. Moreover, it was informed that

Lahore High Court had already directed FBR to return this amount but FBR has taken a new position. According to FBR, now the Sales Tax has been imposed, so, they would adjust the amount deducted from account of Naulong Dam against the sales tax imposed on WAPDA. On the other hand, the Ministry of Water Resources while briefing the Standing Committee, informed that since funds were once sanctioned for Naulong Dam and same have been deducted by the WAPDA. Hence Ministry of Finance is reluctant to give more funds for this purpose. The Committee directed the FBR to immediately return these funds to the Naulong Dam project and directed WAPDA to immediately pay its other dues to the FBR.

However, the FBR has also been directed to return the money immediately without waiting for other WAPDA funds. The Committee was informed that the Hub Dam was built 40 years ago and it was decided that two third of its water would be given to Sindh and one third to Balochistan. It was also decided that cost for the construction of Hub Dam would be paid by Sindh Government and Balochistan Government to WAPDA but both the governments have failed to fulfill their commitments. In addition, 40 years ago it was decided that the monthly expenditure for the Hub Dam would be Rs. three million out of which Rs. two million would be provided by Sindh and one million by Balochistan but both the governments have paid very

negligible amount.

The representatives of the Balochistan government committed that remaining dues would be paid to WAPDA within six months. No representative of the Sindh Government's Water Board attended the meeting. Therefore, the Committee took stern notice of this and directed the Chairman and other officers of the Water Board to attend the next meeting of the Committee otherwise legal action would be taken against them.

The meeting was attended by MNAs Ali Nawaz Awan, Ch. Shoukat Ali Bhatti, Muhammad Farooq Azam Malik, Ms. Nureen Farooq Ibrahim, Ms. Nu-zhat Pathan, Ch. Muhammad Hamid Hameed (through Video Link), Riaz-ul-Haq, Ehsan-ur-Rehman Mazari and Afreen Khan.

21 new
COVID-19
cases
reported

RAWALPINDI: As many as 21 patients were reported during the last 24 hours in the district with eight belonged to Rawal Town, four from Potohar town, six from Rawalpindi Cantt, two Attock, and one from Taxila.

"Presently 44 coronavirus confirmed patients were admitted to various facilities of the city including 17 were admitted in Holy Family Hospital, 8 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 10 in Institute of Urology and 9 in Fauji Foundation Hospital ". According to the daily situation report issued by the District Corona Management center, one patient was on a ventilator in critical condition, 10 stable and 33 were in moderate condition.

District Health Authority updated that so far over 790,000 people jabbed themselves against the lethal coronavirus (COVID-19) across the district since the vaccination administering drive launched on March 10.

The report said that only one patient had died due to this deadly disease in the last 24 hours. — APP

DG PNCA
seriously
injured in
road accident

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Director General Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), Dr. Fouzia Saeed critically injured in road accident during her official tour to Balochistan.

In a statement issued by PNCA here on Monday, the Arts Council said, "she has been transferred to a hospital in Quetta where she is currently recovering".

PNCA also appealed for pray for her speedy recovery. The fatal accident took place on the Panjgur National Highway. She was on way to Gwadar from Quetta. Soon after accident, she was shifted to Panjgur hospital. Later, the doctors referred her to Quetta.

PNCA
announces
result of
talent hunt

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) on Monday announced the result of week-30 of 'talent hunt music edition'.

The first Jury award won by Jerryson A Rafi, second Jury award by Mahrukh Chaudhry and third award titled people's choice won by Ghous Ali. The Arts council announced the result on its official page online.

PNCA would also provide opportunities to the winners and special nominees in its upcoming concerts and music functions. Renowned professional artists in different specialized music fields were taking auditions of registered participants at PNCA. The program was aimed to promote music field along with polishing the creative skills of the young people.

Gallery 6
to organize
APA 2021
exhibition

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Gallery 6 Islamabad would organize a week-long exhibition and award ceremony of Arjumand Painting Award (APA) 2021 at Alhamra Art Center, Lahore, on July 7.

President Dabistan-e-Iqbal Mian Iqbal Salahuddin will be chief guest on the occasion. Curator Gallery 6 Dr. Faisal Arjumand told APP that 82 artists paintings which were selected in the first phase of APA would be displayed at exhibition.

The exhibition will remain open till 14 July (except Sunday) from 10 am to 5 pm. This year, the Gallery is being supported by six collaborating partners. Four cash prizes would be announced; the first prize is Rs. 3 lakhs, second is Rs. 2 lakhs, third is Rs. 1 lakh and the fourth is a merit prize of Rs. 50,000. The exhibition and award ceremony would be attended by art enthusiasts and artists from across the country.

Standing alone

WITH the almost complete pull-out of US troops from Afghanistan, and the notorious Bagram air-base now mainly deserted, with no foreign troops present on it, has Afghanistan essentially been left on its own to battle the chaotic aftermath of the 20-year US presence in the country? The answer to that is mostly in the affirmative. The scenes we are watching now resemble those witnessed after the Soviet withdrawal and also the US withdrawal from Vietnam decades ago.

There is first of all the question of a possible Afghan exodus from the country as it once again falls into war. Recently, the Taliban have been making rapid advances across the country with seven more districts falling to them as their hold around major cities becomes firmer. Kabul remains the only point in the country that is still at least partly controlled by the government of President Ashraf Ghani. It is difficult to say how long even this control will last. The US plans to leave only about 600 troops in the country after September this year, in order to guard its diplomatic enclave. Meanwhile, it is in talks with three Central Asian countries – Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan – to take in Afghans who supported the US during their presence there so that they can be safe while they apply for the visas to the US.

Whether it is possible for the Afghans to do so is something that we do not know. So far, the Afghan security forces have not been able to hold back the Taliban, which now form a ring around all major cities, including the capital. In the meanwhile, the old warlords have also taken up arms threatening yet further chaos in a country that could yet face more destruction, more disaster. No one wishes to see this. But then no one seems to know quite what to do, or how to save the Afghan people from the kind of peril they now face even though this should be a priority for all those engaged in Afghanistan.

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Good steps

THE Kamyab Pakistan (Successful Pakistan) Programme is set to be launched later this month. The Programme is aimed at providing support to people in housing projects, skill development, health cards and interest-free loans for businesses and agri-services. There are some ambitious targets set by the government which are scheduled to be met over the long term. Rs300 billion to Rs400bn interest-free loans would be given in the current fiscal year 2021-22, with the amount being budgeted to provide subsidy against interest-free loans.

This is a good step forward and is part of the government's series of actions in increased government spending for programmes of social welfare. This is another one of the major initiatives taken by the government for the disadvantaged segment of society ahead of the next elections. The initiative aims to provide billions in interest-free loans for people and start-ups, aiding more public spending and entrepreneurship as a result. Skills development and training through the provision of scholarships and access to high tech is bound to improve job prospects for the masses. Part of the programmes include channel loans and financial aid to young Pakistanis by means of the following programmes: the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES), which is designed to enable start-ups; the Skills Scholarships Scheme (Hunarmand Pakistan) to train and equip the youth with industry 4.0 high-tech and high-end traditional skills to gain employment in domestic and international markets; and bodies such as the National Youth Council and the Tiger Force, which seek to tap into the unbounded enthusiasm of the youth for policymaking and civil engagement.

Such programmes aimed at empowering the young population are the need of the hour. Proper skills training, entrepreneurial experiences and internships have proven to go a long way in improving literacy and employment rates.

Governance of the European Union-(Part 2)

Jean-Dominique Giuliani



A study by the European Parliament's Research Service, published in May 2020[2], highlights all the unused or underused resources of the European treaties. From the fight against terrorism to European health, this document provides the existing legal bases on which common actions could be developed to respond concretely to current needs

FINALLY, the independence of the institutions, which is claimed by each of them, is not really put into practice. It is statutory for the Central Bank, the Court of Justice and the Court of Auditors, and this is not open to debate. It could be extended to the Common Diplomatic Service (EEAS), to certain executive agencies, and even to the Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), which is currently only one of the Commission's services and could constitute, with the new European Public Prosecutor, a powerful body in terms of controlling Community funds.

The common European institutions must learn a more systematic distribution of competences and powers. This is particularly true of the Commission, whose tendency

from the outset has been to concentrate all competences in the name of the necessary federalisation of certain policies. This attitude slows down the devolution of competences at European level; it "angers" the States and slows down the development of common tools.

This is especially so in terms of foreign policy. The High Representative is supposed to have the upper hand in external relations. He is appointed by the Member States and sits as a Vice-President of the Commission, but six other members of the College deal with international issues and do not always report to him (International Partnerships, Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Crisis Management, Humanitarian Aid, Security and Defence, Trade).

The Commission retains control over the appropriations, which are very important for development aid and humanitarian action - but it also controls the management of diplomatic personnel. However, there can be no strong European presence on the international scene without considering development aid, humanitarian aid and international policy guidelines in foreign policy, in conjunction with the Member States. Without the latter, the Common Foreign Policy will always be in stalemate; without the mobilisation of all Community resources, diplomatic action, including that of the Member States, will remain deprived of the strengths it needs. The time has come for a more open reflection that is less "constrained" by the usual Brussels responses. Wouldn't a more independent common diplomatic service be more effective?

A study by the European Parliament's Research Service, published in May 2020[2], highlights all the unused or underused resources of the European treaties. From the fight against terrorism to European health, this document provides the existing legal bases on which common actions could be developed to respond concretely to current needs. Admittedly, many of these innovations would require legislative decisions or the unanimous agreement of the Member States and are therefore complex to implement. However, many of them appear to be quick and easy to implement, from decisions to strengthen certain administrative capacities to targeting specific funding. Furthermore, it is clear that bridging clauses, those provisions which allow for a unanimous decision to be taken by qualified majority in areas where unanimous agreement is normally required, are insufficiently used. It might be possible to make more use of them in crises, when urgency makes it easier to reach a consensus.

Full and genuine trust between Member States must be restored through permanent political dialogue that diplomatic tools have somewhat frozen via incessant and complex negotiations. The European Council must regain its true role as a driving force - and it should not rely too often on diplomacy for the implementation of its decisions. We need to find forums where the heads of State and government can talk about foresight, policy and major orientations. They must also be able to confide in each other about their internal constraints and data.

Governments must then find the means, each according to their specificities and constitutional constraints, to give their European policies more solid national roots. Perhaps national representatives should be more closely

involved, as is already the case in some Member States. With strengthened confidence, unused Treaty provisions could be drawn upon.

This is the case, for example, with the delegation of Article 42 of the Treaty on European Union, which the Council can give to a group of Member States to carry out a mission on the Union's behalf. This facility has never been used, although the facts show the need for it. France intervened militarily in the Sahel and was supported by several Member States. This intervention led to the creation of an EU mission to support and train local armies. Germany, through the action of its Chancellor, took the lead in negotiating with Turkey at the height of the migratory crisis and in initiating a dialogue. It did the same with China by concluding an investment protection agreement. NATO's reassurance missions in the Baltic and Polish areas could also be delegated to participating Member States. If the European Union is indeed an addition of the strengths and qualities of the States that make it up, the two articles of the Treaty that organise this form of delegation should finally be used. Every Member State of the Union has a particularity on the international scene. Is it not time to use these qualities, which are numerous and often very specific, to give a mandate to one or other of them to represent the Union, for example in international bodies, or even to act on its behalf? Could such a division of tasks not be organised more systematically, anticipating a de facto evolution that has already begun?

The principle of delegation, which requires trust, could also be applied to other institutions. Parliament itself should accept that one or other of its committees can exercise control that escapes it today. Is it not shocking that its totally legitimate request to know which contracts had been signed by the Commission with the major laboratories to finance and acquire vaccines was only belatedly accepted by the Commission, under shameful conditions - no copies, reading in a secure room - and very partially satisfied by the communication of truncated and smudged documents? As in all parliaments, a Commission could have exercised parliamentary control on behalf of the entire Assembly, which is justified by its human and budgetary implications.

The same applies to the Commission, which intends to monitor closely the exercise of European competences, even when they do not fall within its remit. How many heads of mission have been surprised by the fussy controls of its services when they were far away in difficult, often dangerous terrain that would have justified greater trust and room for manoeuvre, obviously compensated by the obligation to be accountable?

We might also raise the issue of the governance of the six executive agencies, which depend on the Commission and which are in fact decentralised services.

The 37 decentralised agencies, which are more autonomous and on whose boards the Member States and the Commission are represented, should be placed under the control of the European Parliament, which is not even represented on their boards today.

Accepted and orderly delegations are much better than dislocations conceded under the weight of circumstances. The European institutions must accept the principle of

delegation. This will probably require regulatory or legislative adjustments. But daily practice can accompany and anticipate inevitable developments towards more autonomy and more ex-post controls.

The complexity of European texts is matched only by the difficulty of adopting them. The Member States have long had different legal traditions and immediate national interests are not always identical; the European Parliament is increasingly keen to make its mark; and translations into 24 official languages do not make the job any easier. This affects European texts. They are complicated. Directives are addressed to the Member States, which are responsible for transposing them into national law. They are therefore intended for experts responsible for implementing them. But the Union is now increasingly legislating by means of regulations, which are directly applicable within the Member States and therefore enforceable against citizens. These regulations can only really be understood with a certain expertise in European legislation. Shouldn't we start a real codification process sooner or later?

Moreover, the procedures for awarding contracts are long, complex and often costly. Moreover, they run counter to the principle of preference practised by all States on all continents: across the world public contracts financed by taxpayers are reserved, with some exceptions, for national companies. This is not the case with money from the European budget.

The recovery plan decided to face the health crisis could be an opportunity to favour European companies more, thus contributing to the support of the economy. This practice should be extended to other EU budget expenditure. How better to explain to citizens that Europeans form a community than by avoiding, for example, driving to Africa in Asian vehicles or by refraining from systematically calling on large British or American firms for auditing operations, as is unfortunately the case today? The symbolic dimension of the use of European public money is part of the conquest of a sense of belonging.

For a long time, the European institutions were forbidden by the Member States to address citizens directly. The increase in the number of European policies and decisions calls for a real overhaul of the institutions' communication policy. Its content and methods seem largely obsolete. It gives people the impression that it is geared more towards governments than towards citizens.

A real revolution is needed here. The most active commissioners are generally those who take care, as politicians, to talk about their work and who do not entrust anyone with the task of explaining what they do. This rule should be imposed on all commissioners.

Communication content must also change. It is no longer about convincing people of the added value of the European dimension, which is now obvious to most Europeans. It is necessary to explain the reasons for and the means of common policies, to teach them in all transparency and to demonstrate in concrete terms the foresight of which the Union is capable. In the same way, we must not hesitate to recognise the errors and failures in the implementation of some of them. Arrogance is no longer an option in a society of transparency and compassion.

—Courtesy Robert Schuman Foundation

This pandemic is far from over

Dr. Theodore Karasik



Latin America continues to go through its waves, with the Delta variant now in certain locales. There is increasing concern about contamination on buses and other modes of public transportation

AS many countries are either coming out of one wave of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) infections or entering another, there are still major issues with the pandemic around the world. What is becoming clear is that there are mounting new or recurring issues that will affect the trajectory of the recovery. For some communities, recovery may become too shapeless and scattered to define for several more years.

Latin America continues to go through its waves, with the Delta variant now in certain locales. There is increasing concern about contamination on buses and other modes of public transportation. This is unlike other parts of the world, where mass transit systems were deep cleaned before vaccine availability became the method of choice in fighting the pandemic. In Brazil, researchers are documenting the spread of the country's second wave through contaminated buses and terminals. They collected samples from various surfaces in the public transport system in order to identify the presence of COVID-19. The highest risk of contamination was in bus terminals, with 48.7 percent of positive samples, followed by hospital surroundings (26.8 percent).

Meanwhile, in South Korea, there are issues arising within the military about post-vaccination infections. A fully vaccinated navy officer last week tested positive for COVID-19, marking the first breakthrough infection reported in the military. A breakthrough case is when a person is diagnosed with the virus at least two weeks after receiving the full dose regimen. Health authorities earlier said South Korea had confirmed dozens of such cases among the general population. The latest cases

raised the total number of infections reported among the military to 1,025.

In Russia, as in many other countries, some soldiers have rejected the vaccine. Earlier this year, mandatory vaccinations were instituted due to the rise of pathogen cases in the Russian military. Now, the Ministry of Defense is giving booster jabs because of the Delta variant. The impact of infections among military personnel is likely to last a long time.

Another emerging issue is known as "long COVID." Evidence is mounting, from multiple countries and researchers, that even mild infections can lead to permanent changes in the brain, which affect everything from signaling to muscles and organs to cognition, memory and the organization of thoughts and ideas.

In America, while more than half of all adults are vaccinated, face mask and social distancing mandates are being relaxed, while pathogen cases and deaths are on the decline. However, the return to normality does not apply to the 10 to 30 percent of those infected who continue to experience debilitating symptoms months after being infected. Unfortunately, current numbers and trends indicate that long COVID will be another public health disaster. It is being found all around the world.

Long COVID covers "a range of symptoms that can last weeks or months... (that) can happen to anyone who has had COVID-19." The symptoms may affect a number of organ systems, occur in diverse patterns, and frequently get worse after physical or mental activity. Nobody knows the time trajectory of long COVID, so medical services and their systems will be challenged on top of other requirements.

Compounding the difficulties of the recovery situation

is the old debate on vaccine passports. Faced with a divergence of views, governments are taking very different approaches. In Europe, for example, seven countries started issuing the EU's digital certificates at the beginning of June, with the bloc's remaining nations – bar Ireland – doing the same from last Thursday. However, some countries and political factions are taking the opposite stance, strictly limiting the use of such documents or banning their development. This type of thinking will only ensure the pathogen and its issues drag on longer.

The EU says it is working to make its digital vaccination certificate similar to other documentation in non-EU countries. The UK, for example, has a different system because of Brexit issues and reconciling this disconnect is important for economic recovery. The four vaccines approved for use in the UK are also approved in the EU, but there may be additional issues with full access.

Recovery from the pandemic and dealing with the long-term problems of how the pathogen develops must trump politics. Militaries are facing their own challenges with the virus, but are still able to function with what appears to be no direct impact on operations. On a civilian level, impatience with COVID-19 issues will arise, perhaps unpredictably and unexpectedly.

Vaccination is a positive and necessary part of daily life in the 2020s, especially when booster jabs become necessary depending on the severity of the next wave. The unvaccinated will continue to get squeezed. Meanwhile, in medical facilities and other related systems, the elongated curve on where long COVID will end up is another daunting issue for which there is currently no answer.

—Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

Djokovic
into 50th
Grand Slam
quarter-final

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Novak Djokovic reached his 50th Grand Slam quarter-final on Monday with a straight-sets victory over Chile's Cristian Garin at Wimbledon. World number one Djokovic eased into the last-eight at the All England Club for the 12th time, 6-2, 6-4, 6-2, and will face Hungary's Marton Fucsovics for a place in the semi-finals.

"Confidence levels are very high after winning the French Open," said Djokovic. "It was one of my biggest wins in the circumstances - two five-setters, two four-setters in the second week."

"They took a lot out of me but they also gave me wings. The further I go in the tournament, the more comfortable I feel and I look forward to the next challenge." Djokovic, chasing a sixth Wimbledon crown and a record-equalling 20th major title, is halfway to a calendar Grand Slam.

Only two men have swept all four majors in the same year with Rod Laver the most recent back in 1969.

Djokovic broke serve five times on Monday and hit 28 winners, twice as many as his 17th-seeded Chilean opponent.

Hackers
demand
\$70 mn after
Kaseya attack

PARIS: Hackers were on Monday demanding \$70 million in bitcoin in exchange for data stolen during an attack on a US IT company that has shuttered hundreds of Swedish supermarkets. Researchers believe more than 1,000 companies could have been affected by the attack on Miami-based firm Kaseya, which provides IT services to some 40,000 businesses around the world.

The FBI warned Sunday that the scale of the "ransomware" attack - a form of digital hostage-taking where hackers encrypt victims' data and then demand money for restored access - is so large that it may be "unable to respond to each victim individually".

Sweden's Coop supermarket chain was among the most high-profile victims. Most of their 800 stores were still closed three days after the hack paralysed its cash registers, spokesman Kevin Bell told AFP. Coop, like many of the companies affected, is not a direct customer of Kaseya's, but its IT subcontractor Visma Esscom was hit by the attack.

The few hundred Coop stores that had reopened were relying on alternative payment solutions, such as customers paying using their smartphones, Bell said. - APP

UNSC to
meet on
controversial
Ethiopia dam

UNITED STATES: The United Nations Security Council is set to meet Thursday on Ethiopia's mega-dam project, which has sparked fears in downstream Sudan and Egypt over their water supplies, diplomats said.

Both nations have been pushing Ethiopia to ink a binding deal over the filling and operation of its Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) on the Blue Nile that broke ground in 2011.

Addis Ababa, which said it last year reached its first target in the years-long filling of the dam, has announced it will proceed in July with or without a deal. The public session was requested by Tunisia on Egypt and Sudan's behalf, according to a diplomatic source. France's ambassador to the UN, Nicolas de Riviere, said last week that the council itself can do little apart from bringing the sides together.

"We can open the door, invite the three countries at the table, bring them to express their concerns, encourage them to get back to the negotiations and find a solution," he told reporters. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Players of Nishtar Hockey Club in a group photo with former Pakistan Hockey team captain M Usman, on the occasion of an exhibition match between Nishtar and Heroes Club Jehlum. - DNA

Experts see new landmines
deal as Baku's success

DNA

BAKU: A new Baku-Yerevan agreement on the handover of 15 Armenian ex-convicts in a swap for mine maps in liberated Fuzuli and Zangilan regions has been hailed by experts as President Ilham Aliyev's diplomatic mastery and as another success of the Azerbaijani diplomacy. Further progress towards resolving a thorny diplomatic impasse despite seven tense months since the November 2020 ceasefire is largely welcomed as an important step that will prevent human losses in heavily-mined regions, rebuilding the liberated territories, and repatriating IDPs. The Foreign Ministry stated on July 3 that upon Russia's initiative Armenia submitted to Azerbaijan maps of about 92,000 anti-tank and anti-personnel mines planted during the occupation of Fuzuli and Zangilan regions. Baku stressed that obtaining mine maps will save the lives of tens of thousands of Azerbaijani citizens, including those involved in mine clearance, and will accelerate the implementation of reconstruction and rehab-

ilitation projects initiated by President Ilham Aliyev on the liberated territories and the return of IDPs.

This agreement comes after the similar Georgia-mediated accord that Baku and Yerevan reached on June 12 to swap maps of 97,000 mines in Aghdam for 15 Armenian detainees, which marked the first diplomatic breakthrough after a long period of escalation.

Fuzuli and Zangilan regions, which are the mostly-mined areas after Aghdam, have considerable strategic importance with their largest infrastructure projects. The area will be a key component in the regional transport and communications hub.

Over 140 Azerbaijan citizens have been killed or injured in mine explosions since November 10, 2020. Armenia deliberately and constantly planted mines on Azerbaijani territories, in violation of the 1949 Geneva Convention, thereby being a major threat to regional peace, security, and cooperation.

The war between Armenia and Azerbaijan ended on November 10 with the signing of a trilateral peace deal by the Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian leaders.

US expert Peter Tase has described Armenia's submission of mine maps as the fruit of the Azerbaijani government's hard work and unbridled foreign policy led by President Aliyev.

He noted that the release of mine maps by the Armenian regime should have taken place seven months ago, immediately after the glorious victory of the Azerbaijani armed forces in the Second Karabakh War.

"The South Caucasus will have a brighter future now that Nagorno Karabakh is swiftly becoming an industrial and transportation hub of Europe and Asia. Azerbaijan is a key political, security, and economic partner of Eurasian multilateral organizations," he said.

Russia-based Azerbaijani expert Mamed Mamedov hailed the acquisition of the mine maps as an important step in the post-war period. He said that it indicated first of all the next diplomatic victory of Azerbaijan.

He stressed that it can be said with confidence that it will contribute to the rapid restoration of areas, including the creation of the necessary infrastructure and the return of IDPs to their native lands.

The expert also underlined Russia's aspiration to score points as one of the leading actors in world politics through direct participation in the post-war normalization process.

"If we speak about Armenia, then it also turned out to be a winner, since in exchange for mine maps it received 15 detainees. Now we can only hope that with this, Azerbaijan and Armenia, through Russia's mediation are laying a huge foundation of trust, which will help gradually develop a dialogue between the former parties to the conflict," Mamedov said.

Former US Ambassador to Azerbaijan Matthew Bryza has said that the progress in providing mine maps will attract investments in Azerbaijan's liberated lands from big countries and international organizations.

"Such a process will attract I believe significant investment from Turkey where business people are eager to help rebuild the liberated lands of Azerbaijan and from the international community as well, from organizations such as the World Bank, from big countries such as the US I hope and European allies," he said. He believes that this is a pragmatic, positive, and important process.



BELGRADE: Italy's players pose for photos after their victory in the FIBA Men's Olympic Qualifying Tournament final match between Serbia and Italy in Belgrade, Serbia. - DNA

Algeria celebrates
Independence Day

FOREIGN DESK

ALGIERS: Algerians are celebrating their 59th Independence Day on Monday, recalling the heavy price that they paid to gain freedom from the French colonial rule.

The French rule in the North African country with a Mediterranean coastline ended on July 5, 1962. The struggle against occupation left around one and a half million people dead, affecting every household in the country. Even 60 years later, France is

yet to act against perpetrators of genocide, torture, murder or even to compensate the country for such actions committed by its forces.

"Algerians are very proud of their legendary fight and armed struggle against the French," Abdennour Touni, an expert in North African studies at the Ankara-based Center for Middle Eastern Studies (ORSAM), told Anadolu Agency. They braved human atrocities committed by a nation which calls itself a champion of human rights and equality, he added.

Myanmar military kills at least
25 people in raid on central town

AGENCIES

YANGON: Myanmar's armed forces killed at least 25 people in a confrontation with opponents of the military at a town in the centre of the Southeast Asian nation, villagers said on Sunday, as people increasingly take up arms against the generals who seized power in a coup five months ago. A spokesman for the military did not respond to

Reuters news agency calls requesting comment on the violence at Depayin in the Sagaing region, about 300km (200 miles) north of the capital, Naypyidaw, which took place on Friday. The state-run Global New Light of Myanmar said that "armed terrorists" had ambushed security forces patrolling there, killing one and wounding six. It said the attackers retreated after the security forces retaliated.

Myanmar has been plunged into chaos by the February 1 coup against elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi, with protests flaring across many parts of the country and key workers including doctors and nurses joining a mass civil disobedience movement.

In some areas civilians have formed "defence forces" to take up arms against the State Administration Council, as the generals dub themselves, often using

hunting rifles or makeshift weapons cobbled together from household items. Some of the groups have been founded in association with a National Unity Government established by the elected administration that was overthrown by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. The latest violence took place on Friday in Depayin township in the central Sagaing region, about 300km (200 miles) north of the capital, Naypyidaw.

Tokyo Olympics
to be special for
athletes: Ian

SPORTS DESK

CANBERRA: The upcoming Tokyo Olympics will be a special moment in the career of athletes, said Ian Chesterman, Chef de Mission of Team Australian, on Monday. The Australian Olympic Committee announced on Monday a team of 472 athletes to compete in Tokyo, including 254 women and 218 men. It is the second-largest team from Australia to the Olympics, not on its own land, just short of the 482 athletes to the Athens Games in 2004.

During the Sydney Games in 2000, a total of 632 Australian

athletes were on its team. At a virtual press conference, Chesterman told reporters no medal targets were set this time. "Given the events of the past 18 months, this has been the correct path," he said. "Getting to the start line has been so difficult." The COVID-19 pandemic has brought uncertainties to the preparation of the Olympics and athletes. The Australian softball squad landed in Japan on June 1 as the first group of competitors to arrive for the Games. Among all the athletes from Australia, more than 62 percent are attending their first Games.

WI Women complete T20I series win over Pakistan

SPORTS DESK

SAINT JOHN'S: West Indies Women comfortably beat Pakistan Women by six wickets in the third and final T20I to complete a 3-0 series win at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium on Sunday. Pakistan were bowled out for 102 after deciding to bat first. West Indies captain Stafanie Taylor recorded a hat-trick in the last over of the Pakistan innings.

Taylor accounted for Aliya Riaz, who top-scored for Pakistan with 29 off 34, Diana (5 off 10) and Anam Amin (0 off 1), and finished with four for 17 from 3.4 overs. Pakistan lost their openers - Javeria Khan (six off eight) and Muneeba Ali (18 off 15) - in 4.4 overs and had their half of the team back in the pavilion by 12.5 overs with 66 runs on board. Aliya and Diana scored a 22-run stand, ensuring Pakistan to cross the 100-run mark after Anisa



Mohammed dismissed Sidra Nawaz and Ayesha Naseem in successive overs. Her first wicket was Nida Dar, who got bowled after scoring 17 off 19, in the 11th over. West Indies' Mohammed and Connell finished with three for 24 and two for 24.

The Girls in Green started the defense of 102 positively as Diana Baig took a scintillating catch in the second over off Anam Amin's bowling as she dived to her right to send Hayley Matthews back to the pavilion. She followed up that effort with an incredible caught and bowled in the next over, removing Deandra Dotin. On the last ball of the third over, Diana dismissed Kysna Knight. West Indies were now three down for 17. Diana ended-up with match figures of two for 17 in four overs. An unbeaten 48-run partnership between Stafanie Taylor (43 not out, 41 balls, 4x4s) and Kycia Knight (24 not out, 27 balls, 2x4s) helped hosts chase down the target with five balls spare.

Borg
back at
Wimbledon

LONDON: Forty-five years after Bjorn Borg won the first of his five Wimbledon titles, his teenage son Leo kept the family flag flying in the boys tournament on Monday.

Leo, 18, reached the second round with a 6-3, 6-7 (2/7), 6-0 win over 17-year-old Marko Topo of Serbia.

Borg fired six aces and 34 winners in his win out on Court Nine.

Bjorn Borg won the boys tournament at Wimbledon in 1972 before winning five successive men's titles from 1976-1980.

Only one father and son have previously won the boys title at Wimbledon - India's Ramanathan Krishnan in 1954 triumphed as did his son Ramesh Krishnan in 1979.

Leo Borg also played Wimbledon juniors in 2019 but was defeated in the first round. - APP

Nation
headed...

From Page 01

"But now, the situation has changed," he said.

PM Imran Khan inaugurated Gwadar Free Zone, Expo Center, Agriculture Industrial Park, and three factories; he also witnessed the signing of various MOUs aimed at constructing a state-of-the-art hospital, airport, and vocational institute.

PM Imran Khan said his sole aim was not only to win the elections but also to develop Balochistan after becoming the prime minister.

The premier said former prime minister Nawaz Sharif had visited London 24 times, but he never came to Balochistan, while former president Asif Ali Zardari visited Dubai 51 times, but he never had the time to visit Gwadar.

"A person who thinks about Pakistan will think about Balochistan as well, but if a person wants to win elections, they will focus on Faisalabad division, which has more seats in the Parliament than Balochistan," he said.

The premier said he had come to visit Gwadar for two reasons - inaugurate the Gwadar Free Zone Phase 2 and for the development of Balochistan.

The prime minister mentioned that Gwadar International Airport would encourage regional trade and boost economic activity.

The prime minister said works on energy and water supplies to the city were underway, and this would help Gwadar grow. "These projects were moving at a slow pace before [...] but now they are developing at a better pace." The premier, shedding light on why the country should expedite China Pakistan Economic Corridor and remove hurdles in businesses related to it, said Chinese exporters were aiming to install such industries that would help Pakistan increase its exports. "Unfortunately, we have never focused on exports. And if we do, it will help bring in dollars," he said, adding that Pakistan has always been at the mercy of the International Monetary Fund as export-led growth.

The prime minister thanked the government of China for launching water and solar projects in Balochistan, particularly Gwadar.

"Pakistan can benefit from its strategic location and also from the expertise of its friend China which is the becoming an economic power in the region," he said.

He also mentioned the technical education provided by China to the locals of Gwadar, which he said, would prove greatly helpful as the foreign investment grew in future.

"Gwadar will connect with Central Asia [...] We have already signed contracts with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan," he said, as he announced he would soon visit Uzbekistan. The prime minister said countries in the region had expressed interest in reaping the benefits offered by the Gwadar port.

In this scenario, he expressed concern over the law and situation in Afghanistan, which he said, was extremely important for the continuity of development.

"We all want peace and stability to prevail in Afghanistan [...] I spoke to Iran's president, and I told him that Afghanistan's neighbouring countries should push for a political settlement in the [war-torn] nation."

The premier highlighted that war would hurt Afghanistan the most, he said, adding that a civil war in Afghanistan would also have effects on its neighbouring countries.

Briefs

Rescue efforts continue in central Japan

FOREIGN DESK

TOKYO: Rescue workers continued their search for 113 people still unaccounted for Monday, two days after a large mudslide in a hot spring resort town southeast of Tokyo killed at least three people and destroyed at least 130 houses, Kyodo reports. RELATED NEWS Search continues for 20 missing in rain-triggered mudslide 20 people missing in large mudslide southwest of Tokyo Tokyo Olympics' 10,000-spectator cap to be reviewed due to COVID rise Japan eyes ending full operation of state vaccination sites in August Firefighters, police and Self-Defense Forces personnel continued to search mud-swamped houses in Atami, Shizuoka Prefecture, and remove debris after rescuing 23 people by Sunday. One person was reported injured and over 550 people took shelter in local hotels, according to the city. The city government has confirmed the safety of 34 of the 147 people whose whereabouts had been unknown based on the basic resident register. Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga told reporters in Tokyo that rescuers will continue looking for those believed to be buried in the mud. According to the prefectural government, some 100,000 cubic meters of soil collapsed into a nearby river around 10:30 a.m. Saturday, and traveled a distance of about 2 kilometers. The local government decided to close 11 elementary and junior high schools, and four kindergartens on Monday as warnings against heavy rain and mudslide remained in place.

600 Covid-19 patients in critical condition

DNA

NUR-SULTAN: 31,718 people are treated for coronavirus infection in Kazakhstan as of July 5, Kazinform has learnt from the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan. RELATED NEWS 82 new COVID-like pneumonia cases registered in Kazakhstan in 24h Over 3.7 mln Kazakhstanis vaccinated with 1st component of anti-COVID vaccine COVID-19: 9 regions of Kazakhstan in 'red zone' Over 1,200 people beat COVID-19 in Kazakhstan in 24h According to the ministry, 9,645 patients are staying at hospitals, while 22,073 are receiving outpatient treatment. 600 patients are in critical condition, 122 are in extremely severe condition and 69 are on artificial lung ventilation. Earlier it was reported that Kazakhstan added 3,031 new cases of the coronavirus infection, pushing the total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Kazakhstan to 436,962 since the start of the pandemic. Nationwide, since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic 402,121 people fully recovered from the novel coronavirus.

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan sign protocol

DNA

TASHKENT: The governmental delegations of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan signed a protocol on the location of the point of junction of the state borders during talks in Ferghana, the Kyrgyz government's press service reported. "During talks the sides exchanged suggestions on location of the point of junction of state borders of 3 countries. The respective protocol was signed then," said the reported. The next meeting of the governmental delegations will be held in Kyrgyzstan. Uzbekistan's Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov and State National Security Committee Chairman Kamchibek Tashiev discussed delimitation of remaining border sections in March 2021. During the state visit of President Sadyr Japarov to Uzbekistan, the two leaders reached agreement on intensification of work of governmental delegations.

Pak to push Dutch companies for joint ventures, investment

Ambassador-designate to Netherlands visits Sialkot on PRGMEA invitation

DNA

SIALKOT: Pakistan Ambassador-designate to the Netherlands Suljok Mustansir Tarar has pledged to encourage Dutch investors to explore Pakistan for possible joint ventures and investment in conventional and non-conventional sectors, besides promoting new sectors and areas in exports to the Netherlands.

The newly-appointed Pakistani envoy visited Sialkot on invitation of the Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association where he held separate meetings at the Sialkot Chamber as well as at the PRGMEA to have detailed discussions on value-added industry's of export-oriented city. Addressing the meeting at PRGMEA House, the Ambassador said that the efforts of PRGMEA in promoting value-added exports are commendable. He said that the purpose of his visit to Sialkot was to enhance contacts and exchange information for the promotion of trade between



Pakistan and the Netherlands. He took a keen interest in the exclusive product lines of Sialkot, especially the footballs which are played in world cup.

He said that despite the COVID-19, Pakistan's economy is now growing rapidly but new sectors and areas would have to be explored in export, as textile is the only important imports of Netherlands from Pakistan. He said that Pakistan exports to Netherlands are \$1.113 billion which need to

be enhanced. He pledged that the trade and commercial counselors would strengthen the liaison with the PRGMEA as well as the Sialkot Chamber.

Earlier, at the SCCI, President Qaisar Iqbal Baryar along with the executive body member welcomed him to the city and briefed the Ambassador-designate in detail on the ongoing activities of the Chamber and product lines of Sialkot. Later, in his address at PRGMEA House, Central Chairman Sohail

A. Sheikh welcomed the distinguished guest and appreciated him for his visit to the PRGMEA and IAF Regional Office. The meeting was attended by the whole business community of industrial hub of Sialkot including all exporters' associations chairmen and representatives, i.e. PRGMEA, Sports Goods Manufacturers, Gloves Manufacturers, Surgical Instruments Manufacturers, Leather Garments Manufacturers and Hosiery Manufacturers Association.

Addressing the meeting PRGMEA Chief Coordinator Ijaz Khokhar said that PRGMEA's collaboration with International Apparel Federation, having Head office in The Netherlands, started back in 2008. Moreover in collaboration with IAF, PRGMEA hosted 35th IAF convention in 2019 at Lahore Pakistan, which created a softer image of Pakistan. PRGMEA has also signed MoU with various Dutch organizations like MODIENT, CBI and Hogiaf.

Sohail A. Sheikh added that the PRGMEA has constantly been putting forth its efforts to create a prosperous economic structure for Pakistan and the International Community. He said that textile sector is the backbone of Pakistan's economy. PRGMEA is the main stakeholder of apparel sector. Apparel industry is playing pivotal role as it's a major foreign revenue earner, largest employment generator and the highest tax payer segment of our economy. "Currently there are more than 700 members of our Association. PRGMEA's contribution to export of Pakistan is \$3 billion.

Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan agree to boost ties

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan and Central Asian country Kyrgyzstan have reached an agreement to bring bilateral relations to a new level. During the meeting held between Azerbaijan's Prime Minister Ali Asadov and Kyrgyzstan's Foreign Minister Ruslan Kazakbaev, the sides agreed to boost ties by activating the work of the joint intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation, and by paying attention to the issues of mutual exports and imports of goods and products from Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan.

Noting the growth of mutual trade turnover by 67 percent over the past five months, the sides emphasized the plans to intensify this area of cooperation. The measures to bring the bilateral relations to a new level also include consideration of resuming direct flights on the Baku-Bishkek route, creation of joint investment fund, sharing of Azerbaijani experience of the creation of the Alat Free Economic Zone and

sending the relevant expert group to Kyrgyzstan.

The completion of the construction of a recreation park and a secondary school in Bishkek through the funds of Azerbaijan, the establishment of the Kyrgyzstan Trade House in Baku and interaction and cooperation on the possible supply of COVID-19 vaccines to Kyrgyzstan are also among the measures aimed at strengthening the ties between the two countries. Furthermore, Kazakbaev expressed his gratitude to Azerbaijan for the provision of humanitarian assistance in the form of medical supplies in April 2020.

Likewise, the parties expressed readiness to continue active cooperation in all spheres between Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan. Additionally, the minister expressed interest in relating Azerbaijan's experience on issues of attracting investments, fight against corruption and criminality, reforms in public administration and the judicial system. High on the agenda of the meeting were current issues of bilateral, political-diplomatic, trade-economic and socio-humanitarian relations.

KABUL: Pakistan ambassador to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmad Khan met with former President of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo, at a lunch hosted by AKDN Ambassador Sheherzade. Both sides discussed about promoting long term peace, stability, reconciliation and development in Afghanistan. – DNA

Pakistan to sign trade deals with Uzbekistan

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan is going to sign trade agreements with Uzbekistan in July to explore over \$90-billion worth of export potential in Central Asia in order to achieve an unprecedented exports target of \$35 billion set for the fiscal year 2021-22.

For the purpose of Central Asia connectivity, Prime Minister Imran Khan is leaving for Uzbekistan on July 13. During his three-day visit (July 13 to 15), Pakistan and Uzbekistan will sign Transit and Preferential Agreements, prime minister's merce Adviser Razak Dawood in an exclusive talk with the members of Karachi based Council of Economic and Energy Journalists (CEEJ) in Islamabad.

"Both countries have agreed to allocate dedicated space in Gwadar and Tashkent for establishing

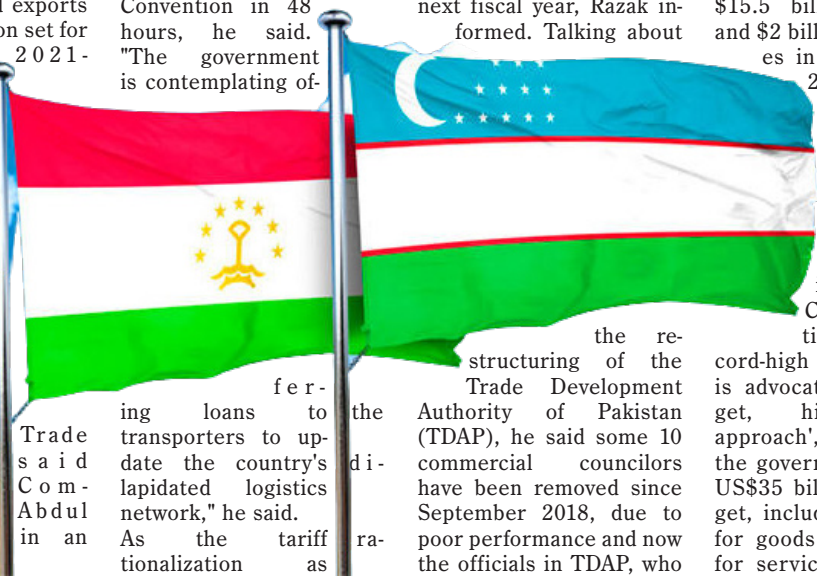
warehousing facilities to help each other in the transportation of goods to other regional countries," he said. We have planned to transport goods under the TIR Convention because the first-ever truck from Uzbekistan reached Pakistan under the TIR Convention in 48 hours, he said. "The government is contemplating of

materials. The focus area for tariff rationalization was active pharmaceutical ingredient (API), poultry, engineering, and textile. The tariff of packaging raw materials, iron and steel, agricultural products would also be rationalized in the next fiscal year, Razak informed. Talking about

linked with product diversification and now the exporters have to show more diversifications in their products to get more incentives from the government," Razak said. Pakistan has witnessed record-high exports of \$25.3 billion, including \$15.5 billion in textile and \$2 billion in IT services in the fiscal year 2020-21, which

were nearly \$4 billion higher than the US \$21.4 billion achieved in 2019-20. While admitting the impact of the Covid situation on the record-high exports, Razak is advocating a 'high-target, high-achievement approach', informing that the government has fixed US\$35 billion export target, including \$28 billion for goods and \$7 billion for services for the current fiscal year 2021-22.

"We know it would be a Herculean task to achieve because the world is opening and everybody is going to get into the export market but everybody should move and try to make it achievable," he said. The incentives are now



the restructuring of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), he said some 10 commercial counselors have been removed since September 2018, due to poor performance and now the officials in TDAP, who used to own country-based responsibilities, have been assigned product-based responsibilities to improve their performances," he said. "Under the Strategic Trade Policy Framework, the incentives are now

FPCCI to conduct training on Global Selling

ISLAMABAD: Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo, President FPCCI, has invited SMEs and entrepreneurs to attend a training seminar on "Become Successful Global Seller" as the seminar will incorporate cutting-edge, state-of-the-art, and practical know-how on how to efficiently and effectively employ modern Supply Chain Management techniques for global selling. Sheikh Sultan Rehman – Coordinator FPCCI Head Office – said that seminar will be conducted by Dr. Farhat Umar – world-renowned Supply Chain Management Consultant from MIT – and she will keep it interactive to make it beneficial for peculiar needs of various industries and sectors. The seminar will include case studies of the most successful brands in the world and their relevance and applicability for Pakistani SMEs and entrepreneurs. The seminar will be held at Conference Room, Federation House, Main Clifton, Karachi at 02:30 pm on Wednesday, July 7, 2021. It is pertinent to reiterate that FPCCI and DHA Suffa University have collaboratively designed a series of innovative, informative, and high-profile webinars and training sessions for all those who want to learn cutting-edge and state-of-the-art international business, marketing, management, entrepreneurship, supply chain management, human resource management, and e-commerce techniques that they can actually apply to establish or grow their businesses exponentially. FPCCI aims to empower and impart knowledge excellence to Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs); who otherwise do not have the opportunities and resources to arrange these kind of high-end trainings for themselves and their employees. – DNA

PNS Zulfikar visits Tunis

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ship ZULFIKAR (with embarked helicopter) visited Tunis (Tunisia), as part of Pakistan Navy overseas deployment.

Upon arrival, ship was received by Tunisian Navy Ship and patrol boats of Tunisian Coast Guard, Defence Attaché of Pakistan and officials of Tunisian navy, said a Pakistan Navy news release here received. During stay at port, Mission Commander Commodore Syed Rizwan Khalid along with Commanding Officer PNS ZULFIKAR Captain Rao Ahmed Imran Anwar called on Commander National Coast guard Commander Jamal Aloui.

During the interaction, matters of mutual interest were discussed and contribution of Pakistan Navy to regional peace and maritime security were acknowledged.

Mission Commander also conveyed well wishes from Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi for the people of Tunisia in general and Tunisian Navy and Coast Guard in particular. The visit of PNS ZULFIKAR to Tunisia will go a long way in strengthening diplomatic relations, military ties and enhance cooperation between the two brotherly Muslim countries. – APP

Uzbekistan receives new batch of Sputnik

DNA

TASHKENT: A batch of the first component of the Sputnik V vaccine in the amount of 40,000 doses was delivered to Uzbekistan from Russia tonight. This was reported by the press service of the Ministry of Health.

It should be noted that on 1 June, 70,000 doses of the Sputnik V vaccine were delivered to Uzbekistan, on 10 June, 70,000 doses of the second component were delivered. Thus, the stock of Sputnik V vaccine in Uzbekistan has reached 280,000 doses. An additional 40,000 doses of component 2 vaccine are expected to be delivered in the coming days.

Turkey's inflation hits two-year high

AGENCIES

ANKARA: Turkish annual inflation has jumped to a two-year high of 17.53 percent in June, exceeding a forecast of 17 percent and continuing an extended rise after a brief dip, potentially delaying any interest rate cuts to later in the year.

The month-on-month consumer price reading on Monday was also higher than expected, up 1.94 percent according to the Turkish Statistical Institute, compared with a poll by the Reuters news agency that forecast 1.50 percent.

Inflation, which has remained in double digits for most of the last four years, has been held up by lira depreciation, depleted monetary credibility and a burst of demand as the economy emerges from the coronavirus pandemic. The depreciation accelerated when President Recep Tayyip Erdogan sacked a hawkish central bank governor in March, raising worries of earlier-than-expected cuts to the 19 percent policy interest rate. Analysts said the hot inflation data eased those worries.

Rahmon and Ghani discuss situation in Afghanistan

DNA

DUSHANBE: President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon held a phone conversation with President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani.

The two leaders discussed development of the military and political situation in Afghanistan. A particular attention was paid to escalation of the situation in northern districts of Afghanistan bordering with Tajikistan. Rahmon informed Ghani about new facts of retreat of Afghan government military forces to Tajikistan. The views were also exchanged on relevant aspects of bilateral relations, including security cooperation and reinforcement of border.

UK set to remove final COVID-19 restrictions

The move to relax the rules looks set to go ahead even though coronavirus cases have risen to their highest level since January

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is expected to announce a further relaxation in coronavirus restrictions in England later on Monday, despite a surge in daily cases linked to the Delta variant, saying people must learn to live with the virus and "exercise judgement" as they go about their daily lives. Johnson is expected to move ahead with the final stage of the four-step plan out of lockdown and "restore people's freedoms" when he speaks at a news conference on Monday. Step four, which is scheduled to come into effect on

July 19, will mean the removal of mask-wearing rules, the end of social distancing and the return of large-scale events.

"Thanks to the successful rollout of our vaccination programme, we are progressing cautiously through our roadmap," Johnson said in a statement ahead of the announcement on Sunday. "Today we will set out how we can restore people's freedoms when we reach step 4. "But I must stress that the pandemic is not over and that cases will continue to rise over the coming weeks. As we begin to learn to live with this virus, we must all continue to carefully manage the risks from COVID and exercise judgement when going

about our lives." The move to relax the rules looks set to go ahead even though coronavirus cases have risen to their highest level since January.

The number of daily cases reached 24,248 on Sunday with 15 deaths. As of July 4, more than 78 million doses of the vaccine had been administered across the UK, with 63.4 percent of adults receiving two doses, the government said. The British Medical Association (BMA) has expressed concern about removing all measures to curb the spread of the virus given the surge in the Delta variant. Chaand Nagpal, the BMA chair, told Sunrise Radio on Sunday that the government should con-

tinue with "sensible targeted coronavirus measures" and act on "data not dates" when making their decisions in order to protect people's lives.

Recently appointed Health Secretary Sajid Javid is expected to announce the details of the relaxation in Parliament in advance of Johnson's media conference.

In a column in the right-wing Mail on Sunday, Javid said people needed to learn to live with the coronavirus as they do the flu, and that the country was "on track" to exit lockdown as planned on July 19. Other parts of the devolved UK are on different schedules for reopening, with Scotland targeting August 9.

"We will have a country that is not just freer, but healthier, too," Javid wrote. Officials said data from Public Health England showed that COVID vaccines are highly effective against severe illness and hospitalisation from the Delta variant with Pfizer-BioNTech 96 percent effective and Oxford-AstraZeneca 92 percent effective against hospitalisation after two doses.

The government is also making preparations to offer third "booster" doses to the most vulnerable, and everyone over the age of 50, to boost their immunity during the winter months. Ministers will make the final decision on reopening on July 12.

Briefs

Pfizer to resume vaccine supply to Pakistan

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer has decided to resume Covid-19 vaccine supply to Pakistan this month. Sources said Pakistan has purchased 13 million doses of Pfizer's vaccine. The firm will provide the vaccine to Pakistan in phases with a consignment of 100,000 shots to reach Pakistan this month. The country would get a vaccine consignment every month. The sources said around 15 million more doses of different Covid-19 vaccines, including Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca, will arrive in Pakistan this month. They said 90 per cent of the vaccines to be flown in by July have been purchased by the Government of Pakistan. The country will likely receive more shots of AstraZeneca vaccine through Covax, they said, adding raw material for production of the homemade vaccine PakVac will also be imported from China's CanSino this month. As many as 4.5 million doses of different vaccines have reached Pakistan over the past four days, the sources said, detailing 2.5 million shots of Moderna vaccine were received through Covax on July 2 and another two million doses of Sinopharm vaccine were flown in during the previous 24 hours.

Putin's visit not scheduled: Foreign Office

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office Spokesperson on Monday said though Pakistan and Russia had extended invitations to each other for summit-level visits, however no such visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin was on schedule so far. "While invitations for visits at the summit-level have been extended by both sides, no such visit has been scheduled yet," Spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Janjua said in response to some media reports regarding the visit of the Russian President during the current month. The Spokesperson said Pakistan and Russia were close partners and friends and considered high-level visits an important part of their growing ties. He said the two sides were committed to building a strong multi-dimensional relationship that not only served their respective national interests but also contributed to regional and global peace. He mentioned that Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov paid a successful visit to Islamabad in April this year, while Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Defence Minister Pervaiz Khattak visited the Russian Federation last year.

Bangladesh extends lockdown as cases hit new record

DHAKA: Bangladesh on Monday extended a strict nationwide lockdown, confining people to their homes for another week as coronavirus cases and deaths both hit new records. Authorities said a record 164 people had died in the previous 2,400 hours, while almost 1,000 tested positive – the most single day-infections since the first case was detected in March last year. Nazrul Islam, a top virologist and member of a high-powered national technical committee that asked the government to extend the lockdown, said the situation was "extremely bad". "The Delta variant is responsible for 70 percent of the infections. This variant is highly transmissible. And we still have not seen the peak yet," he told AFP. Bangladesh has so far reported nearly 950,000 infections and more than 15,000 deaths, figures experts say are likely to be three to four times less than the actual caseload and fatalities. – APP

President confers Nishan-i-Imtiaz on Turkish commander

The conferment was made at a special investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr to recognize of the meritorious services of General Umit Dunder in strengthening of Pakistan-Turkish ties

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Monday conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) award on Commander of Turkish Land Forces General Umit Dunder here. The conferment was made at a special investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr to recognize of the meritorious services of General Umit Dunder in strengthening of Pakistan-Turkish ties. Started with national anthem and recitation of verses from the Holy Quran, the ceremony was attended by First Lady Samina Alvi, senior officials of the armed forces and Turkish Ambassador in Pakistan Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul. As per the citation read out at the ceremony, General Umit Dunder graduated from the Army War College in 1985, from Royal Army Staff College (United Kingdom) in 1991, and



from the Armed Forces College of Construction, Real Estate and NATO Infrastructure Department of the Ministry of National Defense from 2001 to 2004 and as

Gwadar port completely operational, says CPEC Chairman

NEWS DESK

GWADAR: Head of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority Lt-Gen (retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa said on Monday Gwadar port is ready and completely functional. Speaking at a ceremony in Gwadar, he said Prime Minister Imran Khan's personal interest paved the way for the port to become completely operational. He lamented that a Gwadar port free-zone policy could not be worked out from 2007 to 2020. The prime minister is going to lay the foundation stone of the second phase of CPEC projects spread over 2,200 acres, he announced. The Gwadar city's master plan has also been approved and it is being implemented, Bajwa said. He added a hospital, a vocational institute and an international airport are being built under CPEC. We consider Prime Minister Khan's South Balochistan package a panacea for the issues plaguing this part of the province, the CPEC chairman said, adding it was neglected in the past. He expressed gratitude to the premier for personally supervising CPEC and also paid tribute to security forces for maintaining law and order and rendering sacrifices in the line of their duty. Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani, Balochistan Chief Minister Jam Kamal Alyani, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and Planning and Development Minister Asad Umar were also in attendance at the event.

Pakistan, Japan mull cooperation in energy sector

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is opening new areas for oil and gas exploration through competitive bidding that will push massive exploration activities in the country. This was stated by Federal Minister for Energy Muhammad Hammad Azhar in a meeting with Ambassador of Japan, Kuninori Matsuda here Monday, said a statement. Federal Minister said that International Companies including Japanese Companies must participate in the competitive bidding as they are vital for massive exploration targets. This would not only increase the local oil and gas productions but will also save a lot of foreign exchange now used for its imports, he added. Hammad Azhar also apprised the Japanese Ambassador on the effective steps taken by the present Government in substantially minimizing the growth of Circular debt from Rs. 538 billion last to Rs.177 Billion this year, which has greatly contributed in restoring the confidence of investors. He said that due to Industrial Support Package coupled with economic policies, the electricity consumption has witnessed a 15% increase as compared to last year. Federal Minister while reiterating Government's strong commitment to further cement the existing ties between Pakistan and Japan, invited Japanese Companies to explore the electricity transmission and distribution system for their investment which offer good return on equity. – Picture on Page 02

4,000 citizens repatriated from Kabul

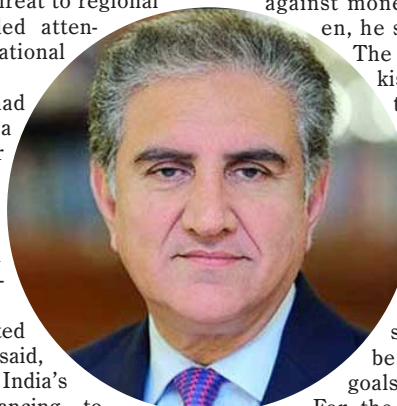
DNA

KABUL: In accordance with Prime Minister's directions to help Pakistanis abroad, Ambassador of Pakistan in Kabul Mabsoor Khan and the Embassy of Pakistan have made effective arrangements for around 4,000 Pakistanis stranded in Afghanistan due to closure of flights to Saudi Arabia, for their return to Torkham. An embassy statement said these Pakistanis were provided a decent place for temporary stay at the Embassy and provided food, buses and cash grant for their return to Torkham and travel to their home towns in Pakistan. These stranded Pakistanis have appreciated the Embassy's efforts, according to the statement.

India's nefarious designs a threat to peace: FM

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will take up the issue of India's terror-financing at international level, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said on Monday. Qureshi in a statement said India's nefarious designs posed a threat to regional security, which needed attention from the international community. He said Pakistan had earlier submitted a dossier based on clear evidence of the Indian terrorism to the United Nations and would again exploit all important for to highlight the issue. As the world stood united against terrorism, he said, "it must take notice of India's continuous terror-financing to create unrest in Pakistan as witnessed in the recent Lahore's Johar Town attack". He pointed out that checking terror-financing was one of the goals of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), and stressed that the international watchdog needed to focus on India's illegal activities.



Qureshi said Pakistan was taking all possible steps to prevent terrorism and protect its borders.

He mentioned that Pakistan had done border-fencing and had cleared the tribal areas of terrorists to ensure development. Also, the enactment of legislation to curb terror-financing and measures against money laundering were taken, he said.

The foreign minister said Pakistan wanted to promote ties with regional countries to attract investment for the prosperity of the country.

On the Afghanistan situation, he said if the unrest continued, Pakistan would be embroiled in a 'two front' situation, which would be contrary to the global goals of achieving peace.

For the repatriation of Afghan refugees, he stressed a well-timed and well-resourced strategy to become part of the Afghan peace process.

On Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), he said the policies of India had failed miserably as the Kashmiri leadership was dissatisfied with the Indian government.



ISLAMABAD: UNDP Resident Representative Knut Ostby met with Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Omar Ayub Khan to explore UNDP initiatives and solicit the Minister's views on priorities of development financing. – DNA

NAB Rawalpindi recovers Rs. 33 bn in fake accounts

Chairman NAB appreciates the excellent performance of NAB Rawalpindi

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB chaired a high level meeting at NAB Headquarters. The meeting reviewed the excellent performance of NAB Rawalpindi especially the recoveries made by NAB Rawalpindi in Fake Bank Accounts Scam Cases. During the meeting, Irfan Naem Mangi, DG NAB Rawalpindi informed that NAB Rawalpindi under the dynamic leadership of Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB has recovered Rs. 33,246 billion in Fake Bank Accounts Scam Cases. DG NAB Rawalpindi informed that NAB Rawalpindi has recovered Rs. 31,906 billion through Plea Bargain and through recovery of state land. The details of the recoveries made through Plea Bargain in Fake Bank Accounts Scam Cases are as under: 1. Plea Bargain of the accused persons Syed Arif Ali and Syed Asif Mahmood for an amount of Rs. 2.13 billion was approved by the respected Accountability Court in an investigation regarding extending



illegal favors to M/s Technomen Kinetic (Pvt) Ltd and others in projects of Sindh Nooriabad Power Company & Sindh transmission and dispatch Company (STDC). 2. Plea Bargain of the accused Harish S/o Kalumal for an amount of Rs. 20.352 billion was approved by the respected Accountability Court in Reference No. 05/2019 regarding illegal award of contract by Government of Sindh Special initiative Department to M/s Har

ish & Company and others. 3. Plea Bargain of the accused persons Hammad Shahid, Abdul Ghani, Tariq Baig, Muhammad Iqbal, Mohammad Touseef, Aamir, Siraj Shahid, Ehsaan Elahi for an amount of Rs. 20.206 billion was approved by the respected Accountability Court in Misappropriation of Land owned by Govt. of Sindh and Pakistan Steel Mills by public functionaries of BOR, Manzoor Qadir Kaka and others.

4. Plea Bargain of the accused persons Nadeem Younas, CEO M/s Zafar Enterprises, Abdul Sattar Qureshi, Aslam Pervaiz Memon, Ex- Executive Engineer, RDD, Baldev, Ex-Director Technical, RDD, Uzair Tahsin, Director Wadood Eng. Services Pvt Ltd, Muhammad Jaffar, Director Wadood Eng. Pvt Ltd, Abdul Rasheed Channa, Ex-Divisional Accounts Officer, Ayaz Ahmed Siddiqui for an amount of Rs. 299.27 million

was approved by the respected Accountability Court in Illegal Award of Contracts by various departments of Government of Sindh to the extent of Roshan Sindh.

5. Plea Bargain of the accused persons Shahzaib Mahmood, Zulfiqar Ali and Arshad Iqbal for an amount of Rs. Rs. 50 million was approved by the respected Accountability Court in Reference No. 02/2020 State Vs Bilal Sheikh.

6. Plea Bargain of the accused persons Shahzaib Mahmood, and Zulfiqar Ali for an amount of Rs. 50 million was approved by the respected Accountability Court in Extending illegal / fraudulent finance facility by misuse of authority by officers / officials of Sindh Bank Limited to benami company of Omni Group namely M/s Paramount Builders & Developers (pvt) Limited and its subsequent misappropriation.

7. Plea Bargain of the accused persons Shafqat Mumtaz and Muhammad Abdullah for an amount of Rs. 11.884 million was approved by the respected Accountability Court in Purchase of plot no. 216, E.I. Lines, Karachi Cantonment, Karachi through dishonest and illegal means.

Pak to issue identity cards to foreigners

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan to start issuing identity cards to illegal immigrants staying in the country. The National Alien Registration Authority (NARA) cards will be issued to the immigrants staying in Pakistan, according to sources. "Currently NARA have a record of 1,20,000 foreign nationals," sources said. "The aliens will be issued cards in three categories and in the initial phase they will be issued 'ID Card for Aliens'," sources said. The immigrants would also have to get the 'Work Permit' for working in the country, according to sources. However, the aliens that will receive both these cards, would not be eligible for the government employment, according to sources. "Moreover, the immigrants' children will be issued 'Juvenile Card' to get admission in a school," sources said. Earlier, the children of immigrants could not get education after 9th Grade.

The immigrants issued the Alien Card will also be eligible for opening a bank account and getting the mobile phone SIM, according to sources. "They will also be entitled to get a utility connection and Driving Licence. All Alien Card holders will be issued specific identity number after bio-metric, as NADRA issues to Pakistani citizens. The registered immigrants have to inform the authority prior to their shifting from one city to another, sources said. The NARA cards would also be issued from the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA), sources added.

Pope Francis undergoes surgery

AGENCIES

ROME: Pope Francis was doing well on Monday after surgery for an inflamed large colon, but the 84-year-old was expected to spend around seven days recovering in hospital, the Vatican said. The pontiff was admitted to Rome's Gemelli hospital Sunday for a scheduled operation under general anaesthetic for symptomatic diverticular stenosis of the colon. Francis "is in good general condition, alert and breathing spontaneously", spokesman Matteo Bruni said in a statement, adding that the surgery "lasted about three hours". "A stay of about seven days is expected, barring complications," he said. A week earlier, on the eve of the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, Francis seemed to hint at the upcoming operation, saying: "I ask you to pray for the pope, pray in a special way. The pope needs your prayers."

The pontiff had already put his Wednesday general audience on hold for the summer, and has no other official appointments in his calendar until Sunday, when he is due to lead the Angelus prayer.

COVID-19 active cases jump over 33 thousands

ISLAMABAD: The national tally on Monday of total active COVID-19 cases was recorded 33,299 with 1,347 more people testing positive for the deadly virus and 650 people recovering from the disease during the last 24 hours. Some nineteen corona patients have died during past 24 hours, 18 of whom were under treatment in the hospitals and one of them perished in their respective homes or quarantine facilities, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Center (NCOCC). Most of the deaths occurred in Sindh and followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Out of the total 19 deaths occurred, 11 of them died were under treatment on ventilators. There were 1,894 Covid infected patients under treatment in critical condition and 19 of them were admitted in various Covid dedicated healthcare facilities of the country during past 24 hours. The National Covid positivity ratio during past 24 hours was recorded 2.97 percent. – APP