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Malaysian Foreign Minister thanks US for Covid vaccines

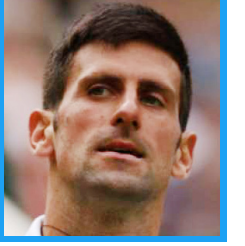
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EU ambassador stresses robust trade relations

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Novak Djokovic marches into quarter-finals

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Briefs

Chinese investors keen to invest

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Asad Umar said on Tuesday that Chinese investors have expressed their willingness to invest in South Balochistan package. Briefing media persons, the minister said that the Chinese investors would invest over \$1 billion in this project. He said that the South Balochistan project was 35 times bigger than the Phase-1 of North free zone of Gwadar, adding that the Prime Minister Imran Khan had announced this historical package in November for Balochistan.

Maryam rubbishes deal talk

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: PML-N Vice-President Maryam Nawaz has rubbished any talk of a deal saying that she is not mad to strike a deal after waging a long struggle. Talking to media outside the Islamabad High Court, Maryam said when this government would go then it would never come back to power. Time will come when everyone will have to be answerable, she asserted. Responding to statement of PM Imran Khan about engaging estranged people of Balochistan, the PML-N leader said that she is in favor of addressing grievances of Balochs but added that Hazara community was also from the province.

PML-N striving for personal agendas

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Special Assistant to Chief Minister Punjab Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan on Tuesday said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leadership wanted to make a deal for protecting their personal agendas but the people of Pakistan had rejected them as they spit poison against national interests while sitting abroad.

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Efforts on to woo Balouch insurgents

Information Minister says the talks will only be with Balouchs who are not associated with India



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ch Fawad Hussain addressing a press conference. - DNA

ANSAR M. BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Information Minister has said efforts to woo disgruntled Balochs are on. Balochistan is of vital importance for CPEC and peace in the province will be restored soon, Fawad Ch said while briefing the media about the federal cabinet meeting. Lahore blast suspect has been arrested, he said, adding that the arrest of Indian RAW man Kulbhushan Jadhav exposed its network in Pakistan and Islamabad will raise issue at all the international forums. He said that Prime Minister Imran Khan had again invited the opposition leadership to cooperate with the government in introducing election reforms to bring about transparency in the election process and to end the rigging

charges once for all. Unfortunately opposition was so far not ready to join the government in its endeavors to ensure non-confrontational elections, he added. Regarding Opposition's apprehensions about upcoming Azad Jammu and Kashmir elections, he said it was building a narrative of rigging in AJK elections without any cogent reason. He pointed out that only eight candidates were currently contesting AJK elections on PPP ticket and almost same was the position of PML-N, which had roughly 12 to 14 candidates and both parties were destined to lose the elections. The minister said the cabinet was briefed about e-voting and the system will be ready after July 15 as the government wanted to provide oversees Pakistanis with right to vote in accordance with its electoral reforms plan and Babar Awan updated the cabinet in detail about the measures for the purpose. Fawad said a total of 3,444 tasks has been finished while 123 remained unfinished. About tourism and other uplift projects, he said the Gilgit airport is not an all-weather airport but the government is working on the project of establishing all-weather airports. The civil aviation association has been made a regulatory body, the minister said and shared with the media about a suggestion of giving remuneration to mosque imams in the federal capital. He also shared with the media his party economic feats and anti-coronavirus combat. Moreover, he said Prime Minister Imran Khan has clear instruction about protocol and warned the government will be taking action against violators.

US left Bagram at night without informing Afghans

General Asadullah Kohistani said that the US left Bagram at 03:00 local time on Friday

NEWS DESK

US pullout over 90% complete: Pentagon

BAGRAM: The US military left Bagram Airfield - its key base in Afghanistan - in the dead of night without notifying the Afghans, the base's new commander said. General Asadullah Kohistani said that the US left Bagram at 03:00 local time on Friday, and that the Afghan military found out hours later. Bagram also contains a prison, and there are reportedly up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners left in the facility. The Taliban have been advancing rapidly in Afghanistan as US troops withdraw. General Kohistani said on Monday that Afghan forces were expecting the Taliban to attack Bagram. Speaking to reporters at the airbase, he said he was already receiving reports the group was making "movements in rural areas" nearby. "You know, if we compare ourselves with the Americans, it's a big difference," Gen

WASHINGTON: The withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan is more than 90 percent completed, the Pentagon's Central Command announced Tuesday. CentCom said it had officially handed over seven former US bases to the Afghan security forces and had evacuated the equivalent of nearly 1,000 C-17 air freighter loads of equipment from the country, ahead of the September deadline to complete the pullout. On Friday US forces handed over the sprawling Bagram air base north of Kabul, the main center of US military operations in the country for most of the past two decades of conflict. Tuesday's announcement underscored that most of the process of withdrawing US military and civilian personnel ordered by President Joe Biden in April had been completed. - Agencies

Kohistani said. "But according to our capabilities... we are trying to do the best and as much as possible secure and serve all the people." The US announced on Friday that it had vacated Bagram, effectively completing its military campaign in Afghanistan ahead of the official end date of 11 September, announced by President Joe Biden earlier this year. The Americans left behind about 3.5 million items, Gen Kohistani said, including tens of thousands of bottles of water, energy drinks and military ready-made meals, known as MREs. They also left behind thousands of civilian vehicles, without keys, and hundreds of armoured vehicles, the Associated Press reported.

Pakistan supports China's efforts for peace: PM

The prime minister noted that under Xi's leadership, China had achieved "major success" in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

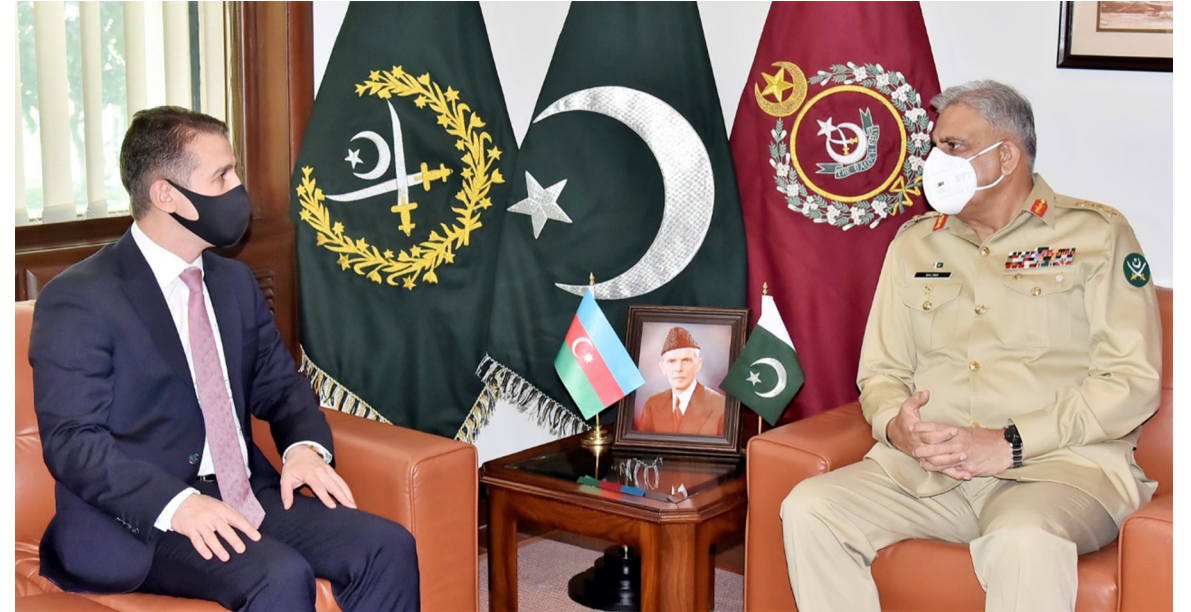
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday said Pakistan and China were "iron brothers", emphasising that Pakistan supported China's efforts to safeguard world peace, contribute to global development and preserve international order. Addressing the Communist Party of China (CPC) and World Political Parties Summit, he said President Xi Jinping's vision of shared prosperity through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) had made a "major impact on global sustainable development" and "proved his credentials as a world statesman".



The prime minister noted that under Xi's leadership, China had achieved "major success" in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. "President Xi's declaration of making the Covid-19 vaccine a global public good is reflective of

his compassion and fairness," he added. He credited the Chinese president's "visionary leadership" for China's transformation. "Xi's people-centric philosophy

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RAWALPINDI: Ali Alizada, Azerbaijan Ambassador to Pakistan paying a farewell call on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of the Army Staff. - DNA

PM: No security for private affairs

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to save taxpayer money and to save the public from the inconvenience that comes with the protocol and security that accompanies a head of state, Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday announced he will be doing away with the practice when he goes to any private function. "To save taxpayer money and avoid inconvenience to the public I will not be going to any private function with protocol and security," the prime minister wrote in a message on Twitter. He said he is also reviewing protocol and security granted to ministers, governors and PTI chief ministers so that a way to minimise expenditure and end public inconvenience can be determined. The prime minister said that a comprehensive policy regarding this will be decided in next week's cabinet meeting. "We will put an end to the colonial legacy of pomp and glory used to overwhelm the people," he vowed. PM Imran Khan has spoken out against the prevalent "VIP culture" in the country on several occasions.

Only 3.5% population vaccinated

ISLAMABAD: Despite the government's campaign to vaccinate as many people as possible against the novel coronavirus, only 3.5% of the population in the country has been inoculated so far, media reported Tuesday. According to the report, so far, only 3.5% of the 100 million people eligible for the anti-coronavirus vaccine have been fully vaccinated, the report said. According to data released by the National Command and Operation Centre, a total of 17,390,346 vaccine jabs have been provided across the country as of July 6. - DNA

COAS lauds Amb. Alizada's services

The Azeri envoy appreciated Pakistan's role for ensuring peace and stability in the region

NEHAL MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada on Tuesday paid a farewell call to Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security situation, including Afghan Peace Process and measures to further enhance bilateral and defence cooperation were discussed, said an ISPR media release. The COAS thanked the ambassador for his services in Pakistan and acknowledged his contributions towards strengthening Pak-Azerbaijan relations. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role for ensuring peace and stability in the region and also pledged to contribute positively towards Afghan peace.

Balochistan's prosperity vital for progress: COAS

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Tuesday said that Balochistan's peace and prosperity is the bedrock of Pakistan's progress. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the COAS interacted with participants of 7th National Workshop Balochistan at GHQ. Attended by large no number of parliamentarians, bureaucrats, members of civil society, youth, academia and media representatives, the workshop is aimed at enabling future leadership of Balochistan in understanding vital national/provincial issues and mounting cohesive response. Speaking at the occasion, Gen Bajwa said that Balochistan's peace and prosperity is the bedrock of Pakistan's progress. He said it is time to reap dividends of hard-earned peace and expedite socio-economic

Continued on Page 06

Malaysian FM thanks US Covid vaccines

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has welcomed the arrival of one (1) million doses of COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine contribution from the United States of America to Malaysia. Dato' Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein the Malaysian Foreign Minister said "on behalf of the Government of Malaysia, I would like to once again express my sincere gratitude to my counterpart, Antony Blinken and the Government of the United States for the generous contribution of its COVID-19 vaccines. These vaccines will greatly intensify Malaysia's vaccination process and make meaningful progress to the ongoing rollout of Malaysia's National COVID-19 Immunisation Programme". The United States, through its Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, has also been extending various assistance and contributions to Malaysia since the start of the pandemic last year, including the in-kind contribution of medical supplies,

Continued on Page 06

Israel behind nuclear site blast: Iran

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iran accused Israel on Tuesday of mounting a sabotage attack on a nuclear facility near Tehran last month. The country's state-run news agency reported as authorities acknowledged for the first time that the mysterious assault had caused structural damage to the site. Authorities announced in late June that they had prevented saboteurs from attacking a site located in Karaj, a city about 40 kilometers (25 miles) northwest of the Iranian capital. They gave no details about what the targeted building belonging to the Iran's Atomic Energy Agency contained, or how it was targeted.

830 more people affected with Covid-19

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's daily coronavirus case load went below the 1,000 cases in a day mark for the first time in six days after the country reported 830 new cases Tuesday morning. The daily case count has been over a 1,000 since July 1. The country last reported 979 cases in a day on June 30. Another 25 people died of coronavirus in Pakistan in the last 24 hours, pushing the national death tally since the pandemic started to 22,452. Latest data issued by the National Command and Operation Centre Tuesday morning shows that after 37,364 tests were conducted on July 5, 830 people tested positive for coronavirus.

No country can oppress China: Mushahid

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Senator Mushahid Hussain has said that China will never allow any country to oppress it. He also said that in Pakistan there is national consensus that this relationship has to be further strengthened, as there is national consensus on CPEC, and ubiquitous positive sentiment towards China in Pakistan. Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi talked about how Pakistan and China have always stood by each other's side in trying times, especially the coronavirus pandemic. She said that China's assistance by sending medical assistance and other pandemic materials to Pakistan was registered by international media as well, and the world recognized the two iron brothers' unique relationship.

Briefs

Corona Vaccination Centre inaugurated for expats

PESHAWAR: A Covid-19 Vaccination Centre was formally inaugurated for Overseas Pakistanis at District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital Dir on Tuesday. Deputy Commissioner (DC) District Dir Upper, Mohammad Shoaib was chief guest on the occasion.

The purpose of opening the centre is to administer required vaccine to expat Pakistanis. On this occasion, 769 persons were also administered anti-Corona vaccine. On this occasion, Medical Superintendent (MS) Dr. Sahibzadamtiaz Ahmad gave detailed briefing regarding the Vaccination Centre. The district administration expressed satisfaction over the process of vaccination and ordered deployment of Levies Force and Police personnel at the centre. - APP

KCCI to help SMU students in career growth

KARACHI: President Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Shariq Vohra on Tuesday said that the students of Sindh Madressatul Islam University (SMIU) will be provided internships and job opportunities. This he said while addressing the oath taking ceremony of newly elected office bearers of SMIU Student Council for 2021-2022 at Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto Auditorium here.

After administering the oath, Shariq Vohra congratulated the newly elected council members and expressed his appreciation for their active involvement in the health activities. The KCCI President advised the students to hone their leadership potential by developing a vision and enhancing their communication skills. "You [students] have an opportunity to grow and decide your own career," he remarked, saying that the era of great development of science has created many opportunities for the students.

Addressing the students, Vice Chancellor SMU Prof. Dr. Mujeebuddin SahraiMemon said that SMIU was one of the few universities in the country whereby a 35-member Student Council body was elected through a purely democratic process. He encouraged the council to work with dedication and provide maximum opportunities to the students of the university for their personal and professional development.

"SMIU has played a great role in the history of Pakistan," Prof. Memon said. "We will try to involve the industrial sector to provide better opportunities to the students of this great institution," he added. On this occasion, Director Student Affairs Dr. Asif Ali Wagan elaborated the electoral process of SMIU Student Council and encouraged the students to participate in extra-curricular activities of the varsity. "Apart from these healthy activities, I will advise you to concentrate on your studies as well," he added. - APP

Sahulat Centre inaugurated in Jaranwala

FAISALABAD: District and Sessions Judge Rana Masood Akhtar inaugurated 'Sahulat Centre' at Judicial Complex, Jaranwala on Tuesday. The Sahulatcentre will issue attested copies of First Information Report (FIR), Medico Legal Certificate (MLC), attestation of law certificates of under trial accused, and attested copies of other cases etc. Additional District and Sessions Judges- Ahmed Kamran Butt, Muhammad Amir Munir, Muhammad Arif Basra, Usman Ali Awan, Civil Judges- IhsanSabir, Miss SadafLiaqat and others also present on the occasion. Talking on the occasion, District and Sessions Judge Rana Masood Akhtar said the Sahulat Centre had been established to facilitate the people on the orders of Chief Justice Lahore High Court. - APP



LAHORE: Androulla Kaminara, ambassador of European Union to Pakistan calls on Speaker Punjab Assembly, Chaudhary Pervaiz Elahi. (News on Back Page) - DNA

Practical training of students will increase employability

President FCCI critically analyzed these proposals with reference to the contents of curriculum, its duration and other related aspects. He said that the outline of these courses may be finalized and presented in the next meeting

DNA

FAISALABAD: All sub-sectors of textile group must give innovative, dynamic, progressive and market driven proposals to upgrade the syllabus of the courses offered by Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA), said Engineer Hafiz IhtashamJaved President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI). He was addressing the 4th meeting of the Sector Skill Council (SSC) in FCCI. The house completed the formal agenda and discussed measures to fully exploit the potential of the SCC with the active involvement of the real stakeholders.

President FCCI expressed concern over the absence of the representatives of different sub-sectors which is causing unnecessary delay in deciding a comprehensive plan for the provision of skilled manpower for this sector. He said that there is a clause that the membership of a member will be automatically cancelled if he remains absent in three consecutive meetings. However, Engineer Hafiz IhtashamJaved said that a special invitation may be extended to them to ensure their participation in the next meeting. He was particularly annoyed at the absence of chairman TEVTA district board and said that a letter may also be written to him so that his presence

could make SSC more productive and result oriented. President FCCI said that chairman Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers Association (PHMA) was very anxious to take over the Madina town TEVTA center but he is also absent in this important meeting. Engineer Hafiz IhtashamJaved said that only the processing sub-sector has given proposals and suggestions to improve the courses launched by TEVTA. President FCCI critically analyzed these proposals with reference to the contents of curriculum, its duration and other related aspects. He said that the outline of these courses may be finalized and presented in the next meeting. He also stressed the need

to concentrate on practical instead of focusing on theory. "The practical training must be imparted in concerned industrial units", he said and added that it will help students to ensure their employability in the similar industrial units. Engineer Rizwan Ashraf directed that the recommendations to upgrade current courses, close old and redundant ones and start new courses may be circulated among all members of the SSC. He said that textile is a major sector which is consistent with a number of sub-sectors. Each sub-sector has its own importance and hence must be represented in the textile chain according to its proportion. He said that each sub-sector must hold its own

separate meetings to thrash out its problems along with its viable solutions. He lamented that the behavior of most of the members is casual and they take least interest in this important mission. He said the members who could not spare time must voluntarily resign paving the way for the others who have time and are willing to work for their respective sub-sector. He thanked President FCCI for taking keen interest to make SSC more active and dynamic with his active and regular participation. Engineer Rizwan Ashraf also appreciated the training centre established by Mr. Zafar Iqbal Sarwar and said that courses offered in this centre could also be repli-

cated in TEVTA centre. Madam Qurrat-ul-Ain demanded that President FWCCI (Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry) may be included in this council to ensure the representatives of female entrepreneurs and seek her input to further improve the quality of courses offered by TEVTA. She opined that Australian and German models are best for technical training in Pakistan. She also suggested that personality courses should also be made an integral part of all courses so that the students could improve their personality and explicitly express their mind verbally and through written communication.

Tehsil council launches anti-encroachment drive



ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: On the directions of the Punjab government, in connection with Anti-Encroachment Week, under the supervision of Chief Officer Tehsil Council Sadar Muhammad Ashraf Malik and Deputy Tehsil Officer Regulation,

the operation to eradicate encroachments is in full swing. In this regard, solid sheds have been demolished in various markets. According to details, Deputy Tehsil Officer Regulation AzmatFirdous along with Enforcement Inspectors Muhammad Khan Klu, Mohammad Hassan, Mian Mohammad Arif, Mohammad

Iqbal and other staff took action at Jhang Road, Thikriwala, Pansra, MundaPind, Nawala Bangla, Aminpur Bangla and other areas and demolished the encroachments on the sidewalks outside the shops in the bazaars by demolishing with heavy machinery under her supervision. The Deputy Tehsil Officer Regulation

said that during the ongoing anti-encroachment drive, temporary and permanent encroachments are being demolished. She asked the shop keepers to remove encroachment otherwise, legal action will be taken. She clarified that the elimination of encroachments in all markets will continue without any discrimination.

Outstanding act of honesty by Gilgit Serena employee

GILGIT: Mr. Johar Ali, employee of Gilgit Serena Hotel found the money amounting Rs. 1,120,000/- Eleven lakh twenty thousand in the room while he was doing his routine work. Without any hesitation he notified his manager and without any delay was contacted who came and money. This simple act defines his honesty and sincerity towards guest and his organization. Bravo! Mr. Johar Ali, you made your organization, your family and Gilgit-Baltistanproud, and you are a true inspiration for other. - DNA

SSP Kamal assumes add'l charge of SSP PHP Gujranwala region

FAISALABAD: In compliance of directions of Add'l IG Punjab Highway Patrol Akram Naeem Bharoka, SSP Patrolling Region Faisalabad Mirza Anjum Kamal has assumed the additional charge of SSP PHP, Region Gujranwala. After assuming the charge, he held meeting with DSPs and Incharge of branches. He directed all the District heads to visit Patrolling Sops in order to monitor and brief the field formation about the SOPs. The prevention, detection of crime and reduction of Road traffic accidents and help rendering to road commuters are prime responsibility of Patrolling Police. He directed branch heads to work effectively. There should be no pendency of letters. The welfare of officers/Officials is top priority. He further reiterated that memorandum of understanding will be reached out for the well being of PHP personnel. - DNA

Milky mushroom growth increased in KP

PESHAWAR: An expert on Mushroom farming Sher Muhammad has made an experiment of growing summer seasoned milky mushrooms through farming in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

"I, through the platform of Khyber Mushrooms, have made an attempt of growing milky mushrooms in the prevailing summer season," informed Sher Muhammad who is involved in mushroom cultivation through farming for the last several decades and imparted training of the skill free of cost to numerous number of people in the province. The experiment of growing milky mushroom is made in Peshawar and Swabi districts and within few days the results will be obtained, Sher told APP. "Mushroom farming is very simple and can serve as potential source of creating livelihood for hundred of thousands of unemployed youth," Sher opined.

"It can also serve as cottage industry as people can do farming in their homes on low scale," he added.

In mushroom farming, he continued, the most popular type of mushrooms grown are oyster mushroom, both white and golden, button mushroom and milky mushroom. However, the oyster mushroom is most suitable to Pakistan's climate and can be grown round the year, except for four months of severe heat including May, June, July and August.

From September's end, when the weather starts changing, growing restarts and continue till late April, he explains. The milky mushroom is grown in summer season under controlled temperature and therefore people avoid its cultivation through farming, Sher Muhammad apprised APP. This season, he added, he decided to make an attempt of growing milky mushroom and if he succeeded in his experiment it would open ways for mushroom farmers to cultivate mushrooms through out the year.

Majority of forms are closed in summer season because mushrooms can be grown in temperature ranging between 30 to 40 degree Celsius and in case of success of milk mushroom cultivation, our summer season will not go empty, Sher claimed. He said there are more than 100 mushroom farms in KP and consumption of this nutritious food among public is also registering increase for the last few years. Sher Muhammad informed that mushroom cultivation is highly profitable business as one kg production costs around Rs. 80 and can be sold in market at the rate of Rs. 380. While the shopkeepers sell to customers at Rs. 400 to 450 per kg. - APP

31 criminals held, contraband seized

FAISALABAD: Police on Tuesday arrested 31 criminals and recovered drugs and illegal weapons from their possession in the district during last 24 hours. According to police, raiding teams nabbed 8 drug pushers and recovered 17.5 kg hashish and 66 liter liquor from their possession. The police also held 11 gamblers with stake money Rs 3,650.

In a crackdown against illegal weapons, police arrested 12 accused and recovered 10 pistols, one repeater and one kalashnikov from them. Further investigation was underway, said police. - APP

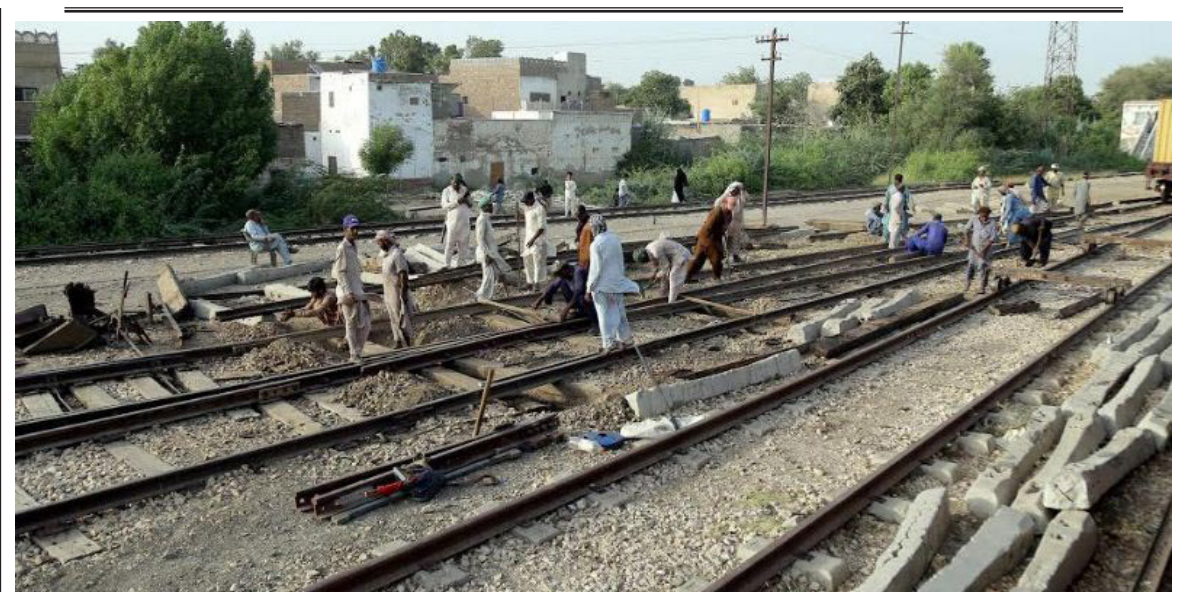
Enhancing furniture exports can increase FX

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Furniture industry is not only catering to the domestic need but also contributing its role in earning precious foreign exchange through its exports. Addressing FCCI (Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry) Standing Committee on Furniture, Chaudhary TalatMahmood Senior Vice President FCCI said that this sector has gained an edge by encouraging our artisans who are produc-

ing innovative and most attractive handmade furniture. He said that Pakistan could earn sizable foreign exchange by enhancing its furniture exports by extending maximum facilities to this sector. He said that FCCI is already trying to facilitate the furniture sector by resolving its core issues and this process will continue with the close collaboration of concerned stakeholders through this standing committee. Mirza Mohammad Afzal Mughal chairman standing committee said that the fur-

niture subcommittee was constituted about five years ago which has played a major role in identifying its fundamental problems and by taking necessary measures to resolve the same at the appropriate forums. He said that furniture manufacturers must get the membership of FCCI as this platform could play a major role in resolving their ticklish issues. He also appreciated the proactive role of Chiniot furniture association that has also raised a strong voice against the levy of sale tax on this nestling sector.



HYDERABAD: Laborers busy in repairing railway tracks near Kotri Railway Station. - DNA Photo by Jan Ali Laghari

Briefs

27 cases reported during last 24 hours: DHA

DNA

RAWALPINDI: As many as 27 more COVID-19 positive cases were reported during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 27,037 in the district. As per the latest data released by the District Health Authority (DHA) here Tuesday, the total infected cases included 24,960 from Rawalpindi and 2077 from other districts. "Presently 42 confirmed patients were admitted to various city facilities, including 10 in Holy Family Hospital, 8 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, and 12 in Institute of Urology, and 12 in Fauji Foundation Hospital," the health authority report said. District Health Authority informed that so far 25,817 patients were discharged after recovery and 361 were quarantined including 183 at homes and 178 in isolation centers. The report updated that 1298 people have lost their battle of life so far due to this deadly disease with 995 belonged to Rawalpindi and 303 from other districts. Meanwhile, Commissioner Rawalpindi Syed Gulzar Hussain Shah said though COVID-19 cases had witnessed a sharp decrease due to appropriate measures taken by the government, there was a need to remain alert as the 3rd wave of COVID-19 still prevailed.

Project launch to identify earthquakes, landslide

ISLAMABAD: Geological experts are all set to start work on a project, during the current fiscal year, to compile data of the country's 'active faults' and potential landslide 'hotspot' zones that would prove to be a major step towards the disaster risk reduction activities. The project would be completed at a cost of Rs 412.769 million in a three-year period, for which the government has allocated Rs 40 million under the Public Sector Development Programme 2021-22, according to an official document available with APP.

It is one of the six new projects the Petroleum Division would execute during the fiscal year 2021-22. The main focus of the project, titled "Pakistan National Research Programme on Geological Hazards (Earthquakes and Landslides) - Data Acquisition along Active Faults and Identification of Potential Landslides Hotspot Zones," is to identify the earthquakes prone areas and landslide hotspots in the country.

Besides, establishing of a new network of Globe Navigation Satellite Stations (GNSS - permanent as well as periodic) and a country-wide landslide inventory database would be carried out. "The outcome will lay a solid foundation for a reliable hazard assessment and hazard zonation related to earthquakes and landslides. It will also pave the way for more detailed hazard assessment studies specific to particular areas. During first year of the project, the departments concerned would fill the posts by assignments from regular strength, purchase durable goods, establish the project office, collect and review technical data. - APP

PNCA postpones new series 'Melody Makers'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) on Tuesday postponed its new series titled "Melody Makers" Season-1 recording scheduled to be held on July 9 at PNCA auditorium. The new series was aimed at paying tribute to the great music composers of Pakistan film industry. The programme was to be hosted by Director General PNCA Dr Fouzia Saeed, but she met with an accident during official tour to Balochistan on Sunday due to which the series was postponed, a council's official Masroor Shah told APP.

SAPM Usman Dar lauds Japanese Govt assistance

Usman Dar emphasised for mutually establishing a centre of excellence regarding technical and vocational training with Japanese assistance

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Matsuda Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan along with Mr. Ishii Ken-suke, Economic Counsellor and Head of Economic & Development Section called on Usman Dar, SAPM on Youth Affairs here at PM Islamabad today. Welcoming the delegates, Mr. Dar appreciated the assistance extended by the government of Japan in various fields and sectors. He underlined the importance for further cooperation, especially for youth development in Pakistan.

"We are facing the challenge of creating jobs for about two million youth added to



job market every year", said Mr. Dar. Mr. Dar emphasised for mutually establishing a centre of excellence regarding technical and vocational training with Japanese assistance. The Ambassador said that the Kamyab Jawan Programme is very important project in regard to youth empowerment in Pakistan. He said that the young Pakistani population is an asset for the country. He further said that investments in Youth development will surely give a great future to the country. It was agreed during the meeting that both sides will initially exchange proposals for identification of areas for mutual cooperation.

Section 203A abolishment through Ordinance urged

RCCI President in his address said that there are a number of legal loopholes and anomalies in the fiscal budget that could lead to business closures

ZUBAIR AHMAD

RAWALPINDI: An important meeting of the city-wide traders' association was held at the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI). The meeting was presided over by RCCI President Nasir Mirza while on the occasion group leader Sohail Altaf, former presidents, senior vice president Osman Ashraf, vice president Shahraiz Malik, tax expert Tauqeer Bukhari, Shehzad Malik, Faraz Fazal, representatives of Anjuman-e-Tajir. Nadeem Sheikh, Sheikh Hafeez, Arshad Awan, Zahid Bakhtawari, Tariq Jadoon, Zafar Qadri, Taj Abbasi, Tahir Taj Bhat-ti, Naveed Kanwal, Sheikh Asif Idrees, Chaudhry Akram and a large number of chamber members were present. At the meeting, the business representatives unanimously strongly demanded that Section 203A be completely abolished via Presidential Ordinance and anti-business clauses be withdrawn.



Taxpayers should not be harassed. If the concerns are not addressed, a shut-down call can be given. RCCI President Nasir Mirza in his address said that there are a number of legal loopholes and anomalies in the fiscal budget that could lead to business closures. The section 203A is not acceptable and the Government must realize the ground real-

ities, he added. This section will open the harassment flood gates, he cautioned. The stakeholders should be consulted to resolve the point of sale issue, he further added. Former President and group leader Sohail Altaf said that the changes in customs and income tax laws have made business more difficult than ever. On the one hand, the Finance Minister in his budget speech introduced a self-assessment scheme and on the other hand, the FBR is sending notices. The business community has made the most sacrifices during the Corona pandemic. Instead of providing relief, government budgetary policies are likely to disrupt business, he added. It was decided at the meeting that a committee would be constituted at the level of Chamber and Traders Association and the Charter of Demand would be placed before the Government, Finance Minister and FBR. The meeting also prayed for the former RCCI president and group leader Sheikh Shabbir (late).

NIH alert on epidemic-prone infectious diseases

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Health (NIH) on Tuesday issued its seasonal awareness and alert letter (SAAL) for epidemic-prone infectious diseases in Pakistan. According to NIH, the main purpose of SAAL is to alert all concerned health authorities and professionals at all levels for timely and efficient responses to outbreaks or epidemics. The letter has been developed for the summer and monsoon season from June to September 2021. In this letter, NIH exhibited patterns of high priority communicable diseases including Hepatitis (A and E), Cholera, COVID-19, CCHF, Dengue Fever, Leishmaniasis, Malaria, Measles, Polio and XDR Typhoid. These diseases are predicted to be on high alert during the said season. It also contains the detailed introduction of diseases, case definitions, infectious agents, modes of transmission, case management, and prevention, it added. Through this letter, the NIH informed about national and international public health events like Primary Amebic Meningoencephalitis (Naegleria fowleri) and heat stroke as national while Ebola Virus Disease may be a threat for any of the country or region in future. On the basis of the last five-year data, the NIH recommended for all federal, provincial, and district health departments to keep continuous surveillance on the anticipated seasonal public health threats and taking all preventive or curative measures in this context. Due to the ongoing pandemic situation of COVID-19, its epidemiology, impact, prevention, and control was also elaborated in detail.

Sajid Baloch posted as ED NAVTTC

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Sajid Baloch a BS-21 officer of the Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS) has been posted as Executive Director, National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC), Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training. Mr. Sajid Baloch has 26 years' experience of working in public sector and development sector, including United Nations. Previously he has served as Registrar, Islamabad High Court, Financial Advisor / Joint Secretary, Ministry of Finance, and Director General, BISP (Benazir Income Support Programme) and Director General Basic Education. He also served as Permanent Delegate (DPD) to UNESCO HQs Paris for three years and as Head of Global Support Programme (GSP) in UNDP and UNOPS for 4 years, and 3 of his gender and governance projects won the international awards. He has the reputation as a competent, public friendly and honest officer and a good administrator. He holds Master's Degree in Development & Environment from Kings College London, and Electrical Engineering from NED University. He is a winner of British Chevening scholarship. He possesses extensive experience of governance, education, TVET, poverty, policy, law, gender, and international/donors liaison and project management. - DNA

Lok Virsa, Muslim Hands for training children

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (NIFTH) - Lok Virsa has decided to organize a training program for school children in collaboration with Muslim Hands Pakistan soon. Executive Director Lok Virsa, Talha Ali Kushvaha and the Manager

Education at the Muslim Hands Pakistan Mir Aman Hunzai decided in a meeting held here on Tuesday. They discussed that under the program basic techniques of different countries arts and crafts like embroidery, pottery, wood carving, drawing, painting and calligraphy would be imparted to the school children, an official said.

Rs 8b to be spent on development projects in Attock

FAISAL MUNIR

ATTOCK: Provincial Minister for Social Welfare and Bait ul Maal Syed Yawar Abbas Bukhari on Tuesday said that Rs 8 billion will be spent on different development projects in Attock during the next financial year. These projects include establishment of 200 bedded Mother and Child Hospital, upgradation of DHQ Hospital, upgradation of nurs-

ing school to college level and many other projects. He was addressing a gathering at village Dakhner after the ground breaking of a carpet road which will be built at the cost of Rs 50 million. He said that the state of the art mother and child hospital will be completed in two years and soon its foundation stone will be laid while the upgradation of DHQ Hospital will be started in the coming August. He said that a trauma center will be built in DHQ Hospital and Gondal where all facilities will be available to handle any type of medical emergencies. Bokhari said, a house for the orphans will be built at the cost of Rs 400 million in Attock having all facilities and said that Attock to Haji Shah

and Jhala Khan Chowk to Bahtar road will be carpeted at the cost of millions of rupees which will benefit thousands of families of the area. He said that Punjab govt has given approval for establishment of Attock University and work on this project will be started soon. He said, Punjab Govt will gradually upgrade eight thousand public sector school to ensure better educational facilities especially in remote areas. He said, a sports stadium will be built in Dhok Fateh and said that hockey stadium has been completed while work on cricket stadium is in progress. Yawar said, this Govt is committed to provide facilities to the people at village level to stop and discourage the trend of migration to cities.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Saudi Arabia Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki chairing a meeting of the session of King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre Pakistan for open heart surgeries and cardiac catheterization of children in the Pakistan. - APP

President cautions of 'unrest in India' over atrocities

The brutalities against Muslims and their ethnic cleansing in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), he said, was the practical manifestation of Hindutva policies

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi on Tuesday cautioned India of an internal strife if it continued persecuting the Muslims under its Hindutva ideology, based on racism and hate. "The future of peace within India greatly depends upon the treatment it metes out to its minorities, particularly Muslims," the president said at the International Conference on 'Institutionalization of Hindutva in India: A Regional Security Perspective'. The conference, organized by the International Relations Department of the National Defence University (NDU), gathered intellectuals from the United States, China, Iran, Germany and Pakistan to deliberate upon the global rise of Islamophobia in the local perspective of Hindutva extremism. He said India in its historic outlook had never been a country, but a combination of over 500 princely states that could even crumble today if it did not stop genocide and persecution of

minorities. President Alvi said the Hindutva ideology was being promoted under the patronage of Modi regime, which would create violence and unrest in the Indian society, and resultantly India would blame Pakistan for its flawed and extremist policies. The brutalities against Muslims and their ethnic cleansing in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), he said, was the practical manifestation of Hindutva policies. He said India's recently amended "Citizenship Act" reflected the prejudiced mindset of Hindutva, aimed at changing the demography of Muslim-majority Kashmir. Such acts on the part of Modi regime, he added, were amounting to "ethnic cleansing" that required the special attention of the world to build pressure on India to stop committing human rights violations in the IIOJK. Dr. Alvi said the world, due to its vested interests, was not seriously taking the disturbing situation in the IIOJK.

"We want the international community to see the 'true colors' of India, that reflect an open hatred against Muslims," he said. He pointed out that the Muslims constituted almost 15 percent of Indian population, but regrettably, they had been kept deprived of their due representation in the Indian parliament as well as their share in the government jobs. He said the Hindutva-inspired government could not tolerate the minorities, particularly the Muslims, and thus wanted to rewrite history by erasing the contributions done by the Muslims for India. He quoted, in this regard, an excerpt from 'The Book of Laughter and Forgetting' authored by Czech historian Milan Kundera that "the first step to liquidate a people is to take away their memory by destroying their books, culture and history". The president also mentioned the books, 'End of India' by Indian intel-

lectual Khushwant Singh and 'Gujarat Files: Anatomy of a Cover Up' by Indian woman journalist Rana Ayub, that highlighted the dark contours of India's history, deeply rooted in violence, bigotry and prejudice. He appreciated the talent of Pakistani nation, saying he was proud of it as it had the resolve and potential to overcome challenges and prove itself in the comity of nations by gaining an 'intellectual edge' in all fields of life. "I can see the country rising which will soon overcome the socio-economic challenges being faced by the country," he added. NDU President Lt Gen Muhammad Saeed said Pakistan's major external threats emanated from India, whose defence capabilities were primarily Pakistan-centric. He said to maintain the equilibrium, Pakistan was justified in building its military might for the purpose of defending its frontiers and the people. He mentioned that since 2014, India was using religious sentiments for political gains, saying it could have dangerous consequences for Pakistan as well as the region.

Shifting markets along Ring Road urged

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The business community on Tuesday suggested the Punjab government to shift wholesale markets, operating in heart of the city, along the proposed Ring Road aimed at ending traffic congestion and controlling environmental issues. "Traders are facing problems in transporting goods to northern areas, Azad Kashmir as well as within the city due to traffic congestion. Shifting of the wholesale markets along the Ring Road will not only help ensure smooth flow of the traffic but also tackle environmental pollution," President Traders Welfare Association Sharjeel Mir said while talking to APP. He said lack of parking space and frequent traffic jams in all markets of the downtown were creating a great nuisance for customers as the motorist's covered distance of minutes in hours because of encroachment-cum-traffic mess. Mir also suggested that a residential scheme should be worked out for the business community along the Ring Road so that they could do their businesses near to their residences. Accordingly, he said representatives of various trade bodies had a meeting with Deputy Commissioner Amir Aiq Khan and conveyed their concerns, who duly acknowledged the problems being faced by the traders.

All main rivers continue to flow normal: FFC

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that all main rivers of Indus River System are presently flowing normal. According to daily FFC report on Tuesday, no rain generating system at present prevails over Pakistan with yesterday's trough of Westerly Wave earlier over Kashmir and adjoining areas has moved away Eastwards (away from the country). Seasonal Low from the Arabian Sea continues to prevail over Northern Balochistan. Mainly dry weather is expected over most parts of the country during the next 24 hours as per the prediction of FFC, Lahore. Nevertheless, isolated thunderstorm/rain may occur over Punjab (Bahawalpur and D.G. Khan Divisions) and Northeastern Balochistan besides over the upper catchments of rivers Indus, Jhelum and Chenab during this period. - APP

Police Arrest Gang of Decoits.

FAISAL MUNIR

ATTOCK: Police on the complaint of Liaqat and Khalid Mehmood, both residents of Kharala Kalan have arrested a gang of eight decoits from Fatehjang involved in a decoity. Two days ago the decoits at gun point had taken away Rs 120,000 and gold ornaments worth Rs 780,000 from the houses of the complainants. Those arrested include Mana, Mithoo, Usman, Mastana, Azam and Ali Haidar all r/o Hafizabad and Iqbal r/o Okara. Case under the act has been registered against them and all have been sent behind the bars. In another attempt Hassanabdal police arrested two decoits namely Tasawar and Aqib both r/o Sundki and recovered Rs32,200 and two pistols from their possession.

Yet in another attempt Attock City police arrested three male and three females from a brothel situated in mohalla Dar us Salam. Meanwhile, the divers of Rescue 1122, recovered dead body of a young boy Shavez r/o Dhok Fateh Attock from Dheri Lagal dam Shavez had gone 77,000 for picnic and was swimming in the dam when drowned. On the other hand Attock police "Pukar 15" received 46107 emergency calls during the last month including 35123 fake calls. 1289 cases have been registered against those making fake calls.

Briefs

Attock edu. dept. bags 1st spot in enrollment

FAISAL MUNIR

ATTOCK: Education Department Attock has bagged first position in enrollment drive in Punjab by enrolling 23,741 students in public sector schools. Chief Executive Officer Education attock Malik Mohsin Abbas while giving details of the drive told the newsmen that at Primary and elementary level in tehsil Attock 1,896, in tehsil Fateh Jang 2,921, in Tehsil Hassan abdal 2,154, in Tehsil Hazro 1,813, in Tehsil Jand 1,818 and in tehsil Pindi Gheb 2,200 while at secondary level 9,939 students were enrolled. He said this was a team work and his team which included education officers and teachers played an extraordinary role. He said public sector schools had all facilities and highly qualified teachers and efforts were being made to give quality education to the young generation. He said tehsil Fateh Jang bagged first position in the enrollment drive while Pindi Gheb got second and Hasan abdal third one.

'Islamabad Food Safety Bill 2021' Okayed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate's sub-committee on Interior Tuesday unanimously approved the 'Islamabad Food Safety Bill 2021' that would be presented to the main body for onward submission in Upper House of the Parliament. Senator Fawzia Arshad moved the bill in the Senate to look into the lacunas and suggest amendments/ correction with consultation of the Ministry of Interior and other stakeholders. The sub-committee that met here with Samina Mumtaz in the chair discussed the 'Islamabad Food Safety Bill 2021' in detail. Senator Shahadat Awan proposed various amendments to the bill on which the Convener Committee directed the Ministry of Law to reconsider the proposed changes so that effective legislation could be enacted. Fawzia Arshad said that the residents of Islamabad were facing issues related to food adulteration due to lack of food safety laws in the federal capital, adding that the enactment of bill would significantly help reducing food adulteration in the city.

AIUO to adopt online admissions mechanism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIUO) has announced to offer admission via fully automated mechanism from autumn 2021 semester. Prospectuses and admission application forms for all programs will be available online on the university website (www.aiuo.edu.pk). Applicants will not only be required to fill online application form but also upload relevant documents on online admission portal. However, printed prospectuses and admission forms will be available in those areas where internet facilities are either nonexistent or very scarcely available. Moreover, students can also deposit admission fee online via Jazz cash, Easypaisa and Upaisa mobile applications, retailer agent, franchises as well as through the branches of Mobilink, Telenor and Ubank AIUO has established facilitation desks at the regional offices of the university throughout the country on the special directives of Prof Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, VC, AIUO to facilitate students in the online admission process so that the students may avail internet facilities free of cost.

Pak-Bangladesh agree to revive Joint Economic Commission

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's High Commissioner to Bangladesh Imran Ahmed Siddiqui has said that many Pakistani businesses have invested in Bangladesh and many Pakistani professionals contributed to the development of Bangladesh particularly its garment sector. There are certain dormant consultative mechanisms at the government level which need to be revived as soon as possible such as Joint Economic Commission.

He was speaking in a webinar on "Pakistan - Bangladesh Economic Relations: Future of Cooperation" hosted by Islamabad based think tank Pakistan House. The High Commissioner said "The platform of Joint Economic Commission remained inactive for many years, however governments on both sides have agreed, in principle, to restart the process. This is important for addressing the hurdles that businessmen and exporters face in enhancing their businesses. Bangladesh is among the top 10 exporting destinations of Pakistani products, which include cotton, yarn, fabric, leather, inorganic chemicals, vegetables and electronics. There is a need to promote better and more frequent interaction between the private sectors of the two countries to



enhance trade which is mutually beneficial. "Bangladesh economy is at a stage where the businesses can move out and invest in other countries. Bangladesh businesses may explore opportunities being offered by CPEC which can also be used as a transport link if Bangladesh is sourcing its imports from Western and Central China. Let us work on creating Pakistan-Bangladesh Business Council for stronger relations. Bilateral relations even between the two closest countries are not always friction free. There may be some problems too. But fortunately the leadership is committed to moving ahead and to promoting better relations.

Ms. Shaista Riaz, Research Associate of Pakistan House moderated the webinar. She highlighted that both countries have decided to finalize a bilateral Free Trade Agreement. FTA will pave the way for opening trade opportunities. Mr. Manzur Rashid, Business Director of ACI Chemicals Limited Dhaka, said that we have found great fabric and yarn manufacturers from Pakistan. CPEC holds great importance and this opportunity will bring prosperity to Bangladesh as well because 30-40% of the import is coming from China. Using CPEC as a channel, Pakistan should promote it to Bangladeshi businessmen. Engr. Ihtesham Javaid, President

Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry remarked that Bangladeshi investors should come to Pakistan and invest by establishing industries. New routes are available now for Bangladesh to reach Pakistan, such as through China. In 2020, the volume of bilateral trade was \$644 million, which was very little considering the market and opportunities. The good news is that the volume of trade has increased significantly in 2021. Mr. Nabeel Essa, Director Tasho Enterprises Limited Dhaka mentioned that other than just yarn and fabric, we need to focus on other aspects of building communication as well including promot-

ing Bangladeshi artisans, brands, MNCs and business stakeholders. 65% of the Bangladeshi population is involved in Agriculture. Bangladesh has the potential to enhance and promote agriculture outside the State too with the help of Pakistan.

Mr. Sadrul Hassan, Special Correspondent UNB, Dhaka, BD said that Pakistan and Bangladesh have huge potential that remains untapped due to many problems. Bangladeshi businessman faces the absence of a direct shipping line to Pakistan and other tariff and non-tariff barriers. Leadership from both countries need to establish direct and regular contact. Both need to work on the sector of tourism, such as launching joint ventures and secondly, they need to work on the textile sector. Mr. Suleman Khan, the Commercial Counsellor, Embassy of Pakistan, Dhaka, highlighted that South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) is an agreement reached on January 6, 2004, at the 12th SAARC summit in Islamabad. It created a free-trade area of 1.6 billion people in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka to reduce custom duties of not all traded goods but selected items to zero by the year 2016. Pakistan and Bangladesh both get the advantage from SAFTA.

Govt notifies transfer, posting of officers

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Tuesday notified transfers and postings of high ranking officers. According to a notification issued by the Establishment Division, Muhammad Riazuddin Khan, a BS-20 officer of Secretariat Group, presently under transfer from Government of Sindh, is transferred and posted as Joint Secretary, Industries and Production Division, with immediate effect and until further orders. Likewise, Ali Mardan Khoso, a BS-18 officer of Police Service of Pakistan, presently serving in Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), under Interior Division, is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of Government of Sindh, with immediate effect and until further orders. While, Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan has relinquished the charge of the post of Officer on Special Duty (BS-21/PSP) in this division with effect from 30-06-2021.

IRSA releases 256,500 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Tuesday released 256,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 259,400 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1436.80 feet, which was 52.80 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. The water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 136,600 and 132,600 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1154.50 feet, which was 116.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 38,900 and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 156,500, 144,100 and 29,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 37,600 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 11,000 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. - APP

Fiscal deficit to remain within target

DNA

ISLAMABAD: With continuity in fiscal consolidation efforts, the fiscal deficit for the entire fiscal year is expected to remain within the target, according to Finance Ministry report. "For Fiscal Year 2022, the fiscal deficit is budgeted to be at 6.3 percent of GDP," said monthly Economic Update and Outlook for June 2021, adding that the fiscal consolidation efforts continued to remain on track throughout the year. The report attributed the improvement in the fiscal discipline to the successful implementation of the measures introduced by the government. It said the fiscal deficit is 1.1 percentage points lower than the last year and recorded at 4.2 percent of GDP during July-April FY2021. About overall economic condition, the report said that with significant signs of economic recovery, the government would continue to follow the positive reform momentum to boost the competitiveness of country's economy and lay a strong foundation for a more robust, inclusive and sustainable recovery. "Pakistan economy has shown significant signs of economic recovery with fast resumption of economic dynamism," it said. According to the report, the government had introduced comprehensive measures to ensure sustainable growth. "In recent budget 2021-22, government has taken growth-oriented initiatives and will continue to follow the positive reform momentum which will help to boost the competitiveness of Pakistan's economy and lay a strong foundation for a more robust, inclusive and sustainable recovery," it said.



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Ambassadors of Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan posing for pictures with their families, at Islamabad Serena Hotel during a dinner hosted by Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels South and East Asia. -DNA

CDA increases beds capacity at capital hospital

ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA has approved to increase the number of beds in the new under construction block at Capital Hospital from 100 to 150 to provide maximum medical facilities to the people. A high level meeting on CDA Hospital was held under the chairmanship of Capital Development Authority (CDA) Chairman Amir Ali Ahmed on Tuesday in which all the directors including the project director, executive director gave a briefing to chairman CDA on the new additional under construction block and the management of the CDA hospital. The Chairman CDA while instructing the management in view of the increasing number of patients and public needs said that the number of beds in the under construction block in CDA hospital should be increased from 100 to 150 in which male and female wards with 31, 31 beds will be constructed on ground floor, first floor and second floor. In addition, two of the four VIP rooms should be removed and another ward with 30 beds should be constructed. In addition, the third floor of the block will consist of 19 rooms including angiography, ECG, ECO, EIT, OPD and doctors' rooms. Chairman CDA said that it is to be noted that PC-1 worth Rs. 176.611 million was approved in the financial year 2020-21, out of which 70% of the work has been completed. He also issued orders to speed up the work. - Shahean Hanif

No deferment for undergrad, associate degrees: HEC

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has clarified that all news items circulating in the press and electronic media regarding deferment of the four-year Undergraduate and two-year Associate Degrees Programmes by HEC, published in context of the Vice Chancellors' Committee Meeting held on July 2, 2021, are misleading and incorrect. Both the programmes are intact and shall continue as earlier. The enforcement of the policy prescribed in the HEC's Notification dated July 11, 2019, regarding "Trans-

ition from BA/BSc Programme to Associate Degree Programmes: Phasing out of MA/MSc Programmes" shall continue in letter and spirit. A meeting of all the Vice Chancellors was jointly chaired by Dr. Shaista Sohail, Executive Director, HEC and Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ali, Chair, VC Committee Meeting /Vice Chancellor, Quaid-e-Azam University on July 02, 2021. The meeting was convened on the request of Vice Chancellors who raised certain issues in implementation of HEC's



Undergraduate Education Policy and Policy on PhD Degree Programmes (2021). All points of concern were thoroughly debated, and in accordance with the majority opinion, the following recommendations were made for consideration by the Commission. The recommendation for deferring implementation of both the policies i.e., Undergraduate Education Policy and Policy on PhD Degree Programmes (2021) until Fall 2022 may be placed before the Commission, HEC's governing body, for consider-

ation. A Committee of Vice Chancellors would meet in fourth week of July 2021 for three days to debate issues and come up with practicable solutions. The summary based on the recommendations of the Vice Chancellors would be taken to the Commission highlighting the factual position and requesting for allowing proposed amendments to facilitate implementation of the two policies. The universities that are willing to adopt or have already adopted Undergraduate Education Policy and/or Policy for PhD Programmes may continue with its implementation diligently.

They asked CDA chairman Amir Ali Ahmed to immediately issue orders to remove all kinds of huts from the F-10 Markaz and conduct an investigation. They further said that if the hovels were not removed from the F-10 Markaz the traders of F-10 markaz would stage a massive protest against the CDA and block the roads of the F-10 and take the chain to various centers. The CDA and DMA will be fully responsible. The huts built in the centers are ugly stains on the face of Islamabad. Under no circumstances will huts be allowed inside any Markaz. Meanwhile, there is a huge problem of encroachment in Islamabad Markaz. The G-8 Markaz is full of encroachment, and the encroachers are not poor stall holders but rich car showrooms owner. They have occupied almost every inch of market for the parking of their cars. Residents of G-8 Markaz are very concerned about the situation. They urged CDA to remove the encroachment and make some space for them to freely move.

ICCI hails launch of gender protection unit

IG Islamabad appreciated the excellent performance of the female staff posted in the Gender Protection Unit and commended them

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Police under the chair of IGP Qazi Jameel ur Rehman organized a roundtable conference on the Gender Protection Unit. Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) hailed the establishment of a Gender Protection Unit (GPU) by Islamabad Police and termed it a proactive move in the right direction. He said that Islamabad Police was introducing new services for the facilitation of citizens, which was laudable.

He said that the GPU would provide more confidence to businesswomen and working women for protection of their rights. He said that the women were half of our total population and they needed better institutional support to play their effective role in the economic development of the country. He said that a network of GPUs should be set up across the country to provide easy access to women for complaint registration and redress of their genuine issues. He said that ICCI would play a role in creating better awareness about this facility in its member companies as well as in markets and industrial areas so that women could take full benefit of this facility for safeguard of their rights and redress of complaints. He said that ICCI in collaboration with Islamabad Police has set up a facilitation desk in its premises and the Chamber would continue to work with police to further improve the security situation in commercial and residential areas in the federal capital to make it a more peaceful and safe city for business and investment activities. The round table conference was attended by Fatma Azim Senior Vice President ICCI, senior officials, civil society members, foreign delegates and desk staff. The Round Table Conference reviewed the performance of the Gender Protection Unit and Helpline 8090

over the past month. IG Islamabad Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman and participants in the conference appreciated the performance of the Gender Protection Unit. Conference participants put forward various suggestions to make the performance of the Gender Protection Unit more effective. The Gender Protection Unit Desk received 77 applications while the Helpline 8090 received a total of 131 complaints of various types including 65 calls. 51 domestic violence complaints, 3 sexual harassment complaints, 11 harassment complaints, 28 neighbors' complaints, and 9 different types of threat complaints were received while 5 people

were arrested. Under various provisions, 46 complaints including 6 cases have been resolved while 43 pending cases are being processed. 10 women received guidance through the helpline. Through social media and other media, 86 percent people expressed their liking while 5 per cent people gave negative feedback. IG Islamabad appreciated the excellent performance of the female staff posted in the Gender Protection Unit and commended them. The IG Islamabad said that due to the launch of the Gender Protection Unit, there has been a significant reduction in domestic violence and other cases.

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The price of life

ONE may safely say food - access to and security of - is central to life - to the way people behave and the many riots we have seen around the world. The latest of these riots came in 2007 and 2008 when the Arab Spring disruptions occurred in the Middle East, sparked partially at least by inflation which could not be controlled. Before this, we have seen similar situations in other countries and chaos erupt in nations like Zimbabwe, where food price inflation has hit record highs. At this time, as the world slowly comes out of the pandemic it has faced for at least a year and a half, and other countries face the possibility of a continued round of disease, the Food and Agriculture Organisation has reported a 40 percent increase in the prices of food items in May this year compared to the previous year. The inflation is driven by the consumption of food in countries where economies are bouncing back, including China and the US, and by the stimulus programmes that nations put in place to deal with the Covid-19 crisis. Drought in Brazil also has brought a decrease in corn production, leaving the rest of the world short of this commodity. At the same time, climate change has affected other crops in the same fashion. In Pakistan, various reports and surveys have highlighted the worsening situation of food security and around one-fifth of the population is now reported to be living with insufficient food.

In times of inflation, it is no doubt the poorest of people, the most vulnerable, who suffer due to lack of food and related problems, including severe malnutrition and other health issues, which end up meaning further expense for those with very little social protection. In an ideal world, we would ask that the world act jointly to help those that are primed to suffer due to the inequalities of this capitalism-sustained system. However, we have seen the one percent has little to no consideration for the majority of the people around the globe. What is not realized perhaps in this hubris is the fact that once the planet starts to fight back, the one percent and 99 percent will face the same trauma and violence.



Caught red handed

AS if Pakistan's startling revelations last year regarding the role of India in terror acts were not enough to capture the international community's attention, this latest bombing in Lahore is yet another physical manifestation of the threat faced by Pakistan. This attack certainly indicates that New Delhi has ambitions to destabilise both Pakistan and the region and our government has brought forward the proof to verify this claim. This is the first serious terror attack in a city that had moved past the spectre of terror; it cannot be taken lightly. That the allegations levied by Pakistan are based on hard facts is something that must be pushed constantly, until there is some sort of reaction by international bodies and other states. With detailed traces on the suspects, accomplices and even their contacts from India, it is clear that our security forces left no stone unturned in their bid to trace the incident back to its source—India's intelligence agency, RAW.

An important facet that must be addressed as a natural consequence of this is the terror financing India is engaged in for subversive activities in Pakistan. While Islamabad has been on the grey list of FATF for several years, India has escaped notice even though its financing in Afghanistan against us has also long been suspect. The efforts to destabilise Pakistan have only accelerated in recent years. Even if we ignore the Pakistan factor, how is it that the legal system within India is lax enough to allow for terror financial channels to be created with such ease?

Bear in mind that this is the same state where nuclear materials are available in the black market. The duplicity and favoured treatment must end. Pakistan must go on the offensive diplomatically. While beefing up security to thwart such attempts by India is important, there must also be a more concerted effort to see the international community act on India's transgressions and recognise that it regularly indulges in state-sponsored terrorism to keep the region unstable for its own benefit.

Time for a reboot of US-Israeli relations

Eitay Mack & Yonatan Gher

This special relationship is a relic of the Cold War, when the US supported its allies unconditionally – militarily and politically – even when it came to military governments and dictatorial regimes that were involved in gross human rights violations. Accordingly, within the borders of Israel there is a state that grants political and economic privileges to its Jewish majority, and in the West Bank there is an Israeli military dictatorship, operating according to the same methods of colonialist regimes, most of which ended in the last century

AT the beginning of his term, US President Joe Biden laid out his foreign policy vision: to restore the United States' respected leadership on the world stage; to take immediate steps to renew US alliances; and to strengthen the coalition of democracies. The Achilles heel of this optimistic plan and its credibility is Washington's anachronistic relations with the State of Israel.

This special relationship is a relic of the Cold War, when the US supported its allies unconditionally – militarily and politically – even when it came to military governments and dictatorial regimes that were involved in gross human rights violations. Accordingly, within the borders of Israel there is a state that grants political and economic privileges to its Jewish majority, and in the West Bank there is an Israeli military dictatorship, operating according to the same methods of colonialist regimes, most of which ended in the last century.

Recently, two acclaimed organisations, Human Rights Watch and B'Tselem, accused the Israeli state of committing crimes of apartheid against the Palestinians. That, however, did not produce a change of policy in Washington.

For decades, the US has maintained a bubble of complete impunity for successive Israeli governments, both in the occupied Palestinian territories and within Israeli borders. It has extended unconditional support for Israel at the United Nations Security Council and provided annual military aid. The Israeli state is the largest recipient of US foreign aid, having been granted some \$146bn since it was established in 1948.

While the US has often denounced the violation of human rights and the deterioration of democratic values and institutions across the world, it has hardly levelled any criticism at the appalling state affairs in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

The US has condemned in strong words and even acted against the bombing of civilians in Syria by Bashar al-Assad's regime, but has said nothing of the Israeli air raids on residential areas in Gaza or the demolitions of Palestinian homes in occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank. The US has also spoken out against the wounding and killing of protestors in Myanmar and the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya, but has stayed silent on Israeli forces wounding and killing protestors in the West Bank and Gaza and forcefully displacing Palestinians from their homes in occupied East Jerusalem, the Jordan Valley and Khan al-Ahmar.

Even when former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu turned racism towards the Palestinian population and Jewish supremacy into a declared policy, Washington remained mum.

Under his watch, the Knesset passed the nation-state law, which declared Israel a nation-state of the Jewish people only, while supporters of ethnic cleansing and hate crimes against Palestinians reached positions of power. He not only weakened state institutions, undermining the independence of the Knesset, the security agencies and the judiciary, but also was himself implicated in various corruption schemes. Nevertheless, Washington continued to welcome Netanyahu into the "club of democratic leaders".

The new government in Israel, which ended Netanyahu's 13-year rule, presents an important opportunity for a reboot of US-Israeli relations. To balance out the dynamic between the two countries, many changes have to be made, but there are a few measures the US government can take immediately to begin this process.

First, the Biden administration should heed the call of Palestinian, Israeli and American activists to condition US financial aid on Israel's commitment to upholding human rights and international law. If it continues violating

the human rights of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, then the flow of US assistance should be stopped immediately.

Second, the Biden administration should demand that the Israeli government stop the illegal evictions of hundreds of Palestinian residents from their homes in occupied East Jerusalem.

Third, the Biden administration should demand that the Israeli government repeal the nation-state law, which gives a cloak of legality to the illegal discrimination of the Palestinian citizens within Israel.

Fourth, the Biden administration should demand that the Israeli government repeal Military Order No. 101, which was passed in 1967 and which prohibits any protest in the occupied West Bank without permission from the Israeli military – permission that as far as is known has never been issued for Palestinians in 54 years of occupation. The Palestinians should be given the opportunity to hold non-violent protests against the occupation and the Israeli military dictatorship, freely and without restrictions.

It should be emphasised that none of these are exceptional measures. In fact, US laws, such as the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and others, condition foreign aid upon the fulfilment of a country's commitments to human rights and international law. The US has conditioned foreign assistance many times and there is no reason why it should not do so for Israel.

By taking these measures, the US will end its policy of double standards that privileges the State of Israel over all other states with which the US enjoys close relations. By now it should be clear to Biden and his team that enabling impunity for the Israeli state and army does not help the people living in Israel and only serves to fuel the endless cycle of violence from which both Palestinians and Israelis suffer.

— Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Conflict continues to thrive despite pandemic

Kerry Boyd Anderson



A few days ago, the last US troops left Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan as part of a broader withdrawal of US troops from the country. However, for Afghans, there has been an increase in violence in the last year

ALTHOUGH much of the world's attention has been focused on the coronavirus disease, the pandemic has unfortunately not led to a halt in conflict. So far in 2021, hotspots for conflict include Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria and Ethiopia.

A few days ago, the last US troops left Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan as part of a broader withdrawal of US troops from the country. However, for Afghans, there has been an increase in violence in the last year. The Taliban has been gaining territory and there are serious concerns that it will continue to do so. Attacks targeting civilians have continued, including one in May against a school that killed 85 people, many of them schoolgirls. As the US and other NATO forces pull out, the war is entering a new period, with the potential for a new wave of violence.

The situation in Yemen is another intractable war that is seeing significant violence this year. Last year and the first half of 2021 has been one of the deadliest periods since 2018, particularly due to fighting around the Houthis' efforts to capture Marib. The UN has called Yemen "the world's worst humanitarian crisis," with the country sitting on the brink of famine.

Syria also remains one of the world's most violent places. While the extent of the fighting has declined in the last year, the conflict still kills people on a regular basis, including in the Idlib area. The war is stuck, rather than over. Syria also faces potential famine. The country will face a particularly acute humanitarian disaster if the UN stops providing critical humanitarian assistance through the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing into northwestern Syria. There are serious concerns that Russia will veto any measure to maintain the aid line beyond July 10.

Ethiopia has one of the younger wars, starting in November 2020. The conflict between the government and allied forces versus the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has killed thousands and displaced nearly 2 million people. Hundreds of thousands of people already face famine conditions, with more at risk. The government recently declared a unilateral ceasefire and, on Sunday,

the TPLF accepted a ceasefire "in principle" but named multiple conditions. Reports suggest that the government is trying to isolate the Tigray region. The conflict could continue and threaten the country's broader stability, especially given low-level conflict in other parts of the country.

Each of these conflicts has characteristics that are unique to the countries involved. The specific political, ethnic, historical, geographical, geopolitical and economic contexts in each region shape the conflicts.

While recognizing the differences between conflicts, there are also important similarities. One is an enduring environment of conflict. The current war in Afghanistan is nearing 20 years, but the country previously saw many more years of war. Syria's civil war began about 10 years ago. The current Yemen war is more than six years old and the country previously experienced decades of conflict between different internal groups and across the old north-south divide. The Tigray conflict is only a few months old, but the border war and years of tension between Ethiopia and Eritrea preceded it, and Eritrean soldiers have played a role in the current conflict.

In all four cases, there is a lack of widespread acceptance of the national government's legitimacy. In Afghanistan, Syria and Yemen, there are clearly large, armed segments of the population that do not accept the government, even if the government has international recognition. The situation in Ethiopia is different but reflects internal disagreement over the nature of the country's political structure. As with so many modern conflicts, there is a fundamental lack of a unified national identity.

Conflicts often become more intractable when outside powers intervene to pursue their own interests. This is clearly part of the problem in Afghanistan, Syria and Yemen, where multiple

external actors are involved. Furthermore, in each conflict, several internal actors are participating, complicating any peace efforts.

All four conflicts are also characterized by extensive displacement and a lack of sufficient humanitarian access. In addition to thousands or hundreds of thousands of fatalities, there are millions of people displaced internally or across borders as a result of these conflicts. In addition to internal displacement, Afghanistan and Syria have generated two of the world's largest refugee flows. The Tigray conflict is one of the most acute recent refugee crises. Many people in Yemen have nowhere to flee but are displaced within the country. All four conflicts have put people at risk of famine and critical humanitarian access challenges.

There are many other places where conflict has continued to kill and displace people during the pandemic. In Asia, multiple internal conflicts in Myanmar and the country's overall instability have caused deaths and displacement. Only 11 days of fighting between Israel and Hamas this year killed more than 200 people. Libya's war has involved multiple outside actors, complicating efforts to reach a lasting peace deal. Africa has multiple violent hotspots, including the Sahel region, Somalia, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central Africa Republic. Beyond these areas of ongoing conflict, there are many other parts of the world where factors such as political instability and extensive criminal violence threaten to escalate into full conflicts and create new refugee flows. Rather than hitting pause on war, the pandemic has intensified people's suffering, eroded economic systems and distracted from peace efforts. In the rest of 2021, new efforts will be necessary to try to address durable conflicts and prevent new ones.

— Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

UEFA thanks Azerbaijan for hosting EURO 2020

DNA

LONDON: UEFA has sent a letter of gratitude to The Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA) for hosting the Euro 2020 A group games in the Baku Olympic Stadium.

Martin Kallen, the CEO of UEFA Events SA congratulated Azerbaijan for delivering four excellent matches in Baku, assessing it as an incredible achievement.

He thanked Azerbaijan for the effort to deliver the EURO 2020 amid the uncertainty caused by COVID-19. Stressing the high level of organization of the group and quarter-final matches, Kallen said: "I had the privilege to attend a match in Baku and I can state that I was very impressed by the atmosphere in the venue and the high standards of professionalism." Baku was among 11 European cities to host EURO 2020 held from June 11 to July 11. The first match of the group was held in Baku on June 12 between Switzerland and Wales (1:1), while Italy beat Turkey (3:0). Wales-Turkey match (2: 0) was held on June 16. A total of 45,682 people attended Group A matches in Baku. The European Football Championship was supposed to be held last year but was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic. Earlier, UEFA awarded the Baku Olympic Stadium for the successful holding of EURO 2020 matches. The stadium was awarded on behalf of UEFA Deputy Secretary General Giorgio Marchetti due to the fact that despite the short time intervals between three matches within the European Championship and hot weather, the stadium's turf was in perfect condition.

Atletico sign Marcos Paulo Costa

SPORTS DESK

MADRID: Spanish La Liga champions Atletico Madrid have announced the signing of Brazilian striker Marcos Paulo Costa do Nascimento. The 20-year-old, who has a European passport and has played for Portugal's under-19 team, joins Atletico on a free transfer from Fluminense and has agreed a five-year contract.

Last season Costa made 24 appearances for his club, scoring three goals and giving three assists.

The Atletico website informs that the forward, who is 1.86 meters tall, can either play in a central striker role or on the left wing despite being predominantly right-footed, and describes him as a "promising and versatile player."

It is not yet certain whether he will start the new season in Atletico's first-team squad, or whether the club could look to loan him out in order to gain experience.

Malaysian FM...

From Page 01

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and ICT equipment, worth USD 250,000. Malaysia is highly appreciative of the invaluable support extended thus far by the United States and hope the close and friendly ties will be further strengthened for the mutual benefits of our two countries.

He further said, as conveyed earlier in his letter of 4 June 2021 to Secretary Blinken, 'I would also like to reiterate that Malaysia welcomes President Joe Biden's 3 June announcement of the United States' expression of support for temporary waiver of the Intellectual Property (IP) protection on COVID-19 vaccines. The Right Honourable Prime Minister, Tan Sri Dato' Haji Mahiaddin bin Haji Md Yassin had also announced in his address to the Nikkei International Conference in May 2021 Malaysia's support for the IP protection waiver for COVID-19 vaccines. In the common pursuit for equitable global access to the COVID-19 vaccines, Malaysia stands ready to establish all-round cooperation with the United States in vaccine research, development, and distribution'.

Pakistan vs England: COVID outbreak in England squad

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Three players of England and four members of the management have tested positive for COVID-19 ahead of the Pakistan One Day International series starting this week. The team has been forced to self-isolate after the seven positive results, two days before the series against the Green Shirts begins in Cardiff on Thursday, July 8. A statement by England Cricket Board announced: "In collaboration with Public Health England, Public Health Wales and Bristol Local Health Authority, those impacted will now observe a period of self-isolation from July 4 following the UK Government's protocol on quarantine. The remaining members of the party have been deemed close contacts and will also isolate."

ECB also confirmed that despite the setback, the series will go forth as planned with Ben Stokes captaining the squad by returning earlier than planned. Multiple players have been from the ongoing County Championship fixtures to join the new squad. All athletes will be required to take PCR tests. ECB Chief Executive, Tom Morrison said, per ESPNcricinfo: "We have been mindful that the emergence of the Delta variant, along with our move



away from the stringent enforcement of bio secure environments, could increase the chances of an outbreak." "We made a strategic choice to try to adapt protocols, in order to support the overall wellbeing of our players and management staff who have spent much of the last 14 months living in very restricted conditions," he continued. "Overnight we have worked swiftly to identify a new squad, and we are grateful to Ben Stokes who will return to England duties to captain. We also recognise the impact this news will have on our first-class counties and their men's playing squads and thank them, along with our partners Sky and Royal London, for their ongoing support in dealing with this pandemic," he added.

England name new squad for ODI

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: England have announced a new squad for the One Day International series against Pakistan, starting on Thursday, July 8. England were forced into self-isolation after multiple players and members of the management tested positive for COVID-19 on Tuesday, two days before the start of the series in Cardiff. Ben Stokes has been brought back early for his international duties and he will assume the role as captain for the first time in limited-overs cricket. Chris Silverwoods has also been brought back from a scheduled break to coach as the head coach. Here is the new squad named by ECB: **England Men's ODI Squad** Ben Stokes, Jake Ball, Danny Briggs, Brydon Carse, Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Lewis Gregory, Tom Helm, Will Jacks, Dan Lawrence, Saqib Mahmood, Dawid Malan, Craig Overton, Matt Parkinson, David Payne, Phil Salt, John Simpson, James Vince.

Paqueta strike sends Brazil into Copa America final



RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil's Lucas Paqueta and Neymar Jr celebrate after scoring goal against Peru during the 2021 Copa America Semifinals football match in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

SPORTS DESK

RIO DE JANEIRO: A first-half strike from Lyon midfielder Lucas Paqueta fired Brazil to a 1-0 win over Peru on Monday as the Copa America hosts booked a place in the final at the Maracana Stadium.

Just as he did in Brazil's 1-0 defeat of Chile in the quarterfinal, Paqueta

showed predatory instincts by combining with Neymar to deadly effect. The latter skipped around two defenders before squaring the ball for the former Flamengo playmaker, who coolly sent a first-time shot past Peru goalkeeper Pedro Gallese. "Paqueta is a great player and improving with every game for the national team," Neymar said after

the match. "He had a great season for his club and now he's showing that he can be important for Brazil too." Peru enjoyed brief periods of dominance in the second half but were unable to break down a Brazil backline that has conceded just twice in six games this tournament.

The result at Rio's Olympic stadium means Brazil will meet either Argentina or

Colombia - who will clash on Tuesday in the other semifinal - in the decider at Brazilian football's spiritual home on Saturday. Brazil are now unbeaten in their past 13 outings and will be favorites to lift their second Copa America trophy on home soil in three years.

Neymar made no attempt to hide a desire to face Argentina in the final, citing friendships with several Albiceleste players, including Lionel Messi and Angel Di Maria. "I want to play against Argentina because some of us are good friends but I want Brazil to win, of course," Neymar said.

Brazil midfielder Casemiro said a grueling schedule was beginning to take its toll on the Selecao, who have played eight matches - including two World Cup qualifiers - in the past month. "We know that as footballers we are privileged but I haven't seen my family in around 35 days," the Real Madrid enforcer said. "We are now playing with our hearts and we're going to give our all to get one more win."

Tomljanovic ends British teen's dream

AGENCIES

LONDON: Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic reached her first Grand Slam quarter-final on Monday as British teenager Emma Raducanu retired injured when a set and 30 down. Raducanu, 18, had lit up Wimbledon in the same fashion 15-year-old Coco Gauff had two years ago but she was clearly struggling, clutching her stomach and gasping for breath.

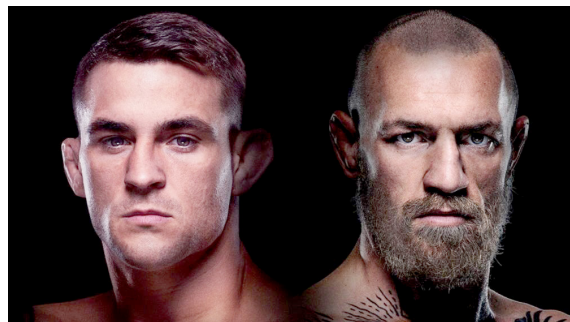
She received medical attention at the break for 30 and was taken off for further examination before it was announced she could not continue. "I am really kind of shocked. Emma must be really hurt being a Briton playing at home," said Tomljanovic. "I am really sorry but it's sport, it happens, I am really wishing her all the best. "I felt like I was in my groove (in the second set) but Emma not being at her best explains that." Tomljanovic, 28, will play compatriot and world number one Ashleigh Barty on Tuesday for a place in the semi-finals.

"It did not really sink in that I am in the quarter-finals given the circumstances," said Tomljanovic.



"But two Aussies playing each other and one to go through to the last four is great. "I am thrilled to play Ashleigh and hope it will be a great match." There was little hint of the anti-climactic ending when Raducanu came out all guns blazing. She held not only the packed Court One in thrall - including her parents father Ian and mother Renee - but also diehard fans watching in the darkness on a soaked Henman Hill/Murray Mount.

UFC 264: AMC to screen McGregor, Poirier clash



AGENCIES

NEVADA: UFC fans are counting down days till Conor McGregor and Dustin Poirier come face to face for UFC 264.

And now, American movie theatre chain AMC has a special treat for all UFC fans as it announced that it will be showing the trilogy all across the United States in 95 of its theatres.

The plans of screening the big game were announced by AMC theatres CEO Adam Aron, who said that the decision to broadcast the high-octane clash pay-per-view on the big screen was taken owing to the surge in demands from UFC fans. The theatre chain had earlier screened UFC 262 in May 2021 as well and is now planning to expand into Esports and other similar events as well.

Turkish court orders release of pro-Kurdish ex-MP

Omer Faruk Gergerlioglu, an outspoken rights defender from the HDP, was handed a two-and-a-half-year prison sentence in April for spreading "terrorist propaganda"

ANKARA: A Turkish court on Tuesday ordered the release of a pro-Kurdish opposition politician who has been in prison since April on terror-related charges, local media and his family said. Omer Faruk Gergerlioglu, an outspoken rights defender from the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), was handed a two-and-a-half-year prison sentence in April for spreading "terrorist propaganda" online over a post he shared in 2016 before he was elected an MP.

He had commented on a story which reported on outlawed Kurdish militants calling on the Turkish state to take a step towards peace.

He has been held in Sincan prison on the outskirts of the capital Ankara since then, having been stripped of his parliamentary seat and immunity. Last week, the top Constitution-



al Court ruled that his rights to be elected and engage in political activity had been violated.

The lower court on Tuesday complied with the top court's verdict and ordered the ex-lawmaker's release, HaberTurk television reported. "The ruling was sent to the prosecu-

tor's office, they will free my father today, I am going to fetch him," his son Salih tweeted.

The HDP, the third-largest party in the Turkish parliament, has been on the radar of authorities for years with the arrest of several of its lawmakers and leaders, including its charismatic former co-chair Selahattin Demirtas. Last month, the Constitutional Court put the party on trial over its alleged links to outlawed Kurdish militants, setting the stage for its possible shutdown. The HDP rejects any links to terror and blasts the crackdown a "political coup".

The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) has been waging an insurgency since 1984 that has killed tens of thousands and is listed as a terrorist organisation by Ankara and its Western allies. - APP

Djokovic, Federer march into quarter-finals

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Novak Djokovic marched into his 50th Grand Slam quarter-final while Roger Federer became the oldest man in the modern era to make the last-eight at Wimbledon on 'Manic Monday' at the All England Club.

World number one Djokovic, chasing a sixth Wimbledon and record-equaling 20th major, eased into the last eight for the 12th time with a 6-2, 6-4, 6-2 win over Chile's Cristian Garin. Federer, who will be 40 in just under five weeks' time, brushed aside Italy's Lorenzo Sonego 7-5, 6-4, 6-2 to make the quarter-finals at Wimbledon for the 18th time and 58th overall at the majors. Djokovic will next face Hungary's Marton Fucsovics, one of a host of players booking last-eight spots at the tournament for the first time.

The list included women's top seed Ashleigh Barty, second seed Aryna Sabalenka, Karolina Pliskova, Viktorija Golubic as well as Matteo Berrettini, Denis Shapovalov, Karen Khachanov and Felix Auger-Aliassime in the men's draw.

Djokovic is halfway to a calendar Grand Slam. Only two men have swept all four majors in the same year with Rod Laver the most re-



cent back in 1969.

"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." Eight-time Wimbledon champion Federer will face either second seed Daniil Medvedev or Hubert Hurkacz, the 14th seed, for a place in the semi-finals.

Medvedev was leading Hurkacz 6-2, 6-7 (2/7), 6-3, 3-4 when play was halted for the night due to rain. "It is not fair for anyone. I have been in these situations before - but these guys are young and they can recover," said Federer, the oldest man in the last eight since the dawn of the Open Era in 1968.

Barty reached the quarter-finals for the first time, beating French Open champion Barbora Krejickova of the Czech Republic 7-5, 6-3.

The 25-year-old Australian will play compatriot Ajla Tomljanovic who was leading Emma Raducanu 6-4, 3-6, 3-6, 6-4. Zverev was undone by 20 double faults and 42 unforced errors. Khachanov also reached a maiden quarter-final at the tournament with a five-set win over Sebastian Korda who was celebrating his 21st birthday. Russian 25th seed Khachanov triumphed 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 5-7, 10-8 and will face Canadian 10th seed Denis Shapovalov.

French Open champion Iga Swiatek 5-7, 6-1, 6-1. The 26-year-old is the first Tunisian woman to reach the last eight and will face Belarus second seed Aryna Sabalenka who defeated Elena Rybakina 6-3, 4-6, 6-3. "It was a great match and I had to stay calm rather than get angry," said Jabeur.

Both Jabeur and Sabalenka have a season-leading 33 wins in 2021. Former world number one Pliskova reached her first Wimbledon quarter-final with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Russian wildcard Liudmila Samsonova. Men's seventh seed Berrettini became only the fifth Italian man to make the last eight with a quickfire 6-4, 6-3, 6-1 win over Ilya Ivashka of Belarus. The Queen's Club champion, the first Italian man in the quarter-finals since 1998, will face Auger-Aliassime of Canada.

Auger-Aliassime, seeded 16, defeated fourth-seeded German opponent Alexander Zverev 6-4, 7-6 (8/6), 3-6, 3-6, 6-4. Zverev was undone by 20 double faults and 42 unforced errors. Khachanov also reached a maiden quarter-final at the tournament with a five-set win over Sebastian Korda who was celebrating his 21st birthday. Russian 25th seed Khachanov triumphed 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 5-7, 10-8 and will face Canadian 10th seed Denis Shapovalov.

Fans urged to stay away from Olympic marathon

SPORTS DESK

TOKYO: The public will be urged not to line the route of the Olympic marathon over fears that crowds of fans could spread the coronavirus, Tokyo 2020 organisers said Tuesday.

With less than three weeks before the pandemic-postponed Games begin, concern is growing over a rebound in virus cases in Japan. "In view of the current Covid-19 situation, it will be necessary to reduce the risk of infection by restricting the movement of members of the public," organisers said in a statement about the marathon and race walk events. "It has therefore been decided to ask the public to refrain from spectating along the course." The marathon was at the centre of controversy in the original build-up to the 2020 Games, when it was moved to northern Sapporo from Tokyo to avoid the capital's punishing summer heat. The women's and men's marathon finals are among the last events at this summer's Games and will take place on August 7 and 8. At a marathon rehearsal event in Sapporo in May, security guards stood with signs around their necks asking people to "please refrain from watching the race" to prevent infections.

Pakistan supports...

From Page 01

has made a critical difference as recently China has eliminated extreme poverty - one of the greatest achievements in the history of mankind," he added. He also praised the CPC, saying the party "united the spirit of the Chinese people and encouraged them to wage an epic struggle for liberation from foreign occupation". The party's leader, Communist China's founding father Mao Zedong, had guided the Chinese people in reclaiming national dignity and self-pride, self-respect and China's rightful place in the world, the premier said. "For decades, CPC's spirit instilled new vigour and hope beyond China's borders. It inspired people of the colonised nations and contributed to the end of colonialism. "CPC's astonishing success rests in the people-centric approach of its development philosophy. It remained committed to serving the people and prioritised their well-being," he noted. "CPC's mission of the great rejuvenation of Chinese nation and PTT's vision of Naya Pakistan reflect the respective aspirations of the people of the two countries," he told the summit. Talking about his party, the premier said the PTI remained committed to its founding principles - establishing rule of law and setting up a society that is humane and compassionate. "I am confident that the year 2021 would provide new vigour and vitality to our time-tested friendship," he concluded. President Xi Jinping addressed representatives of all countries, and talked about CPC's success in eradicating poverty from the country. He also highlighted that CPC works with peoples of the world, a key feature that has positively contributed to the development of China. President Xi stressed that globally, all countries are becoming intertwined, interdependent, and interconnected. President Xi also said that the CPC has always connected Chinese people's future with that of the rest of the world. He also pledged support to the international community to develop global connectivity under the BRI to ensure every nation benefits from China's development.

Balochistan's prosperity...

From Page 01

development adopting people centric approach for attaining enduring stability. The COAS said that the security forces shall remain steadfast and determined to defeat enemies of peace and prosperity of Balochistan/Pakistan. Highlighting internal and external challenges, the Army Chief said that full spectrum threat demands comprehensive national response. He said, "Balochistan is in sharp focus of national leadership and Army is fully engaged in enabling National and Provincial response in synergy with other institutions of state." "We are a resilient nation that has endured the tests of time on its path to achieving peace and stability," Gen Bajwa added.

Briefs

Azerbaijan denies Armenian allegations

FOREIGN DESK

BAKU: The Defence Ministry has denied Armenia's report on the alleged Azerbaijani truce violation on the state border, the local media reported on July 6. "There are no wounded among the military personnel. If there are any losses or wounded in the Armenian armed forces, it could only happen as a result of an incident that occurred between them," the ministry was quoted as saying. Earlier, Armenia alleged that two Azerbaijani servicemen and one Armenian soldier were wounded in a truce violation caused by Azerbaijan. A Moscow-brokered ceasefire deal that Baku and Yerevan signed on November 10 brought an end to six weeks of fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani army declared a victory against the Armenian troops. The signed agreement obliged Armenia to withdraw its troops from the Azerbaijani lands that it has occupied since the early 1990s. On January 11, Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia signed the second statement since the end of the 44-day war to unblock all economic and transport communications in the region. Azerbaijan and Armenia have failed to come to an agreement on the delimitation and demarcation of their state border following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Moody's affirms Uzbekistan's B1 rating

WEB DESK

TASHKENT: Moody's Investors Service ("Moody's") has today changed the Government of Uzbekistan's rating outlook to positive from stable, and concurrently affirmed the B1 long-term issuer and senior unsecured ratings and the (P)B1 senior unsecured MTN program ratings. The outlook change to positive reflects demonstrated improvements to institutional capacity and policy effectiveness that, if continued, will support a higher rating. In Moody's baseline, gradual progress with key structural reforms including improvements to the monetary policy framework and adoption of a medium-term fiscal strategy will limit the growth of government debt. Further progress in reforms that further open the economy and financial sector to more competition and spur productivity in sectors such as textiles would point to stronger creditworthiness. The affirmation of the rating reflects Uzbekistan's small, low-income economy and fiscal and political risks relating to the government's forthcoming structural reforms that will reduce the state's substantial role in the economy and which may result in the crystallization of contingent liabilities during the transition to a market-driven economy.

Ethiopia resumes filling GERD

WEB DESK

CAIRO: Egypt has said it received an official notice from Ethiopia that it had started the next phase of filling a controversial huge dam on the Nile River's main tributary, raising tensions days before an upcoming meeting of the United Nations Security Council on the issue. In a statement late on Monday, the Egyptian irrigation ministry expressed its "firm rejection of this unilateral measure" and said the move was "a violation of international laws and norms that regulate projects built on the shared basins of international rivers". US suspends aid to Ethiopia over Blue Nile dam dispute. Egypt summons Ethiopia diplomat over Nile dam remarks. Nile dam talks between Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan fail again. The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), which is set to be Africa's largest hydroelectric project when completed, is the source of an almost decade-long diplomatic standoff between Ethiopia and downstream nations Egypt and Sudan.



ISLAMABAD: Member parliament Adaleeb Abbas, Ambassadors of Switzerland Benedict de Cerjat, Indonesia Adam Tugio, UAE Hamaad Alzaabi, Riaz Mohammad Khan Former Foreign Secretary and others posing for a group photo after discussing on the relevance of Non-Permanent Members of the UN Security Council, at the Switzerland Embassy on Tuesday. - DNA

Fill-finish manufacturing of vaccine in Morocco

His Majesty King Mohammed VI chairs at the Royal Palace of Fez, the ceremony of launching and signing of agreements

DNA

FEZ: His Majesty King Mohammed VI chaired at the Royal Palace of Fez, the ceremony of launching and signing of agreements related to the project of fill-finish manufacturing of the anti-Covid19 vaccine and other vaccines in Morocco. This structuring project is part of the Sovereign's willingness to provide the Kingdom with complete and integrated industrial and biotechnological capacities, dedicated to the manufacture of vaccines in Morocco. It aims to produce in our country the anti-Covid vaccine, as well as other key vaccines, in order to promote the Kingdom's self-sufficiency and to make Morocco a leading biotech-

nology platform on the African continent and the world in the field of the "fill & finish" industry. The project, which is the result of a public-private partnership, intends to start in the short term with a production capacity of 5 million doses of Covid19 vaccine per month, before gradually increasing this capacity in the medium term. The project will require an overall investment of about \$500 million. With the launch of this large-scale partnership that takes place after the phone conversation of August 31, 2020 between His Majesty King Mohammed VI and His Excellency Xi JINPING, president of the People's Republic of China, Morocco is taking a further step in the achievement of the



Royal vision for an effective and proactive management of the pandemic crisis and its consequences. While strengthening the Kingdom's health sovereignty, the project presented to the Sovereign confirms Morocco's international influence and reinforces its vocation as

a provider of health security within its regional and continental environment, in the face of health risks, external dependencies and political contingencies. At the beginning of this ceremony, and after an introductory speech by the minister of Health, Samir Machour, an international

expert in industrial biotechnology and currently vice-president of Samsung Biologics, presented the project of fill-finish manufacturing in Morocco of the anti-Covid19 vaccine and other vaccines. Afterwards, CEO of the Sinopharm Group, Liu Jingzhen, made a remote presentation from China. CEO of Recipharm, Marc Funk, also presented the project to establish vaccine manufacturing capacities in Morocco. On this occasion, and after presentation of the objectives and components of the project, three important agreements were signed before His Majesty the King, namely: 1 - The Memorandum of Understanding on the co-operation for the anti-Covid19 vaccine between the

Moroccan State and the National Pharmaceutical Group of China (SINOPHARM), signed by minister of Health, Khalid AitTaleb, and president of the Sinopharm Group, Liu Jingzhen. 2 - The Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of vaccine manufacturing capacities in the Kingdom of Morocco between the Moroccan State and the company Recipharm, signed by minister of Economy, Finance and Administration Reform, and chairman of the board of directors of the Mohammed VI Fund for Investment, Mohamed Benchaaboune, CEO of the company Recipharm, Marc Funk, and the representative of the consortium of Moroccan banks, Othmane Benjelloun.

Baku to host int'l Business Forum

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan's Agency for Small and Medium-sized Business Development and International Business Forum have signed a memorandum of understanding to hold the 25th IBF Forum in Baku this year, the agency reported on July 6. The memorandum was signed by Agency's Chairman Orkhan Mammadov and IBF's Chairman Erolyarar. Speaking at the event, Mammadov noted that holding the IBF forum in Azerbaijan would be important for the expansion of business cooperation between the participating countries, especially between Azerbaijan and Turkey. He added that the forum will be important in forming a multilateral business platform with the participation of businessmen. Moreover, it was noted that the forum will introduce foreign investors to the favorable business and investment climate in Azerbaijan, establish direct business contacts between businessmen and conduct a presentation of Karabakh's investment opportunities. Likewise, the forum will be important in terms of revival of trade and economic partnership and implementation of new initiatives in the post-COVID-19 period. In turn, IBF's Head and MUSAID's Chairman shared their opinion about the importance of the forum and expressed their satisfaction with the holding of the forum in Baku.

Oil at highest levels since 2018

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: Oil prices extended gains to hit some of their highest levels since 2018 after OPEC+ discussions were called off, heightening expectations that supplies will tighten further just as global fuel demand recovers from a COVID-19-induced slump. Brent crude climbed 18 cents or 0.2 percent to stand at \$77.34 a barrel by 0542 GMT, after gaining 1.3 percent on Monday. An earlier session peak of \$77.61 was its highest level since October 29, 2018. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were at \$76.57 a barrel, up \$1.41 or 1.9 percent from Friday's close. There were no settlements on Monday, a US holiday to mark Independence Day. It hit \$76.77 a barrel earlier on Tuesday, just shy of an October 2018 peak of \$76.90. Ministers of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies, a group known as OPEC+, abandoned oil output talks and set no new date to resume them, after clashing last week when the United Arab Emirates (UAE) rejected a proposed eight-month extension to output curbs. The UAE, the group's fourth-biggest producer, argued against a deal proposed by Saudi Arabia and Russia to extend quota limits until the end of next year, rather than ending them in April as originally planned. The UAE agreed with the other 22 OPEC+ members that monthly output cuts should be eased by 400,000 barrels a day from August, but said the extension should be treated separately.

Israeli govt fails to pass 'racist' law

FOREIGN DESK

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: The Israeli coalition government led by Prime Minister Naftali Bennett failed to extend a controversial law known as family unification, which bans Palestinian families living in Israel or occupied territories from reuniting, according to Israeli media. The Knesset session, which started last night to extend the duration of the law that makes family reunion difficult after marriages between Palestinians with Israeli citizenship and Palestinians in the occupied West Bank or the blockaded Gaza Strip, continued until morning. The extension of the ban failed as it secured only 59 votes out of 120. Two members of the ruling coalition's United Arab List party refrained from voting in favor of the law, while a member of Prime Minister Bennett's Yamina party voted against it.

Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan mull implementation of joint projects



DNA

BAKU: The implementation of joint projects between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan have been discussed during the meeting between Azerbaijan's Economy Minister Mikayil Jabbarov with the Board Chairman of Samruk-Kazyna JSC and KazMunayQaz JSC, the country's

economy ministry press service reported on July 5. During the meeting, it was noted that relations between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan are developing in various fields. The parties expressed confidence in the further strengthening of economic relations between the two countries. Speaking about the activities of Azerbaijan Investment Holding,

Jabbarov emphasized the importance of sharing experience in the cooperative management field with Samruk-Kazyna JSC. Moreover, the minister underlined the importance of attracting private investment in the economy, digital transformation of portfolio companies, and shared his views on prospects for bilateral cooperation.

Additionally, the parties discussed issues of transport and logistics, as well as co-operation in the oil and gas sector. It should be noted that the trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan amounted to \$142 million in 2020. In addition, the trade turnover amounted to \$39 million in the first five months of 2021. Over 700 companies with Azerbaijani capital are presently registered in Kazakhstan, and about 60 companies with Kazakh capital are registered in Azerbaijan. The main export products from Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan are mineral resources (oil and gas), chemical raw materials, grain, barley, tobacco products, carbon steel rolling, and electrical equipment.

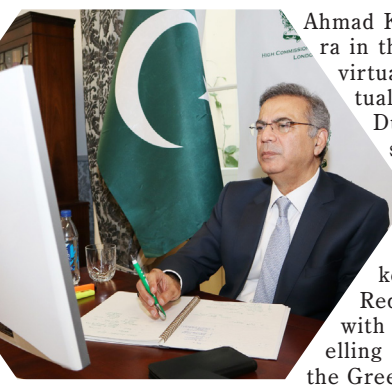


Uzbekistan FM meets with SCO Secretary General

TASHKENT: Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov met with the SCO Secretary-General Vladimir Norov, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan said. The parties discussed the state and prospects of multifaceted cooperation between Uzbekistan and the SCO, as well as issues of further development of the Organization's activities. The sides exchanged views on the agenda and organizational aspects of the upcoming meetings of the Council of Heads of State and the Council of Foreign Ministers of the SCO Member States. The main attention was paid to the participation of the SCO delegation in the International Conference "Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities" to be held on July 15-16, 2021 in Tashkent. International and regional issues were also considered. Earlier on 6 July 2021, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov met with the President of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly Volkan Bozkir, who arrived in Tashkent on an official visit, the Uzbek Foreign Ministry said in a statement. The sides exchanged views on the state and prospects for further development of cooperation between Uzbekistan and the UN and its specialized structures, including in the issues of comprehensive support for young people, ensuring gender equality, creating favorable conditions for people with disabilities, combating the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. - DNA

Pak HC holds virtual khuli katchehri

LONDON: High Commissioner Moazzam Katchehri with the Pakistani diaspora community members attended the Prime Minister Imran Khan, the virtual Khuli Katchehri every month. Diaspora members sought redress, NICOPs, passports and The High Commissioner instantly. He assured that the taken up with the concerned diaspora members were particularly being removed from the UK's missioner said that he was in contact the matter. He said in view of the trav-



British Pakistanis, getting Pakistan on Ahmad Khan held the 6th virtual 'Khuli Katchehri' in the UK today. A large number of virtual event. As per the directions of virtual Khuli Katchehri is held at the During the interaction, the diaspora members sought redress, NICOPs, passports and The High Commissioner instantly. He assured that the taken up with the concerned diaspora members were particularly being removed from the UK's missioner said that he was in contact the matter. He said in view of the trav-

Russia backs ASEAN plan on tackling Myanmar crisis

Myanmar has been in crisis since the military ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's elected govt on Feb. 1, unleashing nationwide anger that quickly turned into protests and strikes brutally suppressed by security forces

AGENCIES

JAKARTA: Russia strongly supports the Southeast Asian diplomatic effort to end the crisis in Myanmar and has conveyed similar messages to the country's military leadership, its foreign minister said on Tuesday. The five-point consensus agreed by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) bloc should be the basis by which the situation can be resolved, Sergei Lavrov said during a visit to Jakarta. "In our contacts with Myanmar leaders, military leaders, we promote the position of ASEAN which should be in our view, considered as a basis for resolving this crisis and bring the situation back to normalcy," Lavrov said.

Lavrov will hold virtual talks with his ASEAN counterparts, during the visit to Jakarta, Indonesia's foreign minister Retno Marsudi said. Lavrov's comments are significant and come amid deepening engagement between Russia and Myanmar's military, as major global powers sanction its businesses and top leaders and call for a global ban on arms sales to the country. Myanmar has been in crisis since the military ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's elected government on Feb. 1, unleashing nationwide anger that quickly

turned into protests and strikes brutally suppressed by security forces. Fighting between the army and newly formed militias in several regions has displaced tens of thousands of people. Despite junta leader Min Aung Hlaing agreeing to an ASEAN peace plan reached in April, the military has shown no intent to follow through and has instead reiterated its own, entirely different plan to restore order and democracy. The ASEAN effort calls for dialogue between all parties,

the appointment of a special envoy, greater humanitarian access and an end to violence, but the bloc's most outspoken members, including Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, have been frustrated by the military's lack of action. Though it has expressed concern about the violence in Myanmar, Russia, a key supplier of arms and training to its military, is among only a few countries that have recognised the junta and has sent top officials to the country to meet the generals. Russia last month welcomed Min Aung Hlaing and a military delegation for an extended visit to Moscow, during which he gave numerous speeches and media interviews and was bestowed an honorary professorship. Lavrov also discussed with Retno an agreement on health cooperation and possibility of jointly producing vaccines.



Briefs

Uzbek envoy meets KP governor

STAFF REPORT

NATHIAGALI: Uzbek Ambassador to Pakistan Oybek Arif Usmanov Tuesday called Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Shah Farman at Governor House Nathiagali. They discussed the matters of mutual interests during the meeting, said a news release. Shah Farman underlined the need of mutual cooperation in trade between the two countries besides discussing new developments in the regional politics. He apprised the ambassador regarding the new investment initiatives of the present government. He said due to improved law and order situation, Pakistan was on the road to economic stability. The Uzbek envoy also stressed the need of strengthening bilateral ties and communication links for enhancing investment in various sectors.

'Pak received over \$60 bn from exports, remittances'

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Tuesday said despite coronavirus pandemic, Pakistan had received over \$60 billion from remittances and exports of goods and services during the fiscal year 2020-21. In a tweet, he said it was an increase of \$10 billion as compared to the tenure of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) when it had received \$50 billion during 2017-18. The country had witnessed record growth in remittances as overseas Pakistanis believed in the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, he added. Farrukh Habib said the foreign remittances during the last three years of PML-N tenure stood at \$19 billion due to alleged involvement of Nawaz Sharif and his family in money laundering.

Doctors advise Zardari not to travel

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court has summoned PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari Wednesday in the case of his pre-bail plea. The IHC division bench consisting of Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Amir Farooq heard the pre-arrest bail petition filed by former president Asif Ali Zardari. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had issued a call-up notice to the former president on June 15 directing him to appear before the accountability watchdog on June 24. The NAB was investigating into Mr Zardari's ownership of a flat in New York. But the former president filed an application in the IHC terming the NAB's call-up notice baseless and an attempt to soil his name. The petition denied NAB's claim that the property belonged to Mr Zardari and that the notice was issued just to harass him at the behest of PTI government. The petition pleaded to the court to grant him interim bail till the case was decided. During hearing, Mr Zardari's counsel Farooq H Naik told the court that the former president was under treatment in a hospital. He pleaded for Mr Zardari's exemption from the court appearance. However, he said if the court would summon him, then Mr Zardari would attend the hearing. Justice Minallah remarked that he was afraid that the case might not set a precedent for others if the court granted bail to the former president in his absence. Justice Farooq said that it was a set rule that the petitioner seeking pre-arrest bail must be present during the hearing of his case.



ISLAMABAD: CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani hosted dinner for the outgoing Ambassadors of Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan and to welcome new Ambassador of Kazakhstan. Seen in the picture are Michel A Galopin GM ISH, Ambassador of Korea Suh Sangpyo, Maurizio Romani GM Islamabad Marriott Hotel, Zahid Latif Khan Chairman REIT, Ambassador of Afghanistan Najibullah Alikhili, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan Erik Beishembiev, Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada, Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin, Maj. Gen @ Muhammad Ali Khan, Ambassador of Tajikistan Ismatullo Nasredin, Ambassador of Turkey Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul and Ansar Mahmood Bhatti Chief Editor Daily Islamabad POST/CENTRELINE/DNA News Agency. The spouses of the outgoing ambassadors are also present in the 2nd row. – DNA

Russia pledges help to secure Tajikistan-Afghan border

DNA

MOSCOW: Russian military helicopters based in Tajikistan fired air-to-surface missiles during a training exercise on Tuesday as Moscow said its forces in the Central Asian nation were fully equipped to help secure the border with Afghanistan. Tajik President Emomali Rakhmon on Monday ordered the mobilisation of 20,000 military reservists to bolster the border with Afghanistan after more than 1,000 Afghan security personnel fled across the frontier in response to Taliban militant advances. Russian President Vladimir Putin told Rakhmon on Monday that Moscow would help the impoverished former Soviet republic con-

Russian plane crashes with 28 on board

Local officials said the plane's debris had been found both in the sea and on land

WEB DESK

MOSCOW: All 28 people on board a decades-old passenger plane that crashed in Russia's far east, including at least one child, are feared dead, according to local officials and media. The plane was en route from regional capital Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky to Palana, a town in northwestern Kamchatka, when

tend with the fallout from NATO's exit from neighbouring Afghanistan if necessary. Russia, which operates one of its largest military bases

abroad in Tajikistan equipped with tanks, helicopters, drones and ground attack aircraft, would help stabilise the border with Afghanistan if needed,

both in the sea and on land. The cause of the crash is now "being investigated", the Kamchatka transportation prosecutor's office told media. There were initial reports that poor visibility may have been a contributing factor. An-26 plans have for decades been the most reliable mode of transportation in the remote and sparsely populated region, where "bears outnumber people", according to a local saying.

pledge on Monday and was cited by the Interfax news agency as saying it appeared that the Taliban was now in control of most of the border on the Afghan side.

"The situation there is rather tense because according to some sources, up to 70% of the Tajik-Afghan border is now controlled by the Taliban," Rudenko was quoted as saying. Russia's defence ministry said on Monday that two MI-24 attack helicopters and two military transport helicopters had taken part in a training exercise in Tajikistan during which unguided missiles had been launched at more than 15 ground targets. The exercise had simulated an attack on illegal armed groups along with a convoy of cars, enemy fire-ports and arms caches.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Sherry Rehman presenting a bouquet to Ambassador of Nepal, Tapas Adhikari, during their meeting. – DNA

PIA plane transports two mln doses of Sinovac vaccine

BEIJING: A special plane of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) PK-6853 airlifted two million doses of Sinovac Covid-19 vaccine from the Beijing Capital International Airport to Islamabad on Tuesday. This special flight of the national flag carrier in addition to the special flight PK-6852 which transported two million doses of the Sinovac vaccine from China to Pakistan in last month, Qadir Bux Sangi, PIA Country Manager for China told. According to official sources, around two million more Chinese Covid vaccines will be brought to Pakistan from China in next few days. Upto 700,000 doses of the Chinese vaccine Sinopharm had already arrived in Pakistan from China while another 1.3 million doses of the same vaccine are expected to reach the country very soon. Pakistan has been using mainly Chinese vaccines namely Sinopharm and Sinovac, although others are also available. On June 22, a special flight of the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) PK-6852 airlifted two million doses of Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine from the Beijing Capital International Airport to Islamabad. The government aims at inoculating 70 million people by year's end. The government has run a massive vaccination drive across the country to achieve the target of providing 70 million doses of vaccines aimed at fighting the Covid-19 pandemic. It may be mentioned that Pakistani health authorities had launched a nationwide vaccination drive with around a million doses of Sinopharm vaccine donated by China, starting with older people and frontline. The drive began with a focus on the oldest people in the community, generally over the age of 80 and worked its way down. Initially, the government had to deal with vaccination hesitancy and a shortage of vaccine supplies and had limited shots for people aged 30 or over. Now it is available for the people aged over 18 years. Islamabad received the first COVID-19 vaccine consignment after a military aircraft transported it from Beijing on February 01, this year.

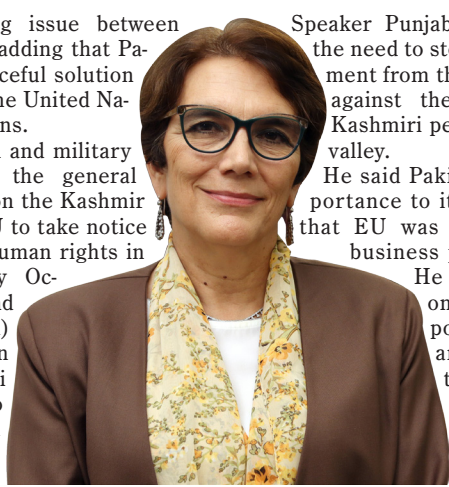
EU ambassador stresses robust trade ties

Ambassador Androulla Kaminara calls on Speaker Punjab Assembly Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan Androulla Kaminara called on Speaker Punjab Assembly Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and discussed wide range of matters including digitalization, GSP Plus status regional stability, EU-Pak relations and matters of mutual interest during a meeting here on Tuesday. The European Union ambassador was accompanied a delegation comprising Head of Political, Trade and Communications section Daniel Clauss, Press and Information Section Officer Syed Khawar Hussain and Androulla Kaminara's husband Charlie. Speaking on the occasion, Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi said that Kashmir dispute

was a long-standing issue between Pakistan and India, adding that Pakistan wanted a peaceful solution of the issue as per the United Nations (UN) resolutions. He said the political and military leadership besides the general public were united on the Kashmir issue, urging the EU to take notice of the violation of human rights in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and play its role in giving the Kashmiri people their right to self-determination as envisaged in the statutes of UN.



Speaker Punjab Assembly stressed the need to stop the Indian government from the use of brutal force against the hapless, innocent Kashmiri people of the occupied valley. He said Pakistan gives great importance to its trade ties, adding that EU was the second largest business partner of Pakistan. He said Pakistan was one of the largest importer of chemicals and machinery from the EU. Speaker PA stressed the need to enhance exchange of parliamentary

delegations between Pakistan and the EU member countries, adding that her delegation would further strengthen the relationship between the European Union and Pakistan. Ambassador Androulla Kaminara said that the EU gives great importance to its ties with Pakistan, adding that EU would play its role in digitalization of various sectors. The diplomat said that the EU pins great importance to improving status of women in Pakistan, adding that the role of women was vital in prosperity of societies. Acknowledging the importance of peace for regional stability, she said the EU will play its role ensuring peace in the region. Androulla Kaminara said the EU will continue its support to the provincial assemblies of the country.

Entry protocols notified for stranded Pakistanis

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Interior on Tuesday notified testing and entry protocols to facilitate Pakistanis stranded in Afghanistan due to suspension of flight operation from Afghanistan to Saudi Arabia. "A large number of Pakistanis who planned to travel to KSA [Kingdom of Saudi Arabia] via Kabul [Afghanistan] have become stranded," an Interior Ministry notification issued here said. It said that due to COVID-19 surge in Afghanistan, Western border for all inbound and outbound pedestrians movement had been ceased from June 17, with only exception of the stranded Pakistanis in Afghanistan and stranded Afghanis in Pakistan besides extreme medical emergency cases from Afghanistan. As per the notification, Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) would be performed on arrival of passengers, while positive cases would be quarantined for 10 days, and only travelers confirmed with negative covid results would be allowed to proceed to their home districts. Similarly, a10-day quarantine would be mandatory under respective provincial and district administration for non-vaccinated or partially vaccinated persons. Whereas, the passengers would be vaccinated by provincial health staff at the end of quarantine period.

Shahid Khaqan predicts rigging in AJK elections

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Former Pakistan Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has predicted the upcoming Azad Jammu and Kashmir general elections will be rigged. Addressing the media in Islamabad on Tuesday, the PML-N leader said the government machinery is preparing for a rigged election in the region. The former premier criticized the Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf government for 'holding no respect for the Kashmiri voter's choice.' Four PML-N ministers from Azad Kashmir, a presidential adviser, and assembly members reportedly left the party ahead of the elections last week. Sardar Mir Akbar and Chaudhry Shehzad Mehmood, who are members of the legislative assembly, are expected to join PTI, along with Ali Raza. Sardar Sikander and his son Revenue Minister Farooq Sikander will join the Muslim Conference, while Raja Abdul Quayyum has returned his PML-N election ticket. Aijaz Yousof has decided to contest the election on an independent seat.

Torkham border closed due to Covid-19

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Interior Sheikh Rashid said on Tuesday that the Torkham border would be closed for all kinds of traffic due to Covid-19. "On the advice of the NCOG all types of immigration departure and arrival will be close from today," the minister announced in a tweet. The Torkham Immigration Centre on the Pak-Afghan border would remain closed till fresh guidelines were provided by the NCOG, the minister added. On June 23, it was reported that Pakistan opened its three border points with Afghanistan, including Torkham, Chaman and Ghulam Khan, for 24/6 in order to increase the volume of trade and promote business activities between the two countries. According to a notification issued by the interior ministry, the three border terminals would remain open for imports and exports from and to Afghanistan, with an unlimited number of trucks to be allowed per day for both Afghan transit and bilateral trade, while ensuring the standard operating procedures and protocols related to the Covid-19.