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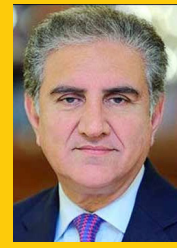
Price Rs. 20

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Misbah worried over team's poor performance

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Briefs

PM Imran for utilizing technology

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday underlined the need for utilization of latest technology to facilitate public and resolved that the government was fully committed to E-governance for better performance and delivery system. He was addressing a launching ceremony of issuance of letters of administration and succession certificates by the Punjab government in collaboration with NADRA here. The prime minister observed that a revolution had been brought to the world by the information and technology sector which also ensured hassle free governance system.

Fawad for capacity building of institutions

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Wednesday said the media was an important tool of narrative building and warfare at the international level. Addressing a seminar on "Lawfare and Pakistan", he said the capacity building of institutions was vital to counter the anti-Pakistan propaganda of inimical countries. He said in the war against terrorism, over 70,000 Pakistanis were martyred but not a single book or research study was not available in the West highlighting Pakistan's sacrifices.

Mamnoon Hussain passes away

DNA

KARACHI: Former president of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain passed away on Wednesday in Karachi, his son Arsalan Mamnoon confirmed, according to media. The former president was suffering from cancer and was undergoing treatment at a private hospital for the last two weeks, his son said. Hussain was the 12th president of Pakistan, who served from 2013 to 2018 during the tenure of the PML-N.

Nine Chinese among 12 killed in bus explosion

The FO said the bus plunged into a ravine after a mechanical failure resulting in leakage of gas that caused a blast; Babar Awan termed it a "cowardly attack"

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: At least 12 persons, including nine Chinese engineers and two Frontier Corps personnel, died and several others were injured on Wednesday in a bus accident near the Dasu hydropower plant in the Upper Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Foreign Office said that the bus "plunged into a ravine after a mechanical failure resulting in leakage of gas that caused a blast". The FO also put the death toll at 12, including 9 Chinese nationals, up from earlier reports of 10 deaths. Meanwhile, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Babar Awan, speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, termed it a "cowardly attack" and said that it would "not divert attention from the special initiatives between Pakistan and its neighbours". The Chinese foreign ministry spokesman condemned the incident as a "bombing". Condemning the attack, China's foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian expressed his

Japanese envoy, Qureshi offer condolences

DNA

ISLAMABAD: MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, on Wednesday expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives of Pakistanis and foreign nationals in the bus blast which occurred near the Dasu hydropower plant in Upper Kohistan. In his condolence message, the Ambassador conveyed his heartfelt grief and sympathies to the bereaved families and wished for a speedy recovery of the injured. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the KPK government and the families of those who have lost their dear ones in the tragic incident.

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Continued on Page 06

COAS lauds Tajik efforts for regional connectivity

Colonel-General Sher Ali Mirzo made the comments during a meeting with the Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa

NEHAL MIRAZ

RAWALPINDI: Tajik Defence Minister Colonel-General Sher Ali Mirzo on Wednesday lauded Pakistan for the role it is playing in the Afghan peace process, said a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). Colonel-General Sher Ali Mirzo made the comments during a meeting with the

Col. Gen. Sher Ali meets President Alvi

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has underlined the need for enhanced engagements with Tajikistan in the areas of trade, defence, energy, tourism and culture. Talking to Defence Minister of Tajikistan Colonel General Sher Ali Mirzo in Islamabad on Wednesday, he said Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Tajikistan which are based on strong historical, religious and cultural links. He emphasized the need for exchanging economic and

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Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Japan, Kuninori Matsuda calls on Federal Minister For Finance, Shaukat Tarin. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Defense Minister of Tajikistan, Colonel General Sher Ali Mirzo calls on President Dr. Arif Alvi. - DNA

PM Imran arrives in Uzbekistan today

The delegates have started arriving in Tashkent. A high powered business delegation from Pakistan arrived here two days ago. The delegation has started its meetings with the Uzbek counterparts. The Capital Tashkent is littered with flags of the participating countries. Pakistani flags are also visible on the roads of Tashkent

ANSAR M BHATTI IN TASHKENT

TASHKENT: Prime Minister Imran Khan is due in Tashkent on July 15 for a two-day visit. The Pakistani prime minister is visiting Uzbekistan on the invitation of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The Prime Minister will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including the Foreign Minister and other members of the Cabinet. A large group of Pakistan's leading businessmen will also visit Tashkent on the occasion. The wide-ranging talks between the two leaders will cover the entire gamut of bilateral relations, with a particular focus on trade, economic cooperation, and connectivity. The leaders will also exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest. A number of agreements/MoUs are expected to be signed aimed at deepening bilateral cooperation in diverse areas. The Prime Minister will address the first Pakistan-Uzbekistan Business Forum. Lead-



ing businessmen from Pakistan and Uzbekistan will participate in the Forum and also hold B2B meetings. Leading up to the Prime Minister's visit, the two sides will also hold the 6th session of the Joint Inter-Governmental Commission (JIGC) and inaugural session of Joint Business Council (JBC) on 14 July 2021 in Tashkent. On the invitation of the Uzbek President, the Prime Minister will also

Continued on Page 06

'UK will work with Taliban'

LONDON: Britain will work with the Taliban should they enter the government in Afghanistan, British Defence Minister Ben Wallace told the Daily Telegraph in an interview published on Tuesday. "Whatever the government of the day is, provided it adheres to certain international norms, the UK government will engage with it," he was quoted as saying in the newspaper. However, Wallace warned that Britain will review any relationship "if they behave in a way that is seriously against human rights". - DNA

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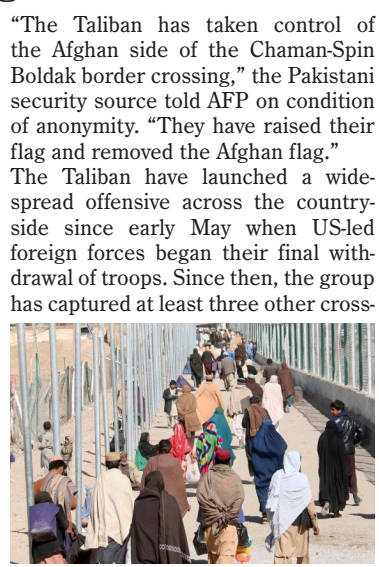
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Taliban takes over Spin Boldak border crossing with Pakistan

Pakistan has suspended activities at the Chaman crossing point in light of the recent development

AGENCIES

KABUL: The Taliban continued with their onslaught against the Afghanistan government Wednesday, as a spokesperson of the group said they had captured the important Spin Boldak border crossing with Pakistan. "The (Taliban) Mujahideen have captured an important border town called Wesh in Kandahar," Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said in a statement. "With this, the important road between (Spin) Boldak and Chaman and Kandahar customs have come under Mujahideen control." A Pakistan security forces confirmed the Taliban had taken control of the crossing. The Afghan defence ministry said it was checking developments.



"The Taliban has taken control of the Afghan side of the Chaman-Spin Boldak border crossing," the Pakistani security source told AFP on condition of anonymity. "They have raised their flag and removed the Afghan flag." The Taliban have launched a wide-spread offensive across the countryside since early May when US-led foreign forces began their final withdrawal of troops. Since then, the group has captured at least three other crossings along the borders with Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Iran. After seizing control of the Chaman crossing point Friendship Gate, the Taliban have called on citizens and traders to not use the crossing point Tuesday. Pakistan has also suspended activities at the Chaman crossing point in light of the recent development. "The Pak-Afghan border at Chaman is on high alert," said Levies officials. "Additional security has been deployed at the gate." Levies officials confirmed that all border crossing points along the Afghan border at Chaman are under the control of the Taliban. "We are in contact with the local leadership of the Taliban on resuming trade and movement of people," said Levies officials. The Levies officials admitted that the situation at the Chaman border, currently, was uncertain.

Briefs

696,337
people get
vaccination

FAISALABAD: As many as 696,337 people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the district. District Health Officer Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Wednesday that 542,527 citizens were injected first dose while 111,544 people were inoculated second dose of vaccine.

He further said that 26,748 health workers were also given first dose while 15,518 received second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As of now 37,564 first doses and 25,043 second doses were in the stock in Faisalabad. He said that 35 vaccination centers and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad where registered people were also getting coronavirus vaccines. People can get vaccinated themselves from the vaccination centres set up at Allied Hospital, District Head Quarters Hospital, Government General Hospital G.M. Abad, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital Samanabad, Children Hospital, Sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Head Quarters Hospital Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandlianwala, Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Jaranwala, Government General Hospital Chak 224-RB, New Building RHC Khurrianwala, New Building THQ Samundri, New Building THQ Tandlianwala, Social Security Hospital Madina Town, Wapda Hospital, Rural Health Centers Mureed Wala, Chak 174-JB, Chak 134-JB, Chak 229-RB, Chak 65-GB, RHC Lundianwala Jaranwala, RHC Khurrianwala Jaranwala, Pindi Sheikh Musa, Kanjwani, Manukanjan, RHC Chak 400-GB, RHC Chak 153-RB, RHC Chak 374-GB and Chak 469-GB, he added.

He further said that timing of these vaccination centers was 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. except Sports Complex Samanabad center which would remain open round the clock. — APP

KP CS
shuffles four
bureaucrats

PESHAWAR: The Chief Secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Wednesday transferred two additional secretaries and two deputy secretaries in the best public interest with immediate effect.

According to a notification, Additional Secretary Auqaf, Hajji, Religious and Minority Affairs has been transferred and directed to report Establishment Department while Additional Secretary Irrigation Department who is under transfer as Director Food Safety and Halal Food Authority has been retained on his previous post.

Similarly, Deputy Secretary Excise and Taxation Department has been transferred and posted as Additional Secretary Auqaf, Hajji, Religious and Minority Affairs Department in his own pay and scale and Deputy Secretary Transport Department has been posted as Director (Operation), Food Safety and Halal Food Authority. — APP

SHO
Samanabad
suspended

FAISALABAD: The regional police officer (RPO) on Wednesday suspended a station house officer (SHO) Samanabad police station over negligence, delinquency and abuse of powers.

A police spokesman said that RPO Riffat Mukhtar Raja received complaints that SHO Samanabad Junaid Nazir Gujjar was involved in abusing powers and delinquency. To which, the RPO suspended Junaid Nazir and directed SSP Operations Muhammad Afzal to probe into the matter.

Three held for extorting money

Three people were caught while extorting money from sellers of sacrificial animals at cattle market Nia Moana on Tuesday night.

On a tip-off, a team headed by Assistant Commissioner City Syed Ayub Bukhari and police raided and arrested three people identified as Rehman Nasir, Afzal and Muhammad Usman. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Chinese ambassador to Pakistan, Nong Rong calling on minister for interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed. — DNA

Tragedy of 13 July 1931 is being repeated across IIOJK: HC

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner Moazzam Ahmad Khan has said that the tragedy of 13 July 1931 is being repeated across Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) with ever greater brutality. The oppression by occupation forces in IIOJK has escalated since India's illegal and unilateral actions of 5th August 2019. The High Commissioner was speaking at the Virtual Parliamentary Conference organized by Jammu & Kashmir Self Determination Movement International (JKSDMI) and Youth Parliament of Pakistan at Riphah Institute of Public Policy Islam-

abad to mark the Kashmir Martyrs Day in the UK on 13 July 2021.

Kashmiris and human rights organizations across the world observe 13 July as Kashmir Martyrs Day to pay homage to the 22 innocent Kashmiris martyred by Dogra forces outside the Srinagar Central Jail in 1931. The Conference was addressed by Federal Minister Syed Fakhar Imam, Jeremy Corbyn MP & Former Leader of the Labour Party, Debbie Abrahams MP Chairperson APPG on Kashmir in the British Parliament, Andrew Gwynne MP Chairman Labour Friends of Kashmir, Paul Bristow MP Co-Chairman Conservative Friends of Kashmir UK, and several

KASHMIRI MARTYRS DAY - INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



other Members of the Parliament from Pakistan and the UK. It was presided over by Syed Faiz Naqashbandi Convener Hurriyat Conference Azad Kashmir Chapter and moderated by Raja Najabat Hussain Chairman JKSDMI. The High Commissioner said India continues to commit unabated human rights abuses of the Kashmiri people. Over the past two years Indian occupation forces had abducted, tortured and killed youth, cracked down on journalists and suffocated political activity, he added. He said India was busy in diluting Kashmiris' distinct cultural identity, stifling their economy and altering the region's demographic structure in

blatant violation of the 4th Geneva Convention. Reiterating Pakistan's commitment to its Kashmiri brethren, the High Commissioner paid rich tributes to the heroic sacrifices of all Kashmiri martyrs who laid down their lives in the path of their just and honourable quest for self-determination. The speakers condemned human rights abuse of the Kashmiri people by the Indian occupation forces and demanded the international community to play its due role in implementing relevant UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir.

Several events were organized across the UK to pay tributes to the martyrs of Kashmir.

DC directs to take steps for discharge of rain water

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali directed that immediate steps should be taken for discharge of rain water from the roads and low lying areas of the city so that there would be no disruption in the normal life of the citizens. He directed this while checking the discharged of rain water from different areas. Deputy Commissioner went to Samundri Road, Allama Iqbal Colony, Narwala Road, Jail Road, Bashir Nizami Chowk, Abdul Rashid Ghazi Chowk, Iqbal Stadium, General Bus Stand, Abdullahpur, Satiana Road, Sir Syed Town, Dijkot Road, Samanabad, Jhang Road, Jinnah Colony, Guru Nanak Pura, Gulberg, Canal Road, Jaranwala Road, Ghulam Muhammad Abad and other areas an instructed the WASA officers to stay in the field during the rains and there should be no obstruction in the discharge of rain water. He said that the city should be kept clean and dry during the rains, in order to meet the expectations of the citizens, departmental services should be made functional and standardized. He said that

the concerned departments should work in a coordinated manner for the relief of the people. The Deputy Commissioner also asked the Chief Traffic Officer to issue special instructions to the traffic staff for uninterrupted flow of traffic to ensure better management in this regard. MD Wasa said that due to rains, special instructions have been issued to the concerned staff to keep the disposal stations functional and provide relief to the citizens by ensuring

rapid release of rain water from the low lying areas. **22462 more people get vaccination**

As many as 22462 more people and Health Care Worker administered the corona vaccine at designated 35 vaccination centers and mobile camp yesterday and till now 690603 people vaccinated. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali informed that 22188 general public and 274 health workers administered vaccine yesterday in which

17258 public had first and 4930 had second while 116 and 158 health workers had vaccinated first and second dose respectively. Deputy Commissioner said that the administration of industrial units have been directed to provide certification of 100% vaccinated staff within one day. He cleared that health teams would check the staff whether they vaccinated or not and for non compliance of an order the strict action would be taken under law.



FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali visting different areas for checking the process of discharge rain water. — DNA

Helpline launched for crisis support, suicide prevention

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: The two non-government organizations (NGOs) Blue Veins and Gender Response Advocacy Centre Ensuring Equality (GRACEE) have joined hand to voluntary launch crisis support & suicide prevention helpline "Happy KP". The helpline aims to provide confidential support over phone, email, video, chat and provide platform to organize team events and counseling. The helpline will also organize awareness events at community level and educational institutions, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. The helpline number "0337 9216207" will connect the beneficiaries with the counselors and mental health experts of GRACEE organization. The helpline will initially start its work in central zone of KP including Peshawar, Mardan, Charsadda, Nowshera and Swabi. On the occasion, chairperson GRACEE Ammara Iqbal said that in recent years, suicide incidents had increased in the province and it had become a major public health issue. From the available evidences, it appears that most suicides occur in young people (single men and married women) under the age of 30 years.

Nuisance of illegal rickshaw stands

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: President, North Karachi Association of Trade & Industry (NKATI), Faisal Moiz Khan, while expressing concern over the Chingchi rickshaws around in North Karachi Industrial Area, and asked DIG Traffic Karachi to remove illegal rickshaws on signals. So that the flow of traffic is not affected and delivery of export goods along

with supply of raw materials to industries can be made possible without delay.

NKATI president drew the attention of DIG Traffic to the constant traffic jams and the occupation of Chingchi rickshaws on signals, said that the worst traffic jams often occur on the entrances and exits of North Karachi Industrial Area, as there are Chingchi rickshaw around on the roads and on signals.

Shopkeepers held over SOPs violation

DNA

PESHAWAR: District administration here on Wednesday arrested 33 shopkeepers and sealed 12 shops over violation of Coronavirus preventive standard operating procedures (SOPs) and not administering vaccines to their employees.

On the directives of the provincial government, Corona vaccination was in full swing in Peshawar and in this connection district administration and District Health Office were fully supporting each others.

In this connection, the officers of district administration visited various areas. They particularly checked the status of Corona vaccination in business centres.

During checking the officers of district administration sealed a renowned electronic shop on Saddar Road, four restaurants and two shopping malls on Charsadda Road while 12 other shops were sealed on Ring Road and Pishatkara after arresting 33 persons over violation of SOPs. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar, Khalid Mahmood said that crackdown against violators of Covid SOPs will continue to implement the officially announced guidelines at all costs. He directed the trading community and general public to avoid crowds and implement official SOPs in letter and spirit and vaccinate themselves against the disease at any nearby vaccination centre. Otherwise, legal actions would be initiated against them.

Fesco issues power shutdown notice

FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco) issued a shutdown notice for Thursday due to maintenance and expansion of electricity lines. According to the notice issued by the company, power supply from Meerwanwala, Bahaduray Wala, Industrial Estate-1, Industrial Estate-2, Mansooran, Fazal-e-Rabbi, Industrial Estate-3 and STS feeders emanating from 132-KV Industrial Estate grid station, Arzo, Chaudhary Wala and Best Export feeders originating from 132-KV Khurrianwala grid station, Pakka Anna feeder emanating from 132-KV Nia Lahore grid station, FIEDMC, Hyundai Nishat and Coca Cola feeders originating from 132-KV FIEDMC grid station and Scarp-1 feeder emanating from 132-KV Chak Jhumra grid station will remain suspended from 6 am to 11 am while Jail Road feeder originating from 220-KV Jaranwala Road grid station will observe shutdown from 6 am to 10 am on Thursday (July 15).

Similarly, electricity supply from Kukrani, Jahanian Shah and Noon Sugar Mills feeders emanating from 66-KV Jahanian Shah grid station will also remain suspended from 6 am to 6 pm on July 15. — APP

PCJCCI for transforming industrial economy

LAHORE: Pak-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) President, S.M. Naveed Wednesday suggested to transform the industrial economy of Pakistan to the digital economy as per Chinese model that has proved to be the best practice in this regard. During a discussion on digitalization of the national economy at PCJCCI Think Tank meeting here, he said that Pakistan needed to set up integrated computing network hubs to boost the digital economy and provide new impetus for the sector's development.

The meeting was also attended by PCJCCI Senior Vice President Daud Ahmad, Vice President Khalid Raffique Chaudhry, Secretary General Salahuddin Hanif and Executive Committee members. S.M. Naveed said that data center computing equipment would be key accelerator for the development of new technologies and industries such as artificial intelligence, big data and blockchain, and help fuel digital transformation and high-quality development. — APP

Special focus on BTB, integration of POS

He said that despite corona pandemic, our recovery recorded a growth of 25%. In 2019-20, RTO had recovered Rs 46bn which jumped to Rs 58bn during fiscal year 2020-21

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Federal Board of Revenue has set tax revenue target of Rs 5.8 trillion for fiscal year 2021-22 with a special focus on BTB (broadening tax base) and integration of POS (point of sales), said Syed Mahmood Husain Jafri, Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue, Regional Tax Office Faisalabad. Briefing to the media in his office here on Wednesday, he said that Regional Tax Office (RTO) Faisalabad had contributed Rs 58 billion towards total revenue collection of Rs 4.7 trillion which was also appreciated by Prime Minister Im-

ran Khan.

He said that despite corona pandemic, our recovery recorded a growth of 25 percent. In 2019-20, RTO had recovered Rs 46 billion which jumped to Rs 58 billion during fiscal year 2020-21, he added. He said that Faisalabad region would contribute its reasonable share by further expanding tax base and integrating approximately 100,000 points of sales. He said that enhanced tax collection was made possible without any advance tax while RTO also paid refund claims of Rs 42 billion in Faisalabad during previous years especially in critical months of May and June. This was possible as the government

was committed to facilitate the industrial production with clear objective to enhance exports, he added. He said that our strategy yielded positive results as industrial wheel gained a phenomenal momentum and most of the units introduced 3 shifts to clear hefty export orders.

About the new fiscal year target, he said: "We have completed our homework to broaden the tax base and integration of POS with FBR. Currently 1000 retailers are linked with FBR while our teams are working to point out and link at least 100,000 retailers with FBR during FY 2021-22". Most of the points of sales are undocumented and we in-

tend to bring them into tax net which would help government to generate maximum revenue without adding burden on the existing taxpayers, he added. He said the RTO was also launching a comprehensive awareness campaign to convince individuals with reasonable income to contribute their due share towards national exchequer. In this connection, seminars would be arranged while help desks had also been established to facilitate the taxpayers, he added.

Responding to a question, he said that powers of ombudsman had been given to Chief Commissioner across the country from November 2020 and grieved par-

ties could file their appeals without any hesitation. He said that a unique way of E-katchery had also been introduced. Complaints filed in E-katchery would be positively redressed within 24 hours. He said that Alternate Dispute Resolution Committee (ADRC) had been reactivated which had given Rs 200 million relief to 15-16 complainants. This committee has an impartial member in addition to the complainant and the defendant, he added. He said the FBR had altogether been changed and the taxpayers must come forward with their genuine complaints which would be redressed purely on merit basis.

Briefs**IRSA releases 317,300 cusecs water**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 317,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 439,100 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1450.44 feet, which was 66.44 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 226,700 and 155,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1161.00 feet, which was 123.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 60,100 and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 179,900, 156,800 and 30,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 58,200 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 64,100 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.

ILO to launch training programme for entrepreneurs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The International Labour Organization (ILO) on Wednesday decided to launch a training programme for imparting entrepreneurial skills to budding entrepreneurs in Pakistan. The decision to this effect was taken during a meeting between Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Muhammad Usman Dar and ILO Country Director Ingrid Christensen, said a news release.

Both the officials, during the meeting, agreed on devising a mechanism for ensuring mutual cooperation in that regard. They explored different means and ways for perusal of the Kamyab Jawan Programme (KJP)'s soft loan scheme, annual review and its impacts on the youth.

It is pertinent to mention that there had been a massive increase in opening of new businesses across the country after a large number of youth has received soft loans under the YES.

Recently, SAPM Usman Dar has said that the government had so far helped over 13,000 youth open their own businesses by disbursing loans amounting to Rs 17 billion under the KJP. At least 100,000 young people had reaped benefits of the programme directly, he added.

477,558 vaccine doses administered so far

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: As many as 477,558 people including 28,386 health workers and 449,172 senior citizens inoculated against coronavirus from 23 centres operating across the district since the start of the vaccination drive.

According to data shared by the district administration here Thursday, 26 more Covid-19 positive cases were reported during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 26,559 in the district while four lost their battle of life against the virus. As per the latest data, 7 cases were reported from Rawal Town, 6 from Potohar town, 5 from Rawalpindi Cantt, 3 AJK, 3 Attock and one each from Islamabad and Murree.

"Presently 54 confirmed patients were admitted to various city facilities, counting 9 in Holy Family Hospital, 13 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 12 in Institute of Urology, 19 in Fauji Foundation Hospital, and one in Hearts International Hospital," the health authority report said. District Health Authority said that so far 25,246 patients were discharged after recovery while 726 were quarantined including 451 at home and 275 in isolation.

Govt. to provide certified inputs to overcome Agri challenges

The government was also taking keen interest in livestock breed improvement, water conservation and promoting farm mechanization Fakhar said

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam on Wednesday said the government was working to ensure availability of quality seeds, development of cold storage facilities and farm mechanization to enhance per-acre output of major crops. Addressing the international conference on "Best practices for building sustainable food systems in OIC Region", he said Pakistan was blessed with natural resource and ranked among the top ten procedures of wheat, rice, sugarcane and different fruits as well as vegetables.

The conference was organized by the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS) in collaboration with various international research organizations to discuss issues and challenges faced by agriculture sector and shared expertise to address them.

Imam said despite having one of the world's best alluvial soils and the best irrigation system, they could not fully harness the potential of our agricultural sector, adding that lack of quality seed, cold storage facilities, farm mechanization, trained manpower, post-harvest management, processing industries, and digital agriculture platforms were the main hurdles in local agriculture



development. Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, he said the government has prioritized agriculture sector and initiated working to diversify the sector, by enhancing

focus on high value horticultural crops, oilseeds and pulses.

The government was also taking keen interest in livestock breed improvement, water conservation and promoting farm mechanization he said. He added that it was supporting farmers by ensuring quality seed of improved varieties, providing farm machinery at subsidized rates and disseminating improved production packages. Despite COVID pandemic and locust attacks, the production of wheat, rice, maize and sugarcane has increased to a record level, which was a result of prudent agriculture policies of the current government. Fakhar Imam apprised the forum that this year

was a remarkable year for agriculture sector of Pakistan, adding that economy got a boost with the record agricultural production, indicating a lesser reliance on food imports in 2021-22. Besides, he said, due to favorable policies and interventions, the exports of Agro-commodities have also increased significantly that help attract handsome amount of foreign exchange for the country. Considering the role of provinces, he said, the government was also engaging all stakeholders for building sustainable food system in Pakistan, adding that these strategic initiatives would help improve public health situation, which was reflecting high rates of stunting.

Vaccination centre to be set up for laborers

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A Coronavirus vaccination centre would be set up in tehsil Taxila under the administrative control of the District Health Authority for vaccinating up to 300 laborers against Covid-19.

District Surveillance Officer, district health authority Dr. Waqar Ahmed Wednesday said, the vaccination centre would be established in collaboration with Al Ummat Foundation on July 16.

He said that the health department was liaising with the welfare organizations which arrange free food in different parts of the city and mobile vaccination centres would be set up at these places.

The surveillance officer said that the organizations were being contacted including Silani Welfare Trust and Bahria-Dastarkhawan so that the government can reach out to as many people as possible and get them jabbed.

He said that under the policy of the Punjab government, a plan has been formulated to vaccinate every section of the society against coronavirus.

The only way to deal with the corona epidemic was to implement SOPs and vaccination, he added.

Lok Virsa to organize musical show titled "RockNite"

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) would organize a musical show titled "Rocknite" on July 18.

According to an announcement issued here, the famous musical bands would perform at the event.

The musical performance would be held at rooftop theater of Lok Virsa.

Lok Virsa organized the event in collaboration with the Hill Joint musical band. Lok Virsa has recently resumed its cultural activities at its premises which were postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic.

The management of Lok Virsa said COVID-19 SOPs would strictly be observed at its premises. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan receives a briefing from Chairman CDA about development project. - APP

Police step up efforts against drug-suppliers

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Senior-Superintendent of Police (Operations) Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanweer Wednesday said the police had accelerated its campaign against drug-suppliers and arrested 738 accused during the ongoing year. In a news release, he said, the police registered 709 cases with huge recovery of 489965-gram chars, 64886-gram heroin, 10386-gram opium, 5518-gram Ice, 136-gram cocaine and 31737 bottles of liquor during the same period.

As per details, Islamabad city zone police registered 192 cases, arrested 193 accused with recovery of 68958 gram Chars, 2472-gram heroine, 1808-gram Ice, 96-gram cocaine and 1257 bottles of liquor. Likewise, Saddar Zone police registered 197 cases and arrested 217 drug-peddlers with recovery of 101,170 gram chars, 35717-gram heroin, 355-gram opium, 1645-gram Ice and 27041 bottles of liquor. Industrial-Area zone police registered 122 cases and arrested 124 accused with 204,286 gram chars, 9030-gram heroin, 9616-gram opium, 1201-gram Ice and 2464 liquor bottles. Rural-Zone police registered 198 cases and arrested 204 drug-peddlers with 115551-gram chars, 17667-gram heroin, 415-gram opium, 864-gram ice, 40-gram cocaine and 975 bottles of liquor.

3,225 workers to collect entrails of animals on Eid

DNA

RAWALPINDI: As many as 3225 sanitary workers would be deployed to collect entrails of sacrificial animals under special plan devised for Eid-ul-Azha. According to Project Director, Albayrak, a comprehensive contingency plan has been prepared by Albayrak and RWMC for disposal of sacrificial animals' entrails. He said that the leaves of the sanitary workers have been canceled and supervisory staff had been directed to carry out effective operation for collection and

proper disposal of entrails, offal and waste of sacrificial animals.

The company would distribute special bags in various areas of the city for the safe disposals of animal remains. These bags would be used especially for insertion of animal waste during Eid days. Awareness activities and distribution of waste bags has already been started, he informed.

Nearly 39 transfer stations would be set up at various locations in Rawalpindi city and Murree where offals, entrails and other wastes of sacrificial animals would be dumped and later on shifted

to the permanent dumping site, he added.

Albayrak has also established an emergency help line which would be functional round the clock, he said adding, the special teams would use more than 351 vehicles including 144 mini dumpers, 30 pickups, 13 loaders, 48 compactors, 5 loading bikes, 45 rental dumpers and additional 250 wooden carts for efficient & effective waste management on Eid-ul-Azha.

The team would also maintain cleanliness at Masajid and Imam Bargahs. Special arrangements would be done for slaughter houses,

mosques and collective slaughter sites. Arrangements were also made for graveyard. A special Complaint Cell would be established to attend complaints of the residents.

The residents have been advised to get registered their complaints at Company's specified numbers 0320-0506661, 0320-0506662 and 0320-0506663. Special activities are being organized to spread awareness among general public for cleanliness campaign. Awareness banners would also be displayed in all union councils, he added.

NUST, OEC sign MoC to ensure jobs for graduates in Japan

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Science and Technology (NUST) on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC) to help its graduates get lucrative job assignments in Japan. The MoC was signed by OEC Managing Director Kashif Noor and NUST's Research Innovation and Commercialization Pro-Rector Dr. Rizwan Kiaz in presence of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Development (OPHRD) Federal Secretary Dr. Ishrat Ali and Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan Kuninori Matsuda. Under the agreement, both the institutions would make collective efforts for placement of science and technology graduates in new destinations like Japan, and provide them an opportunity to utilize and enhance their knowledge and skill globally. On the occasion, the Japanese ambassador said NUST was a prestigious institution of Pakistan and expressed his confidence that collaboration between OEC and NUST would assist IT graduates in seeking employment in Japan. Highlighting the OPHRD ministry's efforts for creating overseas employment for citizens, the federal secretary said serious efforts were being made to find new destinations for the skilled human resource as currently 96 per cent Pakistani manpower went to the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. It may be mentioned here that Japan is an emerging destination for foreign workers. It is facing shortage of workers due to aging population. Therefore, it has introduced new laws for attracting foreign workers. - DNA

NSA briefs Senate Defense Committee

Broad-based roadmap is being developed for Pak-US relations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Committee on Defence & National Security received a comprehensive briefing from Dr. Moeed Yusuf, National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister at the Parliament House. The briefing session lasted for 2 hours which included a detailed interactive Q&A session. The Committee was presided by its Chairman, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed and the briefing focused on Pakistan's role in the changing regional scenario, Pakistan-American Relations, Pakistan-India Relations, the impact of the evolving situation in Afghanistan following the American military exit. The Committee was informed that a broad-based roadmap is being developed for Pakistan-American relations which includes cooperation in commerce and trade, investment including vaccine manufacturing, climate change and military to

military relations as well as promoting regional economic connectivity. Dr. Moeed Yusuf also briefed the Committee on his meeting with his American counterpart in Geneva last month.

Regarding Afghanistan, Pakistan's perspective is very clear in promoting an inclusive political settlement with a view to ensure that Afghan territory is not used against Pakistan and Pakistan to ensure its commitment that its territory will not be used against any country. The international community is also being informed about Pakistan's concerns about the potential fallout of the Afghan crisis particularly in the new influx of refugees. On Pakistan-India relations, Dr. Moeed Yusuf said that the onus was on India to start the dialogue process after reversing the wrongs in Indian Occupied Kashmir, particularly the August 5, 2019 decision, its efforts to change the demographic balance in occupied territo-

ry plus the release of political prisoners and lifting of the internet blockade.

Referring to Pakistan's transition to geo-economics, Dr. Moeed Yusuf underlined that the 3 pillars of this strategic reorientation which includes regional connectivity, partnership for development and the quest for peace within and peace without. He also invited input from the committee on defence and national security in the preparation of a comprehensive document pertaining to Pakistan's national security policy.

In his remarks, the Chairman of the Committee, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed welcomed Dr. Moeed Yusuf and lauded his contribution in injecting fresh ideas and new thinking on Pakistan's national security, particularly on strategic communication and the transition of geo-economics. Senator Mushahid Hussain said that the Senate Committee on Defence & National Security would

present its own ideas and input as well on the issue of national security so that any policy that is formulated by the government is inclusive, broad-based and representative of all shades of opinion. He also proposed that lawfare be made an integral component of Pakistan's approach on national security and he also underlined the need for a comprehensive counter-terror strategy as well as a creative India policy that also has a broader South Asia perspective.

Senator Mushahid Hussain said that given the new emerging situation in which national security can no longer be defined in terms of military might alone, the concept of human security must include elements that are crucial for the wellbeing of the people of Pakistan including health, climate change, population planning, food security and water scarcity, a perspective which Dr. Moeed Yusuf fully endorsed.



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For further information please contact the following.

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Briefs

Anti-dengue measures reviewed

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Additional Deputy Commissioner Abdullah Mehmood on Wednesday in a meeting reviewed measures to curb dengue spread during current rain spells. Chairing a meeting here ADC Abdullah directed to accelerate anti-dengue activities for tracing the larva and its eradication so that the growth of dengue larvae could not spread. He also directed the officials to ensure full implementation of anti-dengue regulations and warned that stern action would be taken against those failing to comply with the laws.

Rain to continue in Capital: MET

ISLAMABAD: More rain-wind/thundershower is expected in Islamabad, Kashmir, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, Balochistan and Sindh during next 24 hours. According to Met office Islamabad, heavy falls are also expected in south Punjab, lower Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, upper Sindh and northeast Balochistan at scattered places during the period. A strong Monsoon currents from Bay of Bengal are penetrating in upper and lower parts of the country. A shallow westerly wave is also present over upper parts of the country.

Rainfall recorded in (mm): Punjab: Mangla 99, Chakwal 88, Sargodha 60, Mandi Bahauddin 53, Joharabad 52, Jhelum 43, Layyah 41, Bhakkar 36, Faisalabad 29, Kot Addu 28, Gujrat 18, Rawalpindi (Chaklala 17, Shamsabad 08), Attock 12, Islamabad (Golra 09, AP 07, Saidpur 06, ZP 05, Bokra 01), Hafizabad 08, Murree 08, Narawal, Jhang 07, Noorpur thal 05, Lahore, Sialkot (AP 06, City 01), Gujranwala 04, Kasur 02, Attock, Joharabad 01, Kashmir, Kotli 35, Rawalakot 19, Garhidupatta 11, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: D.I.Khan (AP 23, City 15), Parachinar 10, Cherat 09, Kalam 08, Saidu Sharif 07, Takht bai, Kakul 06, Lower Dir 04, Upper Dir 01, Peshawar 01, Balochistan: Turbat 18, Kalat 12, Gilgit Baltistan: Bagrote 08, Sindh: Sakrand 11, Thatta 06, Chhor 04, Badin 02. Maximum temperature's recorded in (°C): Nokkundi 44, Jacobabad, Larkana and Mohenjodhar. — APP

All main rivers run to flow normal: FFC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that at present all main rivers of the Indus River System (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej) are flowing with normal discharges. According to daily FFC report on Wednesday owing to good rains, reservoirs storages have improved. Tarbela, Chashma & Mangla reservoir at present jointly stand at 3.54 MAF.

According to Flood Forecasting Division (FFD), Lahore, moderate moist currents from Bay of Bengal (India) are penetrating into upper parts of the country up to 5000 feet with Monsoon low-pressure area prevailing over Southern Chattisgarh (India). Yesterday's upper circulation over Gujrat (India) is now prevailing over South of Karachi in Arabian Sea. Further, trough of Westerly Wave continues to prevail over Kashmir and adjoining areas and Seasonal Low over Northern Balochistan.

For the ensuing 24 hours, scattered thunderstorm/rain of light to moderate intensity have been predicted by FFD, Lahore, over Punjab (Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Lahore & Faisalabad Divisions), Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu & D.I. Khan Divisions) and Balochistan including the upper catchments of all the major rivers. Further to this, scattered thunderstorm/rain of moderate intensity with isolated Heavy Falls may also occur over D.G. Khan Division including isolated thunderstorm/rain over Sahiwal & Multan Divisions of the Punjab Province during the same period.

Evolving system prerequisite for progress of country: Shibli

Shibli Faraz said the research should not be restricted for the sake of research but, focus of development of the country through prioritizing its relativity with the market needs

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Syed Shibli Faraz on Wednesday said evolution of the existing system according to the modern requirements is prerequisite for the progress as no country can achieve success by moving on the same rhythm.

He was addressing the 'Open House and Career Fair' of Civil, Electrical, Mechanical Engineering and Technology arranged by Faculty of Engineering and Technology, International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI). He said only youth could give country a quantum leap through utilizing its potential and extraordinary creative talents towards constructive purposes. The younger generation could move forward on technology fronts where our generation lagged behind to bring socio-economic stability in the country. Shibli Faraz said the research should not be restricted for the sake of research but, focus of de-



velopment of the country through prioritizing its relativity with the market needs. The federal minister said that his ministry was encouraging applied research and commercialization of the patents. Highlighting the steps taken after assuming charge of this ministry few months ago, Shibli Faraz said the ministry took steps for making all its under-utilized laboratories fully functional after mapping. The university students would be

given access to use these laboratories for research purposes. The ministry would also sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the university in this regard, he added. He appreciated the vision of President IIUI of taking forward this university at par with international educational institutions and its degree programs at the level of world accredited programs. The minister also appreciated the innovative technology and engi-

neering projects displayed by the students mostly girls urging them to pay more focus on market oriented products. President IIUI, Prof. Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi said he would take steps to make the IIUI as one of the best institutions in future. The university was following a new strategic plan which would lead it towards international ranking of well reputed universities through restructuring its programs and curriculum to bring in line with

the international standards being followed in international prestigious universities in terms of education, innovation, and research. The university would continue to expand its partnerships with local and international universities and centers of research and international studies, besides signing agreements with International organizations for supporting research activities, he said.

President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan on the occasion said Pakistan was the country which has 55 percent of youth below the age of 35 years. He emphasized that the students should focus on need based research through visiting the market and manufacturing demand based products. Dean Faculty and Convener of Open House, Professor Dr. Nadeem Ahmed Sheikh, Industrial Liaison Officer and Incharge Open House, Assistant Professor, Engr. Javed Ahmed Khan Tipu were also present on the occasion. On the occasion, the federal minister also distributed prizes among the winning students.

ICCI appreciates ITP creating road safety awareness for youth

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Creating maximum awareness in youth and citizens about the road safety measures is very important as a WHO's global status report on road safety showed that over 30,000 lives were lost in Pakistan due to the road accidents and it was appreciable that under the dynamic leadership of the Inspector General of Police Islamabad, Islamabad Traffic Police has adopted a proactive approach to create road safety awareness in youth.

This was stated by Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) at the occasion of a road safety quiz competition organized by the Islamabad Traffic Police in collaboration with ICCI at Chamber House. Qazi Jamil ur Rehman, Inspector General of Police Islamabad was the Chief Guest.



Fatma Azim Senior Vice President, Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, DG Safe City, Syed Karrar Hussain SSP Traffic Division. The students of Bahria, COMSATS and Punjab Group of Colleges reached the final round of competition, which was won by the COMSATS team. Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan lauded the efforts of Qazi Jamil ur Rehman, IGP Islamabad who was taking many initiatives to improve the security situation through introduction of new technology under the safe city project. He

also appreciated ITP for sensitizing youth about road safety by organizing quiz competition for students as it was very important to promote disciplined driving in youth to promote road safety.

He said that due to the good efforts of ITP, road accidents in Islamabad were quite low as compared to other cities, which should be appreciated. He assured that ICCI would fully cooperate with ITP in its endeavours to promote disciplined traffic in the federal capital. Addressing the concluding ceremony, Qazi Jamil ur Rehman, Inspector General of Police Islamabad said that the Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) was making great efforts to ensure a safe road environment in the city and holding a quiz competition among students was another right step in that direction. He said that such initiatives would forge close links with students and promote safe

driving culture on roads leading to further reduction in road accidents. He stressed that the students should keep working hard in order to excel in education and cooperate with police in promoting disciplined traffic in the city. He urged that students should avoid one wheeling and rash driving as these practices posed great threats against road safety. He said that equal application of law were the operational codes of the ITP and excellent planning and strategy regarding traffic management has helped in reducing the ratio of fatal and non-fatal road accidents in the Capital. The students of Bahria University, COMSATS University and Punjab College reached the final round of quiz competition. They were asked questions about traffic laws, road safety measures and signals. The COMSATS team won the final round of the competition.

Govt for subsidy on purchase of Agri-tools: Cheema

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Food Security Jamsheed Iqbal Cheema here on Wednesday said the government would provide Rs 28 billion subsidy on the purchase of agriculture tools and equipment to mechanize local agriculture sector for enhancing per-acre output. He said the list of agriculture tools was increased from 12 items to 81, adding, the government provided half of the total amount on the purchase of these agriculture tools that would help increase output of crops and conserve inputs. He said due to steps taken by the current government, output of all major crops witnessed significant growth, adding that country was spending billions of dollars on the import of food commodities that would start reducing by the next year and help in achieving sustainable eco-

nomical growth. He said Prime Minister Imran Khan has given special attention to farmers and farming communities across the country, which were neglected by all the previous governments and took measures to protect them from the exploitation and introduced mechanism for price fixation of different crops. The Special Assistant said due to introduction of proper pricing mechanism, local farmers received Rs 1,100 billion additional during the current year, adding that farmer's income for next year was projected at 2,100 billion and steps would be taken to double their income in next seven years. To improve the storage facilities across the country, he said an amount of Rs180 billion had been earmarked for the development of godowns, adding that Rs seven billion development program was prepared for each union council to promote and develop agriculture sector in the country.

Search operation on Defence Road underway

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Police on special directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ahsan Younas on Wednesday, launched a search operation on Defence Road, Sector-7 and adjoining areas in the jurisdiction of Morgah Police Station, said a police spokesman. He informed that heavy police contingent, Elite Force, Special Branch personnel and Ladies police under the supervision of SHO Morgah Police Station conducted an operation in the area and searched 114 houses while 270 persons were checked and several interrogated. Police also checked the particulars of 31 tenants during the search operation. According to Superintendent Police (SP) Potohar, the search operations to net criminals and proclaimed offenders were regularly being conducted under National Action Plan in different areas of the district particularly to ensure law and order.

Bike lifter arrested; 2 motorcycles recovered

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested a bike lifter besides recovering two stolen motorcycles from his possession, said a police spokesman on Wednesday. He informed that Race Course police rounded up Waqas and recovered two stolen motorcycles from his possession. He said the accused was a bike lifter and allegedly involved in several cases registered in different police stations. A case has been registered against him in Race Course Police Station while further investigation was underway, he added.

Govt notifies transfer, posting of officers

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The federal government Wednesday notified the transfer and posting of high ranking officers. According to a notification issued by the Establishment Division, Dr. Shaista Nuzhat, a BS-19 officer of Punjab Institute of Language, Arts and Culture, Department of Information and Culture, Government of Punjab, presently posted as Director, Pakistan Housing Authority (PHA) Foundation, under Housing and Works Division, under Section 10 of the Civil Servants Act, 1973, is transferred and directed to report to her parent department i.e. Punjab Institute of Language, Arts and Culture, Department of Information and Culture, Government of Punjab, with immediate effect.

Renovation of bus stops in ICT

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Renovation and calligraphy (artwork) at all bus stops located between Sector "F" to Sector "I" on the direction of Chairman CDA Amir Ali Ahmed to make Islamabad more beautiful and attractive, work under process. On the special directions of the Chairman CDA, the concerned department of CDA has started the renovation and calligraphy (artwork) work on the bus

stops located on all the major highways between Sector "F" to Sector "I" of Islamabad so that The Pakistani culture and civilization will be highlighted in the decoration and calligraphy (artwork) so that it can be passed to the coming generation, the renovation of the city. And calligraphy (artwork) will also promote tourism. In this regard, the Chairman CDA while issuing instructions to the concerned department that the work of renovation and calligraphy should be completed soon.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a meeting on President's initiative for Cyber Efficient Parliament (PICEP) at Parliament House. —DNA

The Conflict between the Islamic Legal System and Int'l HR

AAMER SHAHZAD ABBASI

1. INTRODUCTION

i. What is Sharia?

Muslim legal system based on Sharia law. Sharia is a command of Allah Almighty, which depicts no division between the mankind. Sharia laws emerged from Quran, Sunnah and fatwa's. Sharia oversees most parts of a Muslim's natural life, together with crime, government, finance, family and cleanliness. Islamic Sharia built up a clear structure of adore, laws almost how to live life, civil rights, political rights, social issues and rights, laws of marriage and separate, legacy rights and all others which we are managing in our existence schedule. It is not for the mosque as it were; it is for way of life a direct to life in all its viewpoints. As we know, Islam may be a direct to life in all its viewpoints so it keeps absent a Muslim from the panic of any sort since Islam is consistent and rational.

Allah Almighty says in (Quran 5:8):

"O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do."

Western View about Sharia: Some in the West see Sharia as old fashioned, oppressive, and forced upon Muslims living in Sharia-controlled countries. Most of the western countries talked about

democracy instead of Sharia laws.

iii. Muslim Opinion: However, Muslims reject this opinion of Western people, since Sharia has divinely revealed and not in the light of old fashion. Muslims are bound to keep an eye on the teachings of Allah, which has explained in Quran whereas modern human right activist believe and rely on human made laws regarding the governance of state.

iv. Islamic Criminal Laws unlike with Western Laws: Muslims believes that Allah is Almighty and sovereign and many Islamic laws are dissimilar with western laws i.e. Haddood laws, etc.

v. Consensus Over Same Spirits and Interests: Modern countries and Islamic scholars both are agreeing and have consensus on the large area of human interests for the whole community of the world over same spirits and interests. A few Western and Islamic laws are alike in nature, as minorities reserve the option to enjoy worship, employment, doing business and religious liberty also given in Islam.

6. MODERN HUMAN RIGHT ACTIVISTS VIEWS ABOUT ISLAMIC LAW: Many modern human rights activists misinterpreted Sharia and they think it antique fashioned, strict and extreme. However, Muslims negates this view of west. Islamic System of Law is divinely revealed whereas modern human rights principles are man-made. Some of the jurists' view that Sharia laws are like the laws of Nazi party where the system of torture and death had made.

They defined Jihad, against non-Muslims and zakat money used for non-Muslims during Jihad and western views also opposed that in Islamic sharia who leave Islam must be killed.

5. WHOLE SYSTEM FOR HUMANITY SHELTERED BY ISLAM: Islam is a whole system of human life in which all portion of the public sheltered by the construction of Islam. The world famous poet Allama Iqbal rightly said, "Do not away religion from politics". The western countries talk about the modern democracy and its fairness Instead of Caliphate. This concept of modern democracy is backed by Islamic Sharia i.e. caliphate etc. Most of the western countries like UK and US are considered titleholder of western democracy and against the Islamic system of law. Famous jurist Armanus Von Marie acknowledged that only Islamic religion has governed under its system of law.

CONCLUSION: Islam is a comprehensive way of life, sent by Allah in the form of revelation by means of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). As it shelters vital needs of human life: physical, intellectual and divine i.e. Divine law, Belief, Ethics and moral character etc. On the other hand, the concept of modern human rights is a manufactured and emerged in twentieth century. The famous documents of western human rights are Magna Carta, the American Declaration of Independence and the French declaration etc. The modern human rights activists forcefully criticize the Hudud laws of Islamic system and force to reform this law but orthodox

Muslims rejects any kind of alteration or change in this divine law because they consider it a complete package and way of all human life. The actual Islamic belief cannot be understood until Human Rights are sheltered for every person and community in a Muslim country.

A few supplementary sources under which Muslims resolve their problems. These are secondary sources i.e. Ijma and Qiyas. Primary sources of Islam are supplement to Islamic law, modern human rights because it is fix law and it can assist to modern human rights principles but modern human rights are not supplementary to Islamic system of law, and they are supplement to their own laws.

Western human rights laws and Islamic system of law have different ideologies and different in nature. Both approaches have unique point of view and have major clash on Hudud laws, which cannot be compatible with modern human rights laws. Therefore, it is not easy to reconcile criminal laws of because both Hudud laws are non-negotiable but in a few portion of life, modern human rights laws and Islamic laws can be reformed on consensus of Islamic and western jurist. A few Western and Islamic laws are alike in nature, as minorities reserve the option to enjoy worship, employment, doing business and religious liberty also given in Islam. Any attempt to reform both laws to make it similar is not an easy way or any consensus may not be done overnight.

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Undemocratic conduct

LAST week, in its detailed order on restoring local bodies in Punjab, the Supreme Court ruled that by dissolving local institutions in 2019, the provincial government had disenfranchised people who voted for their representatives. Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Gulzar Ahmed, who authored the judgment, observed that the Punjab government's actions conflicted with various provisions of the constitution regarding local governments and freedom of association. The beauty of democracy lies in local governments, wherein people partake in participatory politics at the neighbourhood level and elect representatives who are easily reachable and empowered to improve services in their communities. Unfortunately, as far as Pakistan's chequered political history is concerned, both voters and aspiring political leaders have largely been denied interacting with this third tier of government. In 2019, the tenures of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan local governments expired while the same was sent packing in Punjab by the provincial government after a new law cut short their tenure. The next year, terms of local governments in Sindh and Islamabad expired and there has been no substantial movement on any front since then either. While judicial interventions into the executive's domain are questionable and unwelcome in most times, had it not been the Supreme Court's dire warning in the first place, the last local bodies elections would not even have taken place. Must it take another Supreme Court deadline for the governments to act?

The present state of affairs is unfortunate despite repeated promises by Prime Minister Imran Khan – some dating back to 2011 when he was a rising opposition figure – to devolve power and conduct direct elections for mayors and even local police chiefs as is done in the West. However, this is not just a PTI problem as both the PML-N and PPP have not fared any better on this count. In all this politicking and scheming, it is the citizens who suffer as they're made to run from pillar to post for resolution of their most basic issues. In May 2019, the PM had said that his "government's number one priority is to hand over governance to the people" as all over the world, "local bodies govern on a grassroots level." It's about time he fulfills that promise.

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Monsoon pains

WHILE the arrival of the monsoon rains have provided much needed relief from excruciating temperatures, citizens of Karachi are dreading the rainfall as they are still reeling from the trauma of last summer. Electricity supply was disrupted in most parts of the city after the very first monsoon showers hit on Monday. More concerning however is the fact that a young boy lost his life by electrocution because of the rainwater that had accumulated on the street.

Apparently, there was some miscommunication between the Sindh authorities and the Met department over rain forecasts, with the former claiming that the latter had not predicted any rainfall for Monday. Engaging in a blame game however is not going to provide any relief to the citizens and the bottom line is that there needs to be better coordination between such authorities.

Rain emergency has been declared in some parts of the city, while in other areas operations are ongoing to clear stormwater drains. It is commendable that the Municipal Commissioner is now taking measures to deal with any emergency and to avoid possible damage from rainfall, however the issue of reactive policy making remains. These measures should have been in place much earlier considering how monsoon warnings were given in advance.

It is crucial for the authorities to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to avoid a repeat of what happened last year. Torrential rainfall during the previous cycle paralysed life in the city and claimed more than 20 lives across the province. With the effects of climate change becoming more apparent by the day, Pakistan needs to undertake long term measures to adapt going forward. The poor state of infrastructure in urban centers like Karachi and the complete lack of it in rural areas will need to be addressed urgently if future catastrophes are to be avoided.

History repeating itself in Afghanistan

Zaid M. Belbagi



The situation today, however, couldn't be starker. With the withdrawal of international forces not even complete, the much-touted Afghan security personnel have been fleeing in their hundreds across the borders into neighboring Iran and Tajikistan. Worse still, others have reintegrated into the Taliban. Under the circumstances, US President Joe Biden's remarks last week that, "We did not go to Afghanistan to nation-build. And it's the right and the responsibility of the Afghan people alone to decide their future and how they want to run their country," smacks of an admission of defeat

IN 1842, four years after invading in formidable numbers and to great fanfare, an entire British army retreating from Afghanistan to India was massacred. Its worthy Afghan foes, with an eye on history and taunting any would-be invader, allowed one military surgeon, Dr. William Brydon, to survive and tell the tale of how unforgiving Afghanistan is to those who covet it. Today, the withdrawal of US forces has led to the Taliban rapidly increasing its control of the country to 85 percent, including border crossings and key infrastructure.

This has raised the question of what exactly two decades of American blood and treasure has achieved. It would seem that, as with the British in the 19th century and the Soviets in 1989, Afghanistan has shown itself to be unconquerable and thoroughly ungovernable.

Only three countries recognized the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan when the US and its allies invaded in 2001. The pseudo state that emerged from the chaos of the Soviet withdrawal married a specifically Pashtun Afghan nationalism with radical beliefs. The movie theaters of Kabul gave way to public stoning and, amid the administrative vacuum, Afghan territory became a haven for terrorists. However, the link between the 9/11 hijackers and the dismantling of the Taliban remains tenuous; if anything, it has become clear that real tensions existed between them and Al-Qaeda. It is, therefore, helpful to be reminded of the legal basis for the Afghanistan war. Almost 20 years ago, the US Congress passed the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists bill and, shortly after, the UN Security Council authorized the creation of an International Security Assistance Force to "reaffirm its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan." Some \$2.3 trillion later and international forces are hurriedly leaving the troubled country months

early, while the Taliban is stronger than it could possibly have hoped to be.

America's two decades bogged down in the Afghan quagmire has taken a significant toll, with some 2,300 US troops killed and 20,600 injured. These figures are, however, dwarfed by the overall total of 241,000 dead, of which more than 71,000 were civilians. The human cost of the conflict has been consistently cited, considering the difference to Afghan lives the operation was supposed to have made.

The vast majority of the money spent in Afghanistan has been on counterinsurgency operations and reconstruction. Roughly half has been spent on building up the Afghan National Army and Police, with a further \$36 billion going on local governance and development. According to President Barack Obama in 2012, when he ordered a surge in personnel, America's job was to "build a partnership with the Afghan people... one that ensures that we will be able to continue targeting terrorists and supporting a sovereign Afghan government."

The situation today, however, couldn't be starker. With the withdrawal of international forces not even complete, the much-touted Afghan security personnel have been fleeing in their hundreds across the borders into neighboring Iran and Tajikistan. Worse still, others have reintegrated into the Taliban. Under the circumstances, US President Joe Biden's remarks last week that, "We did not go to Afghanistan to nation-build. And it's the right and the responsibility of the Afghan people alone to decide their future and how they want to run their country," smacks of an admission of defeat.

The fighting that has broken out between Afghan security forces and the Taliban is not what policymakers had planned for, but in many respects it is what they have learnt to expect. With Taliban delegations already traveling overseas to represent themselves as the de facto government, the Afghan authorities have never

seemed more vulnerable and reliant upon American support. As Taliban commanders last week proudly displayed the scores of weapons they had seized from the Sultan Khil military base, it can only be imagined what other state resources will fall into the wrong hands, plunging Afghanistan into greater turmoil.

The admission by NATO, whose Resolute Support Mission (RSM) has been propping up the security forces, that "there is no military solution to the challenges Afghanistan faces" was telling. Though the Taliban may have been quick to fill the vacuum, its gains do not reflect any ability to be able to govern the territory it has taken. In 2001, it struggled to extend its writ over Afghanistan's myriad different groups. Today, with an emergent China and re-emergent Russia, any number of local warlords will soon be able to court foreign support to entrench themselves and tip Afghanistan further toward the civil war scenario to which it has become accustomed.

Aside from cosmetic changes to Afghan society, a legacy of suffering, waste, fraud and abuse is what is left of America's "forever war." The Armiger Group's Henry Jones-Davies, a security practitioner with years of experience in Afghanistan, underscored the futility of international efforts when he said: "The idea that we could impose a Western-style democratic system on a country with so many different ethnic and religious groups and tradition was incredibly short-sighted. The resurgence of the Taliban is reflective of a reaction to the imposition of foreign systems of governance."

As Afghanistan lurches toward 50 years of instability and conflict, how the Taliban is able to mitigate the country's many complexities remains to be seen. The withdrawing forces would have done well to heed the warnings of the 1842 campaign.

– Courtesy: Arab News

Impact of Covid-19 on Pakistan's digital economy

Haidar Mustafa

Pakistan is a country dominated by cash needs to make many other strategies and changes in their regular patterns to shift themselves properly towards digital payments. The regulating bodies in Pakistan need to make such strategies and implementations to reduce barriers among online transaction systems

GLOBAL markets have been immensely influenced due to the prevailing conditions of COVID-19. Of many catastrophic facets, the pandemic has also aroused many gateways to make Pakistan's economy viable despite the limitations. Speaking of viability, it is evident that many businesses are shut because of amid pandemic but with the adaption of digital means sustainability is inevitable.

To stand on the accounts of productivity, a great surge in the use of digital means has been witnessed in the online banking system in Pakistan during this quarantine period. On record, the 1st wave of COVID-19 initiated at the end of the year 2019. Not long after that people started shifting to online transactions rather than using traditional transaction procedures for security and safety's sake. This all happened when people realized in the pandemic situation that mobile wallets and online wallets are very much useful for buying and online transactions in the present century.

During the first wave of the pandemic,

there was an increase of almost 30-35% users of the financial services providing apps like EasyPaisa and JazzCash, and almost 20-25% of already existing users returned to the use of these online service providing apps. At the same time, the daily online transactions by using e-wallets increased by 17%.

These numbers point towards the shift Pakistan is making towards digital means. Although the pattern is by all accounts proceeding, what we need to comprehend is that it was not singular players that achieved this change, but rather it was a dedicated exertion from various players, including innovation and financial service providers, the public authority, and regulators meeting up.

Pakistan is a country dominated by cash needs to make many other strategies and changes in their regular patterns to shift themselves properly towards digital payments. The regulating bodies in Pakistan need to make such strategies and implementations to reduce barriers among on-

line transaction systems. A few basic steps in this direction would be to incentivize the use of digital payments, mandate providing alternate payment options at all major retail points across the country and make more use cases available on digital channels. Transforming Pakistan into a cashless and financially inclusive society is a herculean task that no player can achieve alone.

Since Covid-19 has effectively played ruin with the public economy, Pakistan should fabricate a hearty advanced foundation to foil any future financial fall from pandemics or comparable circumstances.

New technologies, such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and blockchain, are also on their way to dominate the future economic sphere. Besides, the public should be instructed on the advantages of utilizing advanced digital services and there ought to be motivations for both the customers and the business houses for utilizing and advancing computerized administrations.

– The writer is a student at COMSATS Islamabad

Briefs

COAS lauds Tajik efforts for regional connectivity

FROM PAGE 01
Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

Gen Bajwa told the Tajik minister that Pakistan values its brotherly relations with Tajikistan, which are based on shared faith, culture, and convergence on all important issues relating to regional peace, security, and stability. He also appreciated Tajikistan's efforts towards regional connectivity. On the other hand, the Tajik minister praised Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace and stability, especially the role played by Islamabad in the Afghan peace process.

The ISPR said that Colonel-General Mirzo vowed to work on improving his country's relations with Pakistan. Apart from this, the military's media wing said that the two officials discussed matters of mutual interests, overall regional situation, including recent developments in Afghanistan – especially the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border – and measures to further enhance bilateral defence collaboration.

Chinese among 12 killed in bus explosion

FROM PAGE 01
"shock and condemnation over the bombing". Lijian urged Pakistan to "severely punish the perpetrators" and "earnestly protect the safety of Chinese nationals, organisations and projects" in the country. In a statement, the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan "strongly condemned the incident", expressed condolences with the victims and the injured, adding that it "will do its best with Pakistan to deal with the incident".

"The Chinese Embassy in Pakistan hereby reminds Chinese citizens, enterprises and projects in Pakistan to attach great importance to them, pay close attention to the local security situation, strengthen the safety of project personnel, take strict precautions, and do not go out unless necessary," the statement read. It, however, added that Pakistani authorities "were investigating the cause".

Japanese envoy, Qureshi offer...

FROM PAGE 01
Please accept our deepest condolences, and we wish for a quick recovery of the injured", said the Ambassador. The Ambassador prayed for the eternal peace of the departed souls and wished for the bereaving families to bear this irreparable loss with fortitude and equanimity.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi offered condolences on the tragic incident to Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Tajikistan. The foreign minister told his Chinese counterpart that investigations are underway. Qureshi requested Wang to convey his sentiments to the families of those who lost their lives in the incident.

Messi to sign up for 5 years with Barcelona

MOSCOW: Argentine star Lionel Messi is set to sign a new contract with Barcelona to stay for another five years at his boyhood club, La Vanguardia newspaper reported on Wednesday as speculation over his future looms large over the footballing world. The newspaper has learned that the official announcement is expected later this week and the sides are currently finalizing the contract. The club hopes to be able to obtain approval for the contract's registration without violating Financial Fair Play rules that bar egregious spending. – APP

Blinken urges ASEAN to take 'immediate action' on Myanmar

The ASEAN plan calls for an end to the violence in Myanmar, the start of a dialogue between all parties, greater humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas as well as the appointment of a special envoy

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has expressed "deep concerns" about the military coup in Myanmar and called on Southeast Asian nations to take action to end violence and restore democracy in the country. Blinken made the appeal during a meeting with foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Wednesday. ASEAN has been leading the main diplomatic effort on Myanmar since the country's military seized power in a coup on February 1. At least 902 people have been killed in the ensuing crackdown, according to a monitoring group, while tens of thousands of people have been displaced amid fighting between the security forces and newly formed armed groups across Myanmar.

During Wednesday's video conference with ASEAN diplomats, Blinken urged the 10-country bloc, of which Myanmar is a member, to

take "immediate action" on a five-point consensus that was agreed in April, according to a statement by the US Department of State. The ASEAN plan calls for an end to the violence in Myanmar, the start of a dialogue between all parties, greater humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas as well as the appointment of a special envoy. The plan – which coup leader Ming Aung Hlaing agreed to – has also received the backing of Russia, a key supplier of arms and training to Myanmar's military. The military, however, have since shown no intention of following through on the plan and have instead reiterated its own, entirely different plan to restore order and democracy in Myanmar. The lack of action has frustrated ASEAN's most outspoken members such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, which are also additionally demanding the release of detained civilian leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi. Blinken backed that demand on



Wednesday, urging ASEAN to take joint action to release all those "unjustly detained" in Myanmar and to appoint an envoy to begin the dialogue process between the country's opposing sides. It was not immediately clear if Myanmar's military-appointed foreign minister responded to Blinken's concerns. A Southeast Asian diplomat told the Associated Press news agency that the two-hour meeting was "very civil" despite the discussions on highly contentious issues.

The diplomat, who was involved in the meeting, said ASEAN member states have given Myanmar officials the names of its possible envoys from Thailand and Indonesia but there has been no response. Two ASEAN representatives who traveled to Myanmar last month asked to meet Aung San Suu Kyi and other detainees but were rebuffed, the diplomat added. Blinken's meeting with ASEAN was his first since US President Joe Biden took office in January and came amid concerns among diplomats and others that Washington has not been paying sufficient attention to a region that is crucial to its regional strategy to counter an increasingly powerful China. The State Department said Blinken reaffirmed the US's commitment to ASEAN centrality on Wednesday and underscored ASEAN's essential role in the Indo-Pacific regional architecture. He also went on to emphasize Washington's rejection of China's "unlawful maritime claims" in the South China Sea and said Washing-

ton "stands with Southeast Asian claimants in the face of (Chinese) coercion", the statement said. China claims vast swathes of the disputed South China Sea via its unilaterally declared, U-shaped, "nine-dash line" which intersects with the exclusive economic zones of Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia and the Philippines, all ASEAN members. Trillions of dollars in annual trade flows through the disputed waterway. Malaysian Foreign Minister Hishammuddin Hussein said he hoped Wednesday's meeting signalled a "refreshed commitment" to US multilateral cooperation in the region. "We understand that multilateralism was not a key focus for the previous administration, but the Biden administration's embrace of multilateral cooperation is a welcome development," Hishammuddin said, according to a copy of his delivered remarks. "This path is the only way forward to ensure stability, peace, prosperity and security for our region."

PM Imran arrives in Uzbekistan today

FROM PAGE 01

In his interactions during the visit, the Prime Minister will highlight his vision of 'Naya Pakistan', Pakistan's positive contribution to peace and security at the regional and international level, and the shift from geo-politics to geo-economics. Pakistan and Uzbekistan enjoy historic fraternal relations, marked by mutual respect and rooted in common culture and similar traditions. In recent years, Pakistan-Uzbekistan relations have witnessed an upward trajectory. The two leaders have interacted twice before on the sidelines of BRI Forum in Beijing and SCO Summit in Bishkek. They also held a Virtual bilateral Summit on 14 April 2021. Pakistan has deepened its engagement with Central Asia through its 'Vision Central Asia' policy, with focus on five key strands – political, trade and investment, energy and connectivity, security and defence, and people-to-people exchanges. The Central Asian region is becoming more and more important not only for the Central Asian states but for the neighboring countries such as China, Pakistan, Iran as well because of its geo-political significance. Central Asia is enriched with natural resources besides its being located at the crossroads of the region between East and the West. Central Asia has been facing some serious challenges including terrorism and extremism since long. Many great powers have huge interest in the region therefore it was necessary to put together all these powers with a view to devising a consensus policy and reaching an understanding to usher in a new era of peace and prosperity especially in the context of Central and South Asia.

In view of these ground realities President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev decided to convene an international conference in order to not only secure and ensure regional peace but mull collective efforts to promote intra-state trade and economic activity besides laying special focus on regional and intra-regional connectivity. The delegates have started arriving in Tashkent. A high powered business delegation from Pakistan arrived here two days ago. The delegation has started its meetings with the Uzbek counterparts. The Capital Tashkent is littered with flags of the participating countries. Pakistani flags are also visible on the roads of Tashkent as Prime Minister Imran Khan shall be among a few heads of the governments who would attend this conference. Mostly, the foreign ministers of over 40 countries are expected to take part. The Uzbek government has made elaborate arrangements for the conference. Despite the pandemic, the Uzbek government took this daring initiative of gathering a galaxy of leaders from across the Central Asia and South Asia. The main conference will take place on July 16 while on July 15 delegation-level talks will take place. The participating countries have lauded the initiative of the Uzbek President and hoped this initiative will prove a milestone in not only ushering in a new era of progress in the region but to help achieve peace as well, especially in the wake of the emerging Afghanistan situation.

Sydney lockdown extended again

SYDNEY: Authorities have extended a lockdown in Sydney by at least 14 more days, as an outbreak of COVID-19 continued to grow even after three weeks of restrictions in Australia's largest city. New South Wales state Premier Gladys Berejiklian said on Wednesday that the curbs would need to remain in place until at least July 30 after she announced 97 new locally transmitted cases, a slight increase from a day earlier. "I appreciate people are stressed and upset about what is going on, myself included," Berejiklian said. "None of us want to be in this situation. We want to get out of this lockdown as soon as we can and that is why we have the settings in place that we have," the state premier said. Of the 97 new cases, 24 people were infectious in the community. – DNA



GILGIT: German ambassador to Pakistan Bernhard Schlagheck met with Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan Muhammad Khalid Khurshid Khan on his visit to Gilgit Baltistan. – DNA

Misbah worried over poor performance in England ODIs

BIRMINGHAM: Pakistan men's team head coach Misbah-ul-Haq admitted that he won't defend the national team's performance in ODIs against England and it has worried him after Green Shirts performed well in the last few series. The 47-year-old Misbah interacted with reporters today in a virtual presser and opined that it was a very disappointing performance and fielding was the main problem throughout the series. "It feels like we have come back to the point from where we started. We have to just find how we can move on from here and analyze why we performed in this manner. We have been performing well in the last five-six series but we only played PSL in the last few months and over here we looked off-colour. It's a worrying sign for me as well," he said. "You can't defend this kind of performance. It is a poor and disappointing performance. We couldn't deal with the conditions in the first two matches," he added. Misbah further said that they will take this loss as a team and will not put blame solely on the players. "I believe that it is a teamwork and if the plans were not executed, we are as much to be blamed along with players. As a team, we were unsuccessful," he maintained. It must be noted that England's second-string side whitewashed Pak in three-match series. Green Shirts will now face the hosts in three-match T20I series, starting from July 16. – DNA

Ireland beat South Africa

AGENCIES

DUBLIN: Captain Andy Balbirnie scored a stylish century as Ireland recorded their first ever One-Day International victory over South Africa with a win by 43 runs in the second match of their five-game series in Malahide on Tuesday. Balbirnie stroked 102 from 117 balls as the home side posted 290 for five in their 50 overs, before restricting the tourists to 247 all out in their reply to secure the historic victory and a 1-0 lead in the series after Sunday's opener was washed out. After being sent in to bat, opener Balbirnie received excellent support from Harry Tector (79 from 68 balls), while there was also a flourish from George Dockrell (45 from 23) at the end. South Africa, who again rested key batsman Quinton de Kock, battled to keep up with the run-rate throughout and when opener Janneeman Malan (84 from 96).

Refugee Olympic Team trains ahead of Tokyo 2020

AGENCIES

DOHA: Full of enthusiasm, passion and excitement, the Refugee Olympic Team has been training hard in the Qatari capital of Doha in preparation for Tokyo 2020. The 29-member squad, which will compete across 12 sports at Tokyo 2020, will become the second of its kind to take part in the Olympics after its debut at Rio 2016. In 2016, after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board approved the team's

creation, 10 athletes were selected to take part in the 2016 Olympic Games. All athletes who were considered had received United Nations refugee status. A refugee, according to the UNHCR, is "someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence." "We are honoured to have the opportunity to make a small contribution to the inspiring journey of the Refugee Olympic Team," Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) President Sheikh Joaan Bin Hamad Al Thani, said

at Aspire Zone in Doha on Tuesday. "The team's performances will not just inspire billions of people but will also raise awareness about the scale of the global refugee crisis." However, the IOC said on Wednesday the squad has been forced to delay its departure to Japan following a positive COVID-19 case by a team official. "As a consequence, it was decided that the team would currently not travel to Tokyo and will continue their training in Doha while being tested daily," the IOC said in a statement.



The Iran nuclear deal, six years on

This is while Zarif himself, and diplomats of other JCPOA signatories, previously expressed hope that an agreement could be reached before Raisi becomes president

MONITORING DESK

TEHRAN: Signatories of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers have seen their hopes of restoring the landmark accord by its signing anniversary on Wednesday dashed as multiple factors complicated the process. A clear date has yet to be decided for the start of the seventh – and likely final – round of talks in Vienna to revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the deal that was signed by Iran, China, Russia, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States on July 14, 2015. This is while all sides have emphasised the necessity of re-establishing the full terms of the accord in order to verify the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and ensure it benefits from the economic gains it was

promised under the deal. The US, which abandoned the deal in 2018 and unilaterally imposed harsh sanctions on Iran – which has led Iran to refuse to negotiate with it directly in Vienna – has said it is ready for another round of talks, facilitated by the European Union, whenever Iran agrees to a date. The Iranian foreign ministry's latest quarterly report to parliament on Monday appeared to confirm that politics at play in Tehran have led to the gap between the sixth and seventh round of talks. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote in the report, which was for the first time made public in its entirety of more than 200 pages, that much has been achieved in the Vienna talks so far, but he hopes the process can be "completed" in the next administration. Hardline judge Ebrahim Raisi, who won the presidency after a controversial vote on June

18, will take the reins from moderate two-term President Hassan Rouhani, who had championed the accord despite harsh criticism by his political opponents. Raisi will take office in early August, after which coming to an agreement on restoring the deal seems more likely. This is while Zarif himself, and diplomats of other JCPOA signatories, previously expressed hope that an agreement could be reached before Raisi becomes president. "Achieving an agreement requires courage and readiness to sacrifice reputation and prioritise national interests over personal interests," Zarif wrote on Monday in an apparent last note to his hardline critics who have now seized power in the government, the parliament, and the judiciary. Other factors complicating the talks are the layers of sanctions imposed by the US, and the

multiple steps Iran has taken to advance its nuclear programme in response to the sanctions or sabotage attacks on its soil. The endless waves of sanctions imposed, reimposed or re-labeled by the Donald Trump administration entailed some 1,600 designations, including those relating to "terrorism" and human rights violations. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has insisted they all must be lifted, after which Iran will "verify" their effective lifting and then scale back its nuclear steps. It is unclear how long the verification process will take. Iran has also insisted on a commitment by the US to not renege on the accord again in future as many Republicans and Israeli lobbying groups in Washington, in addition to a number of Arab states, still vehemently oppose the deal. A commitment of an official nature by the US appears unlikely.

But the Iranian foreign minister has sent an optimistic signal on the lifting of sanctions. In his report to parliament, Zarif said if an agreement is reached in Vienna, in addition to the sectoral sanctions on banking, petrochemicals, and shipping, designations on the supreme leader's office and the "Foreign Terrorist Organisation" designation of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) will be rescinded. In addition to new sanctions imposed by Trump – on metals, mines, and textiles – Zarif wrote that a number of executive orders issued by the former president and a number of Congress laws such as the Iran Sanctions Act (ISA) will be revoked. The US has not confirmed the Iranian foreign minister's claims yet. Since May 2019, one year after Trump left the JCPOA, Iran has taken several steps to boost its nuclear activities.

Col. Gen. Sher Ali meets President...

FROM PAGE 01

cultural delegations to expand the volume of bilateral trade as well as cement cultural linkages between the two sides. The President said the Gawadar port and CPEC offer enormous opportunities to regional countries and Tajikistan, in this regard, could benefit from the emerging opportunities by exporting its goods to foreign countries through the Gawadar port. He expressed the hope that the continued interactions between military and defence leadership of the two countries at the higher levels would further expand military cooperation.

Briefs

Greenpeace warns of China climate risk

MONITORING DESK

LONDON: China's key urban centres, including the capital Beijing and its most populous city, Shanghai, are expected to face hotter and longer summers, as well as wetter rainy months, a new Greenpeace study mapping extreme weather conditions due to climate change warned on Wednesday. Greenpeace East Asia said the risk of extreme heat and rainfall is now highest in densely-populated city centres but is growing fast in communities that are becoming more urban on the outskirts of the country's large cities.

That could mean more exposure to dangerous heatwaves for the elderly and those working outdoors as well as heavier flooding in cities such as Shanghai, Liu Junyan, the climate and energy project leader for Greenpeace in Beijing, said as he called on the authorities to adopt more effective measures to prepare for such conditions.

"Urban areas still don't fully understand the variety of changes, and which ones will impact which areas and how, enough to be ready for them," Liu told Al Jazeera. The study found that Beijing is experiencing the "greatest increase" in average temperature, rising at a rate of 0.32 degrees Celsius (0.58 degrees Fahrenheit) every 10 years, with the frequency of heatwaves increasing "considerably" since 2000.

US warns companies on Xinjiang business

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: The United States has warned of heightened risks for companies doing business in Xinjiang, where it accuses Beijing of an "ongoing genocide" and "crimes against humanity" against the Uighurs and other mainly Muslim ethnic minorities, warning firms could be liable to prosecution under US law. In an updated business advisory issued on Tuesday, the US said there was "growing evidence" of forced labour, as well as other human rights abuses and "intrusive" surveillance.

"Given the severity and extent of these abuses, businesses and individuals that do not exit supply chains, ventures, and/or investments connected to Xinjiang could run a high risk of violating U.S. law," the State Department said in a joint statement with the Treasury, Department of Commerce, Department of Homeland Security, The Department of Labor and the Office of the US Trade Representative also signed onto the advisory for the first time.

Bosnia's intelligence chief arrested

FOREIGN DESK

SARAJEVO: The Bosnian police have arrested the country's intelligence chief on accusations of money laundering and abusing his office to forge university diplomas. Osman Mehmedagic, the head of the Intelligence-Security Agency (OSA), was arrested on Wednesday at the request of state prosecutors and police were acting accordingly, Sarajevo police spokesman Mirza Hadziabdic told Reuters news agency. The prosecutor's office said in a statement it was investigating Mehmedagic for the criminal acts of abuse of office or authority, of forging the documents and money laundering. It said more information would be available later on Wednesday. Legal proceedings often take years in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where corruption is widespread and infiltrates all spheres of life, including the judiciary, education and health. Last month, police arrested the director of the American University in Sarajevo and Tuzla and two associates for reportedly issuing a diploma illegally to Mehmedagic.



ISTANBUL: A delegation comprising media people and think tank at the Istanbul Airport enroute to Tashkent to attend Central Asia and South Asia conference. – DNA

Govt starts working on UBG's proposals for shipping sector

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Patron-in-Chief United Business Group S.M. Muneer congratulated the Prime Minister of Pakistan for choosing the right person as the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Maritime Affairs. Mahmood Moulvi is the right individual for this position due to his vast experience and knowledge of the maritime sector from the ground up. The combination of Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Zaidi and SAPM on Maritime Affairs Mahmood Moulvi will prove beneficial for improvements in the maritime sector.

S.M. Muneer said that Mahmood Moulvi is well suited to deal with issues and improvements which are part of the UBG concept - vision for the maritime sector of Pakistan. UBG will be announcing its concept - vision in different parts over the next few weeks.

He said that we are confident that with the joint efforts of MOMA - Mahmood Moulvi & UBG and the guidance & support of Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan there will be major benefits for the country in the maritime sector.

Tariq Haleem Chairman UBG Standing Committee on Maritime Affairs, Communications & Gwadar Development has expressed that high demurrage charges in our

ports, as well as other charges such as labour-cargo handling costs (example stuffing / destuffing of a container costs about Rs. 12,000/- at KPT whereas same operation costs half i.e. Rs. 6,000/- outside the port), have made the ports of Pakistan - i.e. KPT & PQA - the most expensive in the region. Rationalization of port charges, such as labour-cargo handoff of free days and the proper utilization of South Asia Pacific Terminal (SAPTL) at KPT (which has a deep draft of 16 meters alongside berth with option up to 20 meters) could all be used most beneficially for making KPT a state of the art transshipment hub. With proper planning and execution, KPT can also become the most convenient and cost effective port for connecting and expanding our trade volumes with CIS countries. The idea of 'transshipment' has been proposed since a long time; this would help attract mother vessels to Pakistan. This is currently not occurring due to exorbitant port charges etc. We need a new strategy to rationalize port charges, introduce incentive schemes, simplify the Federal Board of Revenue's transshipment rules and harmonize regulations for the transshipment industry. This will help to transform our seaports into regional transshipment hubs. This should be done with the help of the various stakeholders of our seaports. Tariq Haleem said that transforming KPT into

a transit state of the art facility will also allow us to better connect to countries in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, which is a collection of 12 neighboring countries. SAPTL, with an initial investment of about Rs. 100 billion can, at the moment, be the most suitable instrument in creating a transshipment hub and promoting cooperation with our CAREC partners. We need to revisit the entire strategy of a transshipment hub. We also need continuity at both the ports. Changes, 'if any', in management during these types of long term planning initiatives may prove disastrous. "Stock & Sale" traditionally goes hand in hand with transshipment. When Singapore started transshipment activities, Mercedes Benz established a state of the art, in-house facility for stock & sale for their spare parts etc. Spare parts, as well as other items, worth trillions of dollars have been stocked and sold from here. Malaysia started transshipment activities and they provided Stock & Sale suitable laws and space, last year about US\$ 3.2 billion of cargoes were attracted to Malaysia for stock-and-sale. Hitachi is also carrying out Stock & Sale activities worth billions of dollars at Abu-Dhabi. Since many decades Toyota is carrying out stock & sale from Brussels. Toyota's "Just in time" philosophy has been successful due to this facility in Brussels. We should create

suitable legislation to support Stock & Sale so that the business community can promote this concept, hand in hand, with transit trade & transshipment activities.

Today, our transit trade facility is mostly used by Afghanistan only. Some CIS countries have also shown their interest and have started using our ports for transit trade in a small way. MOMA and MOC should approach all 12 CIS countries and provide them suitable facilities with low handling costs for transit trade. It may be noted that imports and exports of these 12 CIS countries are more than about US\$ 450 billion. This trade between landlocked countries should be promoted to be routed through Karachi Port and Port Qasim, as well through Gwadar Port when the port is fully operational. This sort of trade volume would mean a movement of more than millions of containers and millions of tons of other general cargoes per year. The capacities of the ports of Pakistan will need to be enhanced on a war footing to handle these high volumes of cargoes. Transshipment laws need to be amended by FBR in order to permit CFS operations on an urgent basis.

UBG suggests that a common user CFS station should be made within the KPT, with a minimum area of about 200 acres (with the option to expand as per requirements).



ISLAMABAD: Politicians from Bahawalpur along with MPA Khalid Mahmood Jajja called on Swiss ambassador to Pakistan Ambassador Bénédict de Cerjat. – DNA

Erdogan and Xi discuss Uighurs

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has told his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping it is important to Turkey that Uighur Muslims live in peace as "equal citizens of China" but said Turkey respects China's national sovereignty. Erdogan made the comments during a phone call with Xi on Tuesday in which the two leaders discussed bilateral and regional issues, according to a statement from the Turkish presidency. UN experts and rights groups estimate that more than one million people, mainly from the Turkic language-speaking Uighurs and other Muslim minorities, have been detained in recent years in a vast system of camps in China's western Xinjiang region. China initially denied the



camps existed, but has since said they are vocational centres and are designed to combat "extremism". It denies all accusations of abuse. "Erdogan pointed out that it was important for Turkey that Uighur Turks live in prosperity and peace as equal citizens of China. He voiced Turkey's respect for China's sovereignty and territorial integrity," the Turkish presidency statement said. Erdogan told Xi that there was high potential for commercial and diplomatic ties between Turkey and China and the two leaders discussed areas including energy, trade, transportation and health, according to the statement.

Fears of food shortages as unrest rocks SA

More than 1,200 people have been arrested in the lawlessness that has raged in poor areas of two provinces, where a community radio station was ransacked and forced off the air on Tuesday and some COVID-19 vaccination centres were closed, disrupting urgently needed inoculations.

FOREIGN DESK

JOHANNESBURG: Violence and looting has raged in South Africa for the sixth day running, stoking fears of food and fuel shortages as disruption to farming, manufacturing and oil refining began to bite amid the country's worst unrest in decades. More than 70 people have died as grievances over the jailing of former President Jacob Zuma have widened into an outpouring of anger over the inequality that remains 27 years after the end of apartheid. Poverty has been exacerbated by severe social and economic restrictions aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19. More than 1,200 people have been arrested in the lawlessness that has raged in poor areas of two provinces, where a community radio station was ransacked and forced off the air on Tuesday and some COVID-19 vaccination centres were

closed, disrupting urgently needed inoculations.

Many of the deaths in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal provinces occurred in chaotic stampedes as thousands of people stole food, electric appliances, liquor and clothing from stores, police said. The deployment of 2,500 soldiers to support the overwhelmed South African police has so far failed to stop the rampant looting. Here are the latest updates: Residents of Pimville town, in the Soweto district area, have gathered to prevent Maponya Mall to be looted, according to local media. The structure is the only mall in the area that has not been pillaged so far. Deputy Minister of State Security Zizi Kodwa thanked the community for defending the mall. Major South African ports Durban and Richards Bay and a rail line connecting Durban with the Gauteng province where Johannesburg is located have been disrupted,

according to state logistics group Transnet. Transnet said in a statement that force majeure had been declared on the NATCOR rail line. It added that it was deploying all available resources to avert commercial fuel operations being affected, after being served with a force majeure notice by the SAPREF refinery. As violence continues, looting has hit supply chains and transport links in the Johannesburg region and the southeastern province of KwaZulu-Natal, sending a shockwave to the delivery of goods and services around the country. Outside a branch of a popular supermarket in northern Durban's Eastman region, around 400 people started lining up to buy food, hours before the shop was due to open. "With [this looting], it's an inflection point... this has now seriously compromised our energy security and food security," Bonang Mohale, chancellor of the University of the

Free State and a professor of business and economics studies, told AFP news agency. Christo van der Rhee, executive director of the largest farmers' organisation, AgriSA, said producers were struggling to get their crops to market because the logistical network was in a "shambles". "We need the restoration of law and order as soon as possible, because we are going to have a massive humanitarian crisis," van der Rhee told AFP. The British and Irish Lions rugby team's players have been reassured of their safety during their South African tour, a security official with the tourists told AFP news agency. "There have been discussions with the Lions and security has increased," said the security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity as he is not an authorised spokesman. "South Africa is a vast country size wise and the Western Cape is far from the worst hit areas. I would say it is the safest part of the coun-

try currently." The Lions arrived in South Africa on June 28 for an eight-match tour and played three times in Gauteng before flying to Cape Town last weekend. The National Hospital Network (NHN), which represents 241 hospitals, has warned of the ongoing violence's impact on the country's health care services, according to local media IOL. Due to the unrest, health care workers cannot leave their homes causing dire staff shortages, while food supplies are running out at some hospitals, according to a NHN statement reported by IOL. The network is calling on the government to provide on-site security to hospitals and police escorts for the transport of oxygen and other medical supplies. The NHN is deeply concerned at the slow pace in getting the situation under control, reportedly saying that the "collateral damage is simply unimaginable".

Azerbaijan, ADB mull co-op in green energy

DNA

BAKU: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is interested in continuing cooperation in energy sector and in the "green energy" in the country's liberated lands, the bank's country director Candice McDeigan said during the meeting with Energy Minister Parviz Shahbazov on July 13.

During the meeting, the sides discussed the successful cooperation and the work carried out on the pilot project "exchange of knowledge and technical assistance on the development of floating solar panels system". Speaking about the reforms carried out in Azerbaijan's energy sector and projects implemented to expand the renewable energy sources, Shahbazov underlined the importance of international financial institutions, including ADB's support in this process.

The minister noted that "green growth" is among the national priorities for Azerbaijan's socio-economic development until 2030.

Additionally, the parties expressed confidence that the long-term cooperation with ADB will contribute to the implementation of the law "on the use of renewable energy sources in the electricity production" that came into force in the country recently. Azerbaijan has been a member of the Asian Development Bank since 1999. Since then, the bank has committed \$4.4 billion in loans, \$32.28 million in technical assistance projects, including ADB-administered co-financing for Azerbaijan.

Indian SC demands answers on Kanwar Yatra

WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court has questioned the government over its decision to allow a key Hindu pilgrimage even as experts warn that a third COVID-19 wave was inevitable in the country. The judges sought answers from Uttar Pradesh state and the federal government over the decision to allow the Kanwar Yatra from July 25, saying they were "disturbed" over the matter, legal news portal Live Law reported on Wednesday. The court said citizens were "perplexed" by the permission, at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi and medical experts have warned against large gatherings and urged people to follow physical distancing and other protocols. It fixed the next hearing for Friday. On Tuesday, Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state, said the pilgrimage could take place with a "minimum number of people" and "with strict implementation of COVID-19 protocol", Indian media reports said. Every year, an estimated 50 million 'kanwariyas' - devotees of Hindu God Shiva - travel on foot or by other means from various states to collect water from the holy River Ganges and offer it at Shiva temples in their areas.

Cuba restricts access to social media

WEB DESK

HAVANA: Cuba has restricted access to social media and messaging platforms including Facebook and WhatsApp, global internet monitoring firm NetBlocks has said, in the wake of the biggest anti-government protests in decades. Thousands of Cubans joined demonstrations throughout the Communist-run country on Sunday to protest against a deep economic crisis that has seen shortages of basic goods and power outages. They were also protesting against the government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic and curbs on civil liberties. NetBlocks, based in London, said on its website on Tuesday that Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Telegram in Cuba were partially disrupted on Monday and Tuesday. "The pattern of restrictions observed in Cuba indicate an ongoing crackdown on messaging platforms used to organise and share news of protests in real-time," said NetBlocks director Alp Tokar.

Briefs

Farrukh asks opposition to disclose 'hidden accounts'

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Wednesday asked Pakistan Muslim League-N and Pakistan People's Party for submitting documentary proofs of their hidden foreign accounts instead of criticizing government. PTI has already submitted its donors' bank account details to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), he said while speaking to a private news channel. He said the PPP and PML-N had taken funding from corrupt mafia and investigation would be held against them at any cost, adding, PML-N has hidden 12 accounts and PPP had 7. He said millions of transactions were made in the accounts of PML-N and PPP, and they must clarify their position in this regard. Minister said both parties had committed crime by concealing their accounts from the ECP, adding, both parties also had no details of their donors.

US, Pakistani partners combat the Cotton virus

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Pakistan's International Center for Agriculture Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) celebrated a decade of scientific breakthroughs in cotton breeding through the Cotton Productivity Enhancement Program (CPEP) - a project that has bolstered Pakistan's cotton production and agricultural trade. The ceremony recognized the efforts of over 60 partners and marked the end of the decade-long project, which USDA and ICARDA jointly implemented with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Cotton is one of Pakistan's most important crops, yet by the mid-1990s, the prevalence of the cotton leaf curl virus (CLCuV) had seriously limited production. CPEP developed a laboratory diagnostic test to detect the virus and monitor its spread. As part of the project, farmer field schools were held throughout the growing season in small-holder farmer villages to train farmers, particularly women, on best management practices to increase crop yields. Researchers also developed new cotton seed that are resistant to CLCuV in Pakistan. According to Dr. Jodi Schefler, the USDA lead scientist for CPEP: "With the support of key scientific organizations such as ICARDA and the National Institute for Biotechnology & Genetic Engineering, the project has enabled the sharing of scientific knowledge between the United States and Pakistan, strengthened the livelihoods of smallholder cotton producers in Pakistan, and will protect the U.S. cotton crop against potential outbreaks of CLCuV."

3 Kashmiris martyred in IOJK

PULWAMA: Three young Kashmiris were martyred in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district Wednesday after Indian occupying forces opened fire on them under the guise of a siege and search operation, media reported. According to Kashmir Media Service (KMS), the occupying Indian administration has also suspended internet service in Pulwama as well as in other districts on IOJK. KMS says that in the last few days, there has been an increase in the number of killings under the guise of false search operations by the Indian forces in the occupied valley. - APP

FM Qureshi proposes inter-SCO collaboration

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Foreign Affairs Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Wednesday said that the key to unlock the geo-economic potential of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) region lay in greater connectivity among the member states and proposed a transition to national currencies and setting up the SCO Development Fund and Bank dedicated to project financing. According to a statement by the Foreign Office, addressing the Meeting of the Council of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Foreign Ministers, the foreign minister said that the "collective vision of SCO will reach fruition through effective inter-SCO collaboration in connectivity and development of transport links through air, road and sea". "However, we have noted a lack of progress in road development and transport connectivity initiatives. In advancing these proposals, we all need to transcend zero-sum perceptions and choose cooperation over confrontation," Qureshi said. He said SCO is a vital platform to forge closer ties with regional partners and to realise the potential of the emerging confluence between the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Eurasian Economic Union. The foreign minister said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is the flagship project of BRI, supplements SCO's vision of regional connectivity and economic integration. Qureshi said Pakistan views the SCO as a unique template for interstate relations within the Eurasian Heartland, that brings together nearly 44% of the global population, a quarter of the global GDP, and three-fifths of the total Eurasian territory. He said that during COVID-19, the SCO

Pak FM, Russian counterpart discuss Afghanistan

DUSHANBE: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood on Wednesday met his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in Dushanbe and discussed in details security situation in the region, especially in Afghanistan. It may be recalled that Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi is currently in Tajikistan to attend a meeting of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers. In his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Dushanbe, important regional and global issues were discussed, including bilateral relations and the promotion of bilateral cooperation in various fields. The two sides reviewed the implementation status of the decisions taken during Russian foreign minister's visit to Pakistan in April 2021. It was agreed to work closely to further strengthen bilateral relations in all spheres, the Foreign Office said in a statement. The regional security situation, particularly Afghanistan also came under discussion. Foreign Minister Qureshi briefed his Russian counterpart on Pakistan's constructive approach towards the Afghan peace process. Reiterating continued support, FM Qureshi emphasized close coordination between the two countries to help achieve negotiated political settlement. The two foreign ministers agreed to remain in contact for the mutual benefit of the two countries. - DNA

member states "rose to counter the challenge" and especially commended China and Russia for their role in the collective crisis. The foreign minister said to overcome the challenges arising out of the pandemic, Pakistan supported the initiatives of e-commerce, digital economies, sharing of experiences and practices in innovation and new technologies. On regional security, he said SCO-led mechanisms had resulted in "significant success in dealing with the common challenges of terrorism, separatism, extremism, illicit trafficking of drugs, as well as transnational organised crime". He said that Pakistan is contributing through participation in joint border exercises and joint anti-terrorism exercises as well as through collective action in the fight against narcotics and their precursors. He said stability and peace in Afghanistan had "a bearing

on regional security in the SCO space". As a shared responsibility, he said, Pakistan had played its part in facilitating the peace process aimed at forging a comprehensive, broad based and inclusive, negotiated political solution that is Afghan-led and Afghan-owned. He expressed serious concern over the unfolding situation in the wake of the withdrawal of US and NATO troops and in the absence of a peace deal. "The rise in violence in recent weeks has exacerbated an already volatile situation. A specter of chaos and escalated conflict looms large that would also give space to the 'spoilers' who wish to see the reign of instability in Afghanistan and the region," he said. He called upon all Afghan parties to engage constructively and work for a negotiated political solution. "Pakistan has been and will always be a

partner for peace. "We stand ready to working with SCO member states in reinforcing efforts for sustainable peace and stability in Afghanistan," he said. The foreign minister proposed some ideas he said "would contribute towards achieving our shared vision of a prosperous and inter connected region". - SCO family needs to focus on collective economic development that intertwines with our national Sustainable Development Goals. "Our agencies dealing with achieving Sustainable Development Goals must meet at least once a year and share experiences and best practices in a spirit of cooperation and shared progress," said Qureshi. - In order to promote business partnerships, necessary linkages between CEOs and entrepreneurs of SCO member states must be created and a mechanism to connect annually at the SCO CEOs Club must be offered. "I would be happy to host its first meeting in Pakistan," the foreign minister said. - Empowerment of women in different walks of life is a shared objective within SCO. "Contributing towards this goal, I would like to see SCO Women Entrepreneurs Forum established. A platform that brings together women in business/ trade/ and creative arts to forge a strong SCO identity," Qureshi said. - A Women Parliamentarians Caucus from SCO countries. "As representatives of the people, women parliamentarians offer a unique perspective and leadership style that adds value and depth to governance mechanisms," the foreign minister said. SCO Secretary General Vladimir Norov, Director Executive Committee SCO-Regional Anti Terrorists Structures Jumakhon Giyasov, Foreign Minister of host Tajikistan Sirojiddin Muhriddin and other foreign ministers of SCO member states participated in the meeting.

Pak embassy in Japan honours three citizens



DNA

TOKYO: Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad invited three extraordinary Pakistanis living in Japan for their social work that has also been highlighted in the Japanese media. Mr. Haroon Qureshi, Mr. Ghalib Hussain and Mr. Aqil Siddiqui were invited and presented with letters of appreciation for their services that included providing food for the needy, financial help for the destitute and homeless, running an Islamic school and managing a graveyard for the Muslims. Ambassador appreciated efforts of Mr. Haroon and others while stating that their work has contributed positively towards the image of Pakistan and Pakistanis living in Japan. Mr. Haroon thanked the Ambassador for appreciation and vowed to continue and expand his humanitarian work.

Sindh decides to close schools, indoor dining

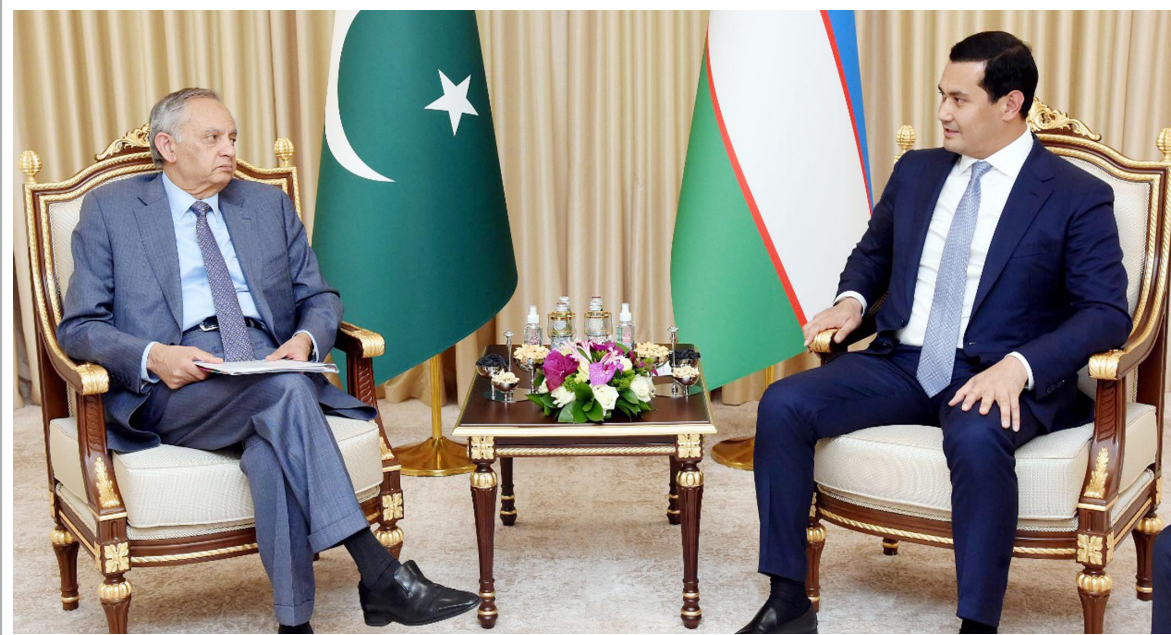
NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Sindh government has decided to close schools, impose a ban on indoor dining again and place several other restrictions across the province as COVID-19 cases continue to increase amid fears of a fourth wave. The steps were taken Wednesday during the meeting of the Provincial Coronavirus Taskforce headed by Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah. Schools are to close from Friday for students of all classes, except for the exams of students enrolled in class 9 and above. Once exams are finished, schools will also close for students of class 9 and above. During the meeting, the chief minister expressed concern over the worsening situation of COVID-19 in Sindh, where the positivity ratio has increased sharply during the past few days. It was also decided to impose a ban on indoor restaurants, amusement parks, water parks, tourists spots, cinemas, gyms and indoor games from Friday.

Stranded Pakistanis to be brought back

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Aviation, Ghulam Sarwar Khan on Wednesday informed the Senate that the government had increased its flights operation for repatriation of stranded Pakistanis from various countries. He was replying to the calling attention notice of Senator Nuzhat Sadiq to draw attention of the Minister for Aviation, towards the difficulties being faced by Pakistanis due to over booking and cancellation of flights of various airlines. The minister said that the flight operation for the repatriation of stranded Pakistanis in different countries was running successfully and assured that action would be taken against the airlines involved in overbooking. He said that any decision about flights at National Command and Operation Centre (NOC) was made keeping in view the COVID-19 situation in consultation with the Civil Aviation Authority. He said that due to COVID-19 situation, whole tourism sector in the world was under great stress. He said NOC meets daily to discuss COVID-19 situation and to make important decisions. He said that although flights had to reduce due to Corona situation, but proper arrangements were made for return of all Pakistanis and decision was made to arrange chartered flights particularly in wake of coming Eid.



ISLAMABAD: Sardor Umur Zakov, Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan for Investment and Foreign Trade calls on Razak Dawood, Advisor to PM on Commerce. - DNA

PM surrenders on every order: Maryam

DNA

HAJIRA: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz has said that Nawaz Sharif is not the 'choice' because he does not capitulate and Imran Khan has become a 'choice' because he is afraid and surrenders on every order. She was addressing a public rally in Hajira College Ground in Azad Kashmir on Wednesday as part of her campaign for the upcoming AJK elections scheduled to be held on July 25. The PML-N leader said that history would remember PM Imran Khan as a puppet premier. She accused him of acquiring power after stealing votes. She claimed that Imran himself confessed and told his people that the 'selectors' had no choice except him. She held that Imran himself betrayed what was the difference between him and Nawaz Sharif. Maryam said neither Nawaz gave in nor did he sell his conscience. She criticized that India had cut Kashmir from the jugular vein of Pakistan with just one stroke of the pen in the PTI tenure, adding that had Nawaz's government been there, India could not have dared do so. Addressing PM Khan, she said: "Azad Kashmir has pronounced its verdict, no matter what you do." She said that whether Imran Khan steals the election or ran away with the boxes or kidnap the Election Commission staff, Kashmir has announced its decision.



PM keen to further develop Pak-China friendship: Moin

DNA

BEIJING: The Pakistan-China friendship has grown even stronger under the present leaders of two countries. Prime Minister Imran Khan is keen to further develop that bond, Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque said on Wednesday. "It is encouraging to see that the friendship has grown even stronger under the present leadership of our two countries. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan is keen to further develop that bond and has visited China thrice since assuming office in 2018," he said in an article published by Beijing Review. He said, PM Imran Khan's reform agenda resonates closely with Chinese President Xi Jinping's vision of socio-economic development, anti-corruption, poverty alleviation, tourism promotion, clean and green development and jobs and livelihood creation. President Xi, in turn, is keen to intensify strategic ties with Pakistan. During his 2015 visit to the country, the bilateral ties were upgraded to an all-weather strategic cooperative partnership. During this particular visit, Pakistan and China launched various new projects of the CPEC, one of the biggest projects under the Belt and Road Initiative. Of these undertakings, many have already been completed while others are at different stages of finalization. Pakistan is completely committed to the CPEC and the Belt and Road Initiative and is ready to take this initiative to new heights as aspired to by both nations' peoples. "We are proud of the special attention President Xi and

Socar hopes energy links with Pakistan will flourish

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (Socar) on Tuesday said that various media reports appearing in the last several days did not represent the reality of successful cooperation between state entities of brotherly Pakistan and Socar. As in all sectors of political and economic life, relationships between Pakistan and Azerbaijan in the energy sphere are also built

on principles of mutual respect and confidence, the spokesman said in a generalised statement. "In accordance with the inter-governmental agreement in the sphere of energy, links between the two countries continue in positive mode and grow in upward trajectory," said the spokesman, adding the fruitful results the two sides have witnessed in the recent years of this cooperation will be further strengthened in the years ahead as well.



The Pakistan-China relationship has negated the notion that bilateral ties are merely the result of convergence of political interests. On the contrary, we have demonstrated that the underlying forces driving strong international cooperation are those of mutual respect and understanding, the common experiences of the past, the adherence to international norms and values, and the sincere desire to work together for a transparent and just international system catering to the legitimate interests of all nations without any discrimination. He said, the year 2021 celebrates the 100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC and thus is an apt occasion to remember its innumerable services and countless sacrifices for the prosperity and progress of China and its people.

Pakistan, China for coordinated approach to achieve peace

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Wednesday had in-depth discussion on the overall regional security situation, with particular focus on the evolving situation in Afghanistan. During the meeting held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Foreign Ministers meeting, there was a consensus that in view of the latest situation, close coordinated approach was extremely critical to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Qureshi briefed his Chinese counterpart on Pakistan's consistent efforts to facilitate

the Afghan peace process. During the meeting, the two Foreign Ministers took stock of existing fraternal ties with a view to further enhance cooperation in all areas of mutual interests, Foreign Office said in a statement issued here. Foreign Minister Qureshi offered condolences on the tragic incident in which a bus carrying Chinese workers plunged into a ravine following a blast and had resulted in the loss of precious lives of Chinese workers and Pakistani nationals. He added that the investigations were underway. The Foreign Minister requested his Chinese counterpart to convey sentiments to the families of those who lost their lives in the incident. - APP



DUSHANBE: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi posing for a picture. - DNA