



Islamabad POST

Monday, July 19, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Outgoing Kyrgyz ambassador given a warm send off

Detailed News On Page-08

Peace can only be achieved through talks

Detailed News On Page-08



Milan complete the signing of Olivier Giroud

Detailed News On Page-06



Afghan govt recalls it's ambassador

Reports of the ambassador's daughter being "abducted" and "tortured" surfaced on Saturday, with a statement by the Afghan foreign ministry saying that the girl was "abducted for several hours" on Friday

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT



KABUL: Afghanistan on Sunday said it was recalling its ambassador to Islamabad and all senior diplomats over "security threats" after the top envoy's daughter was briefly kidnapped in the Pakistani capital this week.

"Following the abduction of the daughter of Afghan ambassador in Pakistan, the leadership of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan have recalled the Afghan envoy and other senior diplomats from Islamabad back to Kabul until all the security threats are removed," the foreign ministry said, demanding the arrest and prosecution of kidnapers.

The daughter of Afghanistan's ambassador to Pakistan was briefly kidnapped by unknown assailants who left her with injuries and rope marks and Pakistan authorities have said they are investigating the matter.

Reports of the ambassador's daughter being "abducted" and "tortured" surfaced on Saturday, with a statement by the Afghan foreign ministry

Whole saga is a conspiracy, says Rashid

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said on Sunday that the incident involving the daughter of the ambassador of Afghanistan to Pakistan "was not an abduction" at all. "This is an international conspiracy. An agenda of RAW," he said, while speaking to a private news channel. He was referring to the Indian intelligence agency. The minister said that the daughter had first claimed that

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan terms Afghan decision 'unfortunate'

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The decision by the Government of Afghanistan to recall its Ambassador and senior diplomats from Pakistan is unfortunate and regrettable. The reported abduction and assault of Ambassador's daughter in Islamabad is being investigated and followed-up at the highest level on the instructions of the Prime Minister. The security of the Ambassador, his family and personnel of

Continued on Page 06

saying that the girl was "abducted for several hours" on Friday. The Foreign Office issued a statement in response saying that a thorough probe has been launched and law enforcement agencies "are trying to trace and apprehend the culprits to be brought to justice". In the meanwhile, the security for the ambassador and his family was "beefed up", according to the statement.

Prime Minister Imran Khan had instructed the interior minister to get to the bottom of the matter within 48 hours. Last night, the minister shared an update into the probe, saying that the woman used the services of two taxis, and that the driver of one has been contacted, while the other will be traced after a written statement is provided by the family.



BAGH: Prime Minister Imran Khan addressing a rally in Kashmir. – DNA

PM stresses reduction in violence

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan and President Ashraf Ghani met on the sidelines of International Conference on "Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities" in Tashkent on 16 July 2021. The exchange of views focused on Afghan peace process and Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. The Prime Minister highlighted that Pakistan has always supported a united, peaceful and stable Afghanistan. The Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's consistent support to the Afghan peace process, highlighting that Pakistan

Continued on Page 06

Elect honest leaders, PM urges Kashmir

The premier was addressing PTI rallies in Bimbar and Mirpur as part of the party's election campaign

DNA

BHIMBAR: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Sunday said that when one goes to vote in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly polls on July 25, they must ask themselves if the party leader is honest (sadiq) and trustworthy (ameen). He was addressing a PTI rally in Bimbar as part of the party's election campaign ahead of the polls, and later, addressed one in Mirpur, where he urged the crowd to do the same. "Ask yourselves while casting the vote: are these leaders honest and trustworthy?"

PM Imran Khan said that even if party leaders are not honest, and the candidates contesting the election are, "they will not be able to do anything (honest)". "But if your leader is honest and if the candidate is a cheat, he will fear doing anything (dishonest). If the leader is not chasing money, he won't let others chase it either," the premier said. The prime minister said that if one does research on the poorest countries of the world, they will find that their state is such because there are "Nawaz Sharifs" and "Asif Ali Zardaris" there too. "Their leaders are stealing the country's wealth and

taking it abroad." "Wherever you find poverty, you will find the rule of force, not law. You will find corrupt leaders, prime ministers, ministers and parliament." "This is why Hazrat Ali said that a system run by disbelievers may very well run, but a system where this is injustice, will never prevail," the premier said. Earlier, at the outset of his speech in Bimbar, the premier urged the large crowd gathered to wear masks, as the threat of coronavirus is far from over. "You all are standing very close together. I fear that I will

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Use of technology crucial

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi says Pakistan's proactive approach to prepare itself for the technology-focused fourth industrial revolution would lead it towards becoming an economically strong nation.

PTI govt 'incompetent'

DNA

LAHORE: PML-N President and Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shahbaz Sharif has said that the masses have to face problems of electricity and gas load-shedding because of PTI's "incompetence and greed for money," media reported Sunday.

Construction on Dasu Project to resume soon

The Chinese company also nullified an earlier notification about termination of contract

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Chinese construction company CGGC has declared its earlier notice null and void about contract termination of employment of Pakistani labour working with it on Dasu Hydropower Project. Thereafter, construction work on Dasu Hydropower Project would now be resumed very soon, said a notice issued on Sunday. Meanwhile, later clarification was also issued from the foreign office regarding the notification of termination of the employment contract of the Pakistani personnel working on

Continued on Page 06

Qureshi, Chinese envoy visit CMH

NEHAL MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong Sunday visited the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) here and inquired after the well-being of Chinese nationals, injured in Dasu incident. They wished them speedy recovery.

The foreign minister assured the injured Chinese nationals for all out support and medical care, said a press release. He also expressed his satisfaction over the treatment given to them and the recovery being made by the Chinese nationals. "Our projects will be completed soon," he further added. On the occasion, Ambassador Nong Rong said that China and Pakistan would continue to cooperate more closely to face any challenges together. Earlier on arrival, Major General Muhammad Aleem, Commandant CMH apprised the visiting dignitaries of the medical care being provided to the injured.

Chinese team visits incident site

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A 15-member Chinese delegation has visited Dasu in connection with the investigation of the tragic incident where it was briefed by the Pakistani side. In a statement on Sunday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri, responding to media queries regarding the Chinese delegation's visit to Pakistan to provide assistance in investigating the Dasu incident, said the Chinese team expressed appreciation over the efforts made by the Pakistan side.

Taliban leader 'favours political settlement'

DNA

KABUL: The Taliban's supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada on Sunday said he "strenuously favours" a political settlement to the conflict in Afghanistan even as the hardline Islamist movement has launched a sweeping offensive across the nation. The announcement comes as representatives of the Afghan government and Taliban insurgents sat down for a new round of

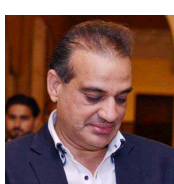
talks in Doha over the weekend, stirring hopes that the long stalled peace talks were being resuscitated. "In spite of the military gains and advances, the Islamic Emirate strenuously favors a political settlement in the country," Akhundzada said in a message released ahead of next week's Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha. "Every opportunity for the establishment of an Islamic system, peace and security that presents itself will be made use of by the Islamic

Emirate," he added. For months, the two sides have been meeting on and off in the Qatari capital, but have achieved little if any notable success with the discussions appearing to have lost momentum as the militants made enormous gains on the battlefield. The two sides were due to talk again on Sunday. The Taliban leader said his group remained committed to forging a solution to end the war but slammed "the opposition parties" for "wasting time".

CA & SA conference brings laurels to Uzbekistan

The conference indeed provided both Pakistan and Uzbekistan to come further close to each other. The agreement to form the strategic partnership, of course, is a landmark step in terms of strengthening and deepening bilateral relations

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI



TASHKENT: The good thing with the new Uzbekistan is that it gives you an absolutely new look whenever you visit this fast emerging economy. The country can surely be proud of being a house of the vibrant peoples and thriving business and touristic hub.

A few years ago perhaps nobody could predict that Uzbekistan would acquire strategic and regional importance within a short span of time. This great Central Asian country started making strides towards progress and development when the incumbent President Shavkat Mirziyoyev took charge of the office. They way President Shavkat carried forward the futuristic policies of the founding President late Islam Karimov, is ostensibly unparalleled. It is because of the visionary leadership that Uzbeki-



stan now stands out prominently among the comity of nations. Internally, the country has seen colossal developmental activities. The infrastructure has been streamlined on modern lines while the living standard of people has also been improved albeit in the remote areas people may not have access to all facilities but the good thing is that the government is fully aware of this fact and therefore zealously working to bring those areas at par with the developed ones, sooner rather than later. When I talked to people on

streets, cafes; working places and even students, everybody seemed satisfied with the way the incumbent President had been running the country. I met a middle-age man, in a cafe, who had never exercised his voting right, but this time he was all agog to cast his vote for President Shavkat as according to him the President had changed the lot of the country and people as well. He admitted, the government was faced with challenges also but what made him optimistic that ultimately

Continued on Page 06

PM Imran Khan shares glimpses of his Bukhara visit

The prime minister concluded his stay in Uzbekistan by visiting the mausoleums of great Islamic personalities in the historic cities of Samarkand and Bukhara

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

TASHKENT: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Sunday shared more glimpses from his Uzbekistan visit, detailing his visit to the ancient city of Bukhara. In a message from his personal Twitter handle, Imran Khan said that the ancient city of Bokhara which he visited last Friday was the centre of learning for centuries. "Changez Khan was so impressed by the height of the tower that he spared it when he sacked the city in the 1220s," the prime minister said as he offered prayers at the shrine of the founder of the 'Naqashbandiya silsila'. Prime Minister Imran Khan Sunday shared a combo of pictures and comments on twitter, the popular social media platform, about his recent visit to ancient city of Bokhara, in Uzbekistan.



Continued on Page 06

Inside...

C. Asian countries have huge potential for Pakistani products – Page 02

Inland aquaculture a potential area for Pakistan-China co-op – Page 03

Only presidential form of govt to salvage Pakistan – Page 04

EU's balancing act between Beijing and Biden – Page 05

Olympic cluster scare as athletes test positive – Page 06

District admin to plant over 3.247 million saplings – Page 07

Outgoing Kyrgyz envoy given a warm send off – Page 08

Briefs

Transporters arrested over violation of official fares

PESHAWAR: The district administration took notice of complaints regarding overcharging of commuters by transporters conducted raids on bus stations and arrested several drivers on Sunday.

According to details, the district administration was receiving complaints regarding overcharging by transporters due to the influx of commuters ahead of Eidul Azha, said a press release issued here.

In this connection, the officers of district administration inspected bus stations across the provincial metropolis and arrested several drivers on overcharging from commuters. The overcharged fare was returned to commuters on the spot.

On this occasion, the commuters expressed jubilation and appreciated the performance of district administration.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Khalid Mahmood has directed administrative officers for conducting inspection of bus stations and action against transporters over violation of the officially issued fare-list. — APP

Traders' bodies join hands for joint struggle

PESHAWAR: Alliance Federation, Peshawar and Markaz-e-Tanzeem-e-Tajirgan have agreed on joint struggle for the resolution of the problems of trading community, said a press release issued on Sunday. Both organizations of the trading community were agreed during a meeting between the president of Markaz-e-Tanzeem-e-Tajirgan Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Malik Meher Elahi and president Traders' Alliance Federation, Peshawar Ghulam Bilal Javed.

During meeting they discussed problems faced by the trading community and agreed on unconditional joint struggle for serving the interest of traders in the province. Others those present on the occasion were included Amin Hussain Babar, Ghulam Hussain Chank, Haji Ihsan, Bakht Mir Jan Durrani, Mazullah, Shehzad Ahmad Siddiqui, Fazal Mula, Hamayun Israr and others.

Speaking on the occasion, Ghulam Bilal Javed paid tributes to the services of Malik Meher Elahi for his services for trading community.

He said that joint work with them will provide them opportunity to learn from his experience. He said that with the alliance between both organization, Traders Alliance will get more strength as now not only the problems of Peshawar Cantonment rather the problems of traders at the city will also be addressed. — APP

2 outlaws held after encounter

FAISALABAD: City Tandianwala police claimed on Sunday to have arrested two dacoits after a shoot-out and recovered illegal weapons and other valuables from their possession.

According to details, police were carrying two accused of a dacoity case Faizul Hasan and Abid Gujjar for recovery of valuables when their accomplices intercepted the police van and opened indiscriminate fire. The attackers succeeded in getting their arrested accomplices freed from police custody.

The police team called for help and when more force reached the spot and chased the outlaws, the criminals took shelter in nearby crops and opened indiscriminate fire at police team.

The police also returned the fire and during the brief encounter, Faizul Hasan and Abid Gujjar received bullet injuries and fell on the ground while their accomplices Nasir, etc. managed to escape. Further investigation was underway. — APP

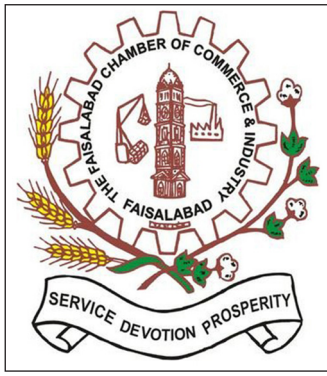
C. Asian countries have huge potential for Pakistani products

Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) appreciated the efforts of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Advisor Abdul Razak Dawood to enhance bilateral trade between Pakistan and Uzbekistan and said that it will be beneficial for the both countries

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Collaboration between Pakistan and Uzbekistan will open new avenues of value addition and help Pakistan to almost double its exports, said Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI). He was addressing a joint meeting of entrepreneurs organized by the Ministry of Commerce/Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) in Tashkent. It was chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed said that Uzbekistan has a well-developed cotton and spinning industry and we could collaborate in these sectors in addition to exploiting the massive potential of value addition in the processing sector. He said that Textile Policy has played a pivotal role in jacking up exports to 15 billion dollars and Faisalabad has played a key role in achieving the ambitious export targets. He said that the new Textile Policy is still lying unapproved. "Its approval will give a new momentum to the textile sector", he said and add-



ed that it will also help the Government to get maximum foreign reserves from its exports.

He appreciated the Government's efforts to open new export markets for Pakistani exporters and said that Central Asian States have huge potential for Pakistani products but our exporters hesitate to enter into these untapped markets in the absence of a reliable banking system.

However, he appreciated the efforts of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Advisor Abdul Razak Dawood to enhance bilateral trade between Pakistan and Uzbekistan and said that it will be beneficial for the both countries. Commenting on the proposed

PTA (Preferential Trade Agreement) and said that during its negotiation textile sector may be involved and before finalizing the draft of PTA, all stakeholders must be consulted and taken into confidence to ensure maximum benefit for the Pakistani exports. He further said that Uzbekistan is also a cotton surplus country and we could import cotton from this country to overcome our domestic shortfall.

However, a peaceful Afghanistan is imperative for trade with Uzbekistan and other Central Asian Republics as all road links pass through this war ravaged country.

Indonesian envoy discusses Batik promotion in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Indonesia Adam Tugio had afternoon tea with Mohsin Qamar, CEO Batik Studio Fashion Store in Marriott Hotel. During discussion, they exchanged ideas on how the Embassy and Batik Studio Fashion Store can work together to promote Indonesian intangible cultural heritage of Batik through exhibitions and competition to design Batik with Pakistani motives later this year.

Batik is an Indonesian technique of wax-resist dyeing applied to the whole cloth. This technique originated from the island of Java, Indonesia. Batik is made either by drawing dots and lines of the resist with a spouted tool called a canting, or by printing the resist with a copper stamp called a cap.



Admin, PESCO join hands against power theft

DNA

PESHAWAR: District administration Peshawar and Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) Sunday joined hands against power theft to provide relief to people in load shedding during Eidul Azha.

In this connection, Assistant Commissioner (AC) City, Dr. Ihtasham-ul-Haq along with Executive Engineer (XEN), Niaz Mohammad and Additional Assistant Commissioner (AAC), Mohammad Azhar conducted raids against power pilferers and removed over 130 direct connections.

Further action would also be taken against them. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar, Khalid Mahmood has directed crackdown on Kunda mafia and showing no leniency with anyone in this regard. He vowed that those involved in power pilferages would be sent to jails.

ATC complex at Faisalabad airport becomes operational

DNA

FAISALABAD: An air traffic control (ATC) complex equipped with the latest technology as per international standards has been established at the Faisalabad airport.

According to the airport manager, the newly established ATC complex has become operational at the Faisalabad airport. The complex has been completed in six months with a cost of Rs40 million.

The new air traffic control complex has been established at the height of 120 feet as due to the lower height of the old ATC it was difficult to control the planes at the airport.

Earlier this month, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) had green-lighted Air Arabia to operate four flights to and from Faisalabad and Multan in a week.

According to CAA officials, the low-cost Emirati airline (Air Arabia) would operate two weekly flights between Abu Dhabi and Multan and two flights between Abu Dhabi and Faisalabad.

Last month, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) had granted permission to increase the number of flights up to 40 per cent to five countries.

Crime free roads, responsibility of PHP

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: The safer highways are crucial to ensure safety and security of road commuters. The crime free roads are critical responsibility of Punjab highway Patrolling police. SSP patrolling Region Faisalabad Mirza Anjum Kamal asserted that Incharge Posts should work hard to ensure crime and accident free highways. He showed his disapproval about the absence of Officers/officials in his recent surprise visits. The field staff should perform their duties with religious fervour as they have assigned with noble task of safeguarding the life and property of citizens. Besides prevention of crime, the regulation of traffic is awfully essential. In order to mitigate the ratio of accidents, the drivers should be sensitized. The infraction of one way is disastrous that need to be dealt with stern hands. He directed to impound the vehicles who are involved in traffic violations.

Couple's fight claims life of daughter

FAISALABAD: A girl was killed during a scuffle between her parents, in the area of Mureedwala police station.

Police said on Sunday that Razia Bibi, along with her 11-year-old daughter Nadia Parveen, left her house over domestic dispute and started to live with her parents in Chak 489-GB.

Her husband Shahbaz went to his in-laws house for settling the matter with his wife when a scuffle occurred between the couple, during which, Shahbaz pulled head scarf (Dopatta) of his daughter Nadia to carry her along with him, but her mother also pulled the girl to stop her going with her father. During the scuffle, Nadia was strangled and she died on the spot.

A case has been registered against the accused.

3 corpses found

Three bodies were found in different parts of the city on Sunday.

According to police, some passersby found body of a 25-year-old youth floating in Rakh Branch Canal near Samundri Road and informed the police and Rescue-1122.

The divers of Rescue-1122 fished out the corpse and handed it over to D-Type Colony for further action.

Meanwhile, police found a body of 40-year-old man from a deserted place on Jhumra Road, whereas a body of elderly man was recovered from fields of Chak 28-JB. The identity of victims has yet to be established.

The bodies have been sent to mortuary for postmortem. Further investigation was underway. — APP

WSSP finalises Eid ul Azha sanitation plan

PESHAWAR: Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP) has finalised three-day Eid ul Azha sanitation operation plan for 43 urban union councils of Peshawar.

The plan was finalised during a meeting with Chief Executive Officer Dr Hassan Nasir in the chair.

As per the plan, 2602 sanitary workers would be on duty on the first day of Eid ul Azha. The company will collect offals through 566 vehicles of which 310 are WSSP's own vehicles while 253 are private vehicles hired for the biggest sanitation operation of the year in which 10500 tons of waste is expected to be produced within 3 days of Eid. A week earlier, massive awareness campaign was launched in the provincial metropolis to sensitize masses about cleaning the surroundings clean and disposing offal at designated location.

Out of total 6202 staff, 1189 are sanitary workers, 660 Katta Qulis, 341 drivers, 293 helpers, 63 municipal inspectors and 55 supervisors.

Of the total fleet, 153 Suzuki mini dumpers, 18 mini dumpers, 25 bike loaders, 20 small tractors, 108 large

tractors, 42 compactors, 40 shovels, two trucks, 23 multi-loaders armroll, 109 dumpers, nine excavators and 17 rickshaws would be used for offal and waste collection during the three days sanitation operation. All zonal managers have finalised temporary transfers stations where the waste would be collected from narrow streets and congested residential localities and then taken to Shamshato dumping site, some 22 km away from city.

The waste would be fumigated and powder lime will be used before covering it with soil at the dumping site and in transfer stations.

Monitoring teams supervised by the Chief Executive Officer WSSP Dr. Hassan Nasir comprising general managers, zonal managers, managers and assistant managers are constituted for effective execution of the plan.

To divide the staff and vehicles zone-wise, Zone-A that comprised of nine union councils will deploy 497 staff and 142 vehicles, expecting to pick 2008 tons of waste. In Zone B, comprising 21 UCs, as many 1058 staff and 211 vehicles will carry out operation, estimated to collect 3702 tons waste. — APP

Plantation minimizes pollution and smog: Justice Rana Masood

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: District & Session Judge Rana Masood Akhtar and Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali sapled the plant at District Courts. Additional Deputy Commissioner HQ Muhammad Khalid, Additional District and Session Judges, President District Bar Association Ch.Akhtar Ali Virk, Secretary Bar Khurram Ejaz Kahloo and others also sapled the plants. District & Session Judge highlighted the importance of plantation and said that trees are the beauty of nature those minimize the pollution and smog. He said that trees are being planted in the vacant places of courts. He asked the Judges to participate in the plantation campaign and sapled as many as trees which also gave us th shadow. Deputy Commissioner said that all possible steps are being taken to make the Prime Minister's Ten Billion Tree project a success and during last week more than 15 thousand sapled planted in connection with Khidmat Aap Ki Dehleez Par program. He said that plantation regarding monsoon was also underway in the district during which government offic-



FAISALABAD: District & Session Judge Rana Masood Akhtar sapled the plant at District Courts. — DNA

es, parks and the target will be achieved by planting trees in public places. He asked the officers of the forest department to make effective arrangements for their maintenance and development by planting different types of tall plants on the available lands so that they can grow and meet the challenges facing the environment.

20229 more people get vaccination

As many as 20229 more people and Health Care Worker administered the

corona vaccine at designated 35 vaccination centers and mobile camps yesterday and till now 766531 people vaccinated.

Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali informed that 19926 general public and 303 health workers administered vaccine yesterday in which 14158 public had first and 5768 had second while 79 and 224 health workers had vaccinated first and second dose respectively. Deputy Commissioner appealed the

citizen to vaccinate themselves against corona. He said that No Vaccination No Service Policy had been started in the govt. departments so to avoid any hurdles people should vaccinated otherwise no facility would be given to unvaccinated. Meanwhile the mobile corona vaccination was also started at eight bazars of clock tower. Assistant Commissioner City Syed Ayub Bukhari supervised the process alongwith Pak Army Officers.

CM suspends entire staff of Excise checkpost

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mahmood Khan Sunday paid a surprise visit to various government offices in Mardan and Malakand districts without any protocol. The chief minister suspended the entire staff of Shergarh Excise Checkpost on showing negligence in duties. When the chief minister arrived at the check post, the entire staff was taking rest in their rooms instead of checking vehicles on the road. He also expressed his displeasure over poor cleanliness situation in Mardan and issued warning to the Tehsil Municipal Committee concerned.

The CM also visited various sections of Dargai hospital and inspected various health facilities and cleanliness situation. — APP



DHIRKOT: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz Sharif addressing a rally during the election campaign in AJK. — DNA

Briefs

Met dept. predicts rain in Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department Sunday forecast rain, wind/thundershower in Islamabad, Upper Punjab, Upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan during next 24 hours. According to MET office Islamabad, hot and humid weather is likely to prevail elsewhere in the country. A strong monsoon currents are likely to penetrate upper parts of the country from Sunday (evening/night) and may persist till Wednesday. Rainfall in Sindh: Padidan 32, Shaheed Benazirabad 16, Sakrand 08, Dadu 06, Badin 01; Balochistan: Turbat 12, Zhob 06, Khuzdar 01; and Punjab: Sialkot (City) 01. The maximum temperature's recorded in (°C) as Sibbi 44, Chillas 43, Mohenjodharo, Rohri and Bahawalnagar 42.

Lok Virsa Museums to remain close on Eid-ul-Adha

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (NIFTH) - Lok Virsa museums would remain closed on the first day of Eid-ul-Adha, an official statement said. As per previous practice, both the Museums National Heritage Museum and Pakistan Monument Museum administered by Lok Virsa will reopen with routine public timings on the second day of Eid. Executive Director Lok Virsa Talha Ali said that a large number of people were used to visit National Heritage Museum and Monument Museum on special occasions of Eid festivals and Independence Day celebrations. Talha Ali said that visitors should follow COVID-19 SOPs including wearing masks and social distancing.

Virtual projection of arts, culture continues

ISLAMABAD: The cultural organizations including art galleries of the twin cities continued their efforts to compile and share artistic pieces, virtually observing social distancing to slow down the spread of contagious COVID-19 Pandemic. Executive Director National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage - Lok Virsa Talha Ali told APP that the pandemic forced many cultural institutions to adopt Information Technology based innovative solutions to reach their audience. He said that during the first wave of COVID-19 many cultural programmes were postponed that put a huge economic blow on the artists. Talha Ali said it was difficult situation where virtual programmes had kept us connected with artists and their creative works. He said that art had a significant role in uniting the society, provide comfort, inspire creativity and ease stress among masses that was prevailing in these troubling times.

He said Lok Virsa would continue to compile and share virtual arts and cultural experiences, such as online dance classes, live streamed concerts, creative activities for kids, and virtual gallery tours. "Most of these opportunities are for free and public must avail them," he underlined. The Theater Wallay official said the art world has been extremely hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic over the last year and a half. The cinemas and theaters have been in darkness and concert halls silent due to lockdown that left many jobless and destitute. "Performers and artists have found themselves without work, and cultural activity of all kinds has been at a standstill. The virtual experiences are a sign of relief for many cultural organizations, artists and artisans," he added. - APP

Inland aquaculture a potential area for Pakistan-China co-op

In this new avenue in the business sector, Dr. Saeed Murtaza Hasan Andravi believed that the aquaculture fisheries can be a good opportunity for Chinese investors, and the Pakistani side can learn from Chinese experience and expertise

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Inland aquaculture is a potential area for Pak-China cooperation to earn foreign exchange, says a report published by Gwadar Pro. According to Dr. Saeed Murtaza Hasan Andravi, director of Animal Sciences Institute, NARC in Pakistan, fisheries is a big and emerging sector, especially inland fisheries. "As for marine fishery, nature has provided us with a long coast line where we catch different natural varieties of fish and seafood which we are also exporting. Then we have inland fisher-

ies, freshwater fisheries, in Pakistan. He told Gwadar Pro that this is an emerging sector and has proven itself that in an agricultural country where crops and livestock are important, fishery is also valuable at the same time. He further explained that it provides a good diet to humans, which is high in protein, and can be exported to earn foreign exchange, adding that "if we look at all these factors such as human health, poverty alleviation, nutritious diet, export, fisheries has proven itself." Meanwhile, China is advanced in aquaculture fishery. According to the National Scientific Big



Data Sharing Platform for Fishery, from 2015 to 2019, the gross output value of China's mariculture industry and freshwater aquaculture industry maintained an average annual growth rate of about 5% and 2%, respectively. In this new avenue in the business sector, Dr. Saeed Murtaza Hasan Andravi believed that the aquaculture fisheries can be a good opportunity for Chinese investors, and the Pakistani side can learn

from Chinese experience and expertise.

"For the inland fish farming, farmers need a good, cheap and easily available aqua feed. This is a very good field for Chinese investment. As for breeding, Chinese investors can bring the new Chinese fish breeds to Pakistan and set up their farms, hatcheries and sell these and their eggs to the farmers. This also requires investment, preferably from Chinese," he said. Now a huge quantity of Pakistan's seafood is exported to China, "we need to open avenues of export to China from aquaculture and inland fisheries along with sea-

food." Pakistani scientists have been working with Chinese experts in close liaison for the past few years and working to introduce Chinese breeding techniques and Chinese breeds such as trout to Pakistan.

According to RehanaKausar, program leader and senior scientific officer at Animal Sciences Institute, NARC, Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) has established two laboratories at its research station namely Mountain Agriculture Research Centre (MARC) Juglote, Gilgit-Baltistan, with the technical cooperation of Gansu Fisheries Research Institute (GFRI), China.

36 criminals arrested, weapons recovered

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) launched operations in different areas and rounded up 36 lawbreakers for possessing illegal weapons besides recovering 29 pistols 30 bore, a 32 bore pistol, three 223 bore rifles, a Kalashnikov and, ammunition during last three days. According to a Police Spokesman, Airport, Race Course, Pirwadhai, Sadiqabad, Mandra, Saddar Baroni, KalarSyedan, Naseerabad, Gujran Khan, Chontra, Kahuta, Cantt, Morgah, Westridge, Taxila and Murree police conducted raids in their respective jurisdictions and arrested Muhammad Imran, Usama Ali, Numan Ali, Muhammad Amjad, Saddam Hussain, Umar Farooq, Hamza Khan, Arif, Abdullah, Waqar Ashraf, Haris, Shahzaib, HarisShafi, Zain, Bilal, Muhammad Imran, Numan, Amjad, Zeeshan, Atif, Muhammad Riaz, Abdul Khaliq, Muhammad Ilyas, Waqar Mehmood, Ubaid ur Rehman, Muhammad Habib, Hayat, and others. He said, the operations would continue and the lawbreakers would be sent behind the bars.

Lok Virsa conducts miniature painting classes

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

Medicines' generic name prescription to be ensured

ISLAMABAD: Provincial health departments, Health care Commissions and Chief Drug Inspectors have been directed to develop a mechanism to ensure prescription of medicines in generic name. Directions in this regard were issued to provinces in response to a complaint received from the Prime Minister portal that some pharma firms give bribes to doctors for prescribing their trade names of medicines. Director, Division of Pharmacy Services, Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), Dr. Abdur Rashid said that provinces will develop a mechanism that all doctors should prescribe medicines in generic name and retail pharmacy drugs will be dispensed by pharmacists. The matter of registration of drugs on generic name basis has already been taken up by the concerned DRAP's Division with relevant stakeholders in March 2021. - APP

Motorbike, 3 wheeler sales increase 38.97%

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The sale of motorbikes and three wheelers witnessed an increase of 38.97 percent during the fiscal year (2020-21) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. During the period under review, as many as 1,903,932 motorbikes and three wheelers were sold in July-June (2020-21) against the sale of 1,370,005 units in July-June (2019-20), showing growth of 38.97 percent, according to the Pakistan automobile Manufacturing Association (PAMA). The sale of Honda motorcycles went up 47.85 percent from 873,902 units in last year to 1,292,096 units during fiscal year 2021 whereas the sale of Suzuki motorcycles also rose by 43.63 percent from 17,301 units to 24,851 units.



ISLAMABAD: Motorcyclists making selfie with a dove model auto rickshaw on Islamabad Expressway. - APP

High rates force buyers to leave without animals

RAWALPINDI: With only two days left for the Eid-ul-Azha, the buyers flocking cattle markets in Rawalpindi are left with little option, but to return home without buying sacrificial animals. Residents, who arrived here at Bhatta Chowk sale point along with their jubilant children, told APP on Sunday that the animal sellers were demanding exorbitant prices which were beyond their purchasing power. Ghais Haider, a buyer at the market, said last year he purchased a small goat of 25 kilograms against Rs 30,000, but now the same animal was being sold at up to Rs 60,000 which showed that the rate of sacrificial animal had gone up by 100 percent. Riaz Abbasi, another buyer, at Adiala Road market said the rates of goats, sheep, buffalos and cows were inflated, forcing the people to go home empty hands. He said buffalos and cows of 160 kilograms, which were available at no more than Rs 120,000 last year, were being sold up to Rs 200,000 this year. Riaz called upon the district administration to take steps to save the public from fleecing of sellers. When contacted President Jamiat Ul Quresh Pakistan Khursheed Ahmed Qureshi, he said the major cause of the increase in prices of animals was due to demand and supply gap. He informed APP that animals' production had witnessed a steep decline during the previous years as the departments concerned had failed to adopt a comprehensive policy to boost production of halal meat, resulting in Rs 400 per kg increase in mutton prices and Rs 300 per kg in beef prices during the last year. Giving details about online shopping of sacrificial animals, Qureshi, who is also a member of the Board of Directors of Livestock and Dairy Development Directorate, said that the online shopping of sacrificial had reached up to 70 percent due to the Covid-19 pandemic, adding the people were preferring online platforms. He said the use of online platforms to purchase sacrificial animals could also be another reason for small crowds at the cattle markets, adding online companies offering a goat of 14 kg at Rs 32,000 and 14 kg of share in cows or buffaloes at Rs 15,000. - APP

Lok Virsa's 'Mandwa Film Club' to resume next month

ISLAMABAD: Executive Director Lok Virsa Talha Ali Khan Kushyaha here said that National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) would resume its famous 'Mandwa Film Club' next month (August) for the entertainment activities for common public. While talking to APP, Talha Khan said the Club members and fans also demanded that National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (NIFTH) should resume screening of national and international films. He said that more films from our glorious past which related to our folk culture and traditions were in the priority list of our film club. He said that Lok Virsa was also busy in documentary classes of film productions. Former Mandwa Film Club Coordinator Aijaz Gul further told that over 150 classical national international films were screened at club since its inception. The members of club, fans and visitors had earlier expressed displeasure over the closing of this popular programme. - APP

HEC prohibits enrollment in unauthorized degree programs

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Higher Education Commission (HEC) has advised the students not to waste their time and money by enrolling in unauthorized degree programs such as two-year BA/BSc or MA/MSc which have been phased out due to the quality concerns. According to an official of HEC, one or two universities have announced admission to unauthorized BA/BSc and MA/MSc programmes which would earn money for the university but would not in the interest of the students. These discarded degrees would not enable students to apply for jobs or further education. The decision to phase out BA/BSc and MA/MSc programmes and replace them with a single, composite four-year BS degree was taken in 2004, however, universities were allowed to continue both systems in a transition period. In 2011, the Associate Degree (AD) was announced as an alternative to the BA/BSc degree. AD is equivalent to 14 years schooling and entitles graduates to get admission in the 15th

semester of respective BS programmes after fulfilling the admitting university's requirement. In 2016, the transition period was concluded and a final decision made to stop admissions in BA/BSc programmes on December 31, 2018 and in MA/MSc programme on December

31, 2020. The official source revealed that it was also decided that the last BA/BSc exam would be held in 2020 and that the admission to the last batch of MA/MSc would take place before December 31, 2020. These decisions were confirmed in 2017, and again in 2018, 2019 and 2020. However, due to the disruption caused by the corona-

virus, universities were given a grace period of three months to conclude the final BA/BSc exams before March 31, 2021. Similarly, the deadline for admission to the final cohort of the MA/MSc programmes was extended to March 31, 2021 so that the final cohort of BA/BSc students could apply for admission. In addition, holders of BA/BSc degrees were allowed to apply for admission in the third year or 5th semester of the BS programme, subject to the completion of a bridging semester or any additional course requirements that the university may impose. Any student who has missed the deadline to get admission to the MA/MSc programmes can apply instead for admission to the third year (semester) of the BS programme, which is a far superior option. Fresh students can be admitted either directly into the 4-year BS programme, or in the 2-year Associate Degree Programmes, offered through recognized campuses, constituent and affiliated colleges in place of the old BA/BSc programmes.



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Street criminals held, looted items recovered

SSP (Operations) has said that during the preliminary investigation, the accused have confessed their involvement in several incidents of snatching and street crime in the areas of Khanna, Lohi Bher, Koral, Sihala and Express Highway

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Khanna police team has arrested a gang of four criminals who have been found involved in several snatching and street crime incidents in the city. The police also recovered snatched motorbikes, mobile phones, digital cameras and weapons along with ammunition from them. According to the details, SSP (Operations) Islamabad police, Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanweer had categorically directed all the Zonal SPs to accelerate their efforts to arrest the accused involved in street crime and snatching incidents and recover the looted items. Following these directions, SP (Rural-Zone), Noshawan constituted po-

lice teams under supervision of SDPO Shehzad Town, ASP Usman Munir. A Khanna Police team headed by SHO Khanna police station Sub-Inspector Ashiq Khan and also including SI Ghulam Mustafa and other police officials ensured high vigilance in the area and succeeded to nab 4 snatchers. These accused were preparing for dacoity and the police team, on a tip of, conducted a successful raid and arrested them. The accused have been identified as Usaid



s/o Fazal Raheem, Sani Boss s/o Gul Abbas, Noor Naja s/o Pervaiz Masih and Jawad Masood s/o Masood Raheem. The Police team also recovered 3 motorbikes, mobile phone, digital camera, and pistols along with ammunition from their possession. SSP (Operations) has said that during the preliminary investigation, the accused have confessed their involvement in several incidents of snatching and street crime in the areas of Khanna, Lohi Bher, Koral, Sihala and Express Highway. The accused

used to commit crime on gunpoint at midnight and snatched motorbikes, cameras, mobile phones and other valuables. Furthermore, Lohibher police arrested two accused Aziz Khan and Muhammad Ali Bukhari involved in a murder and dacoity case and recovered looted cash Rs 3, 08,000 from their possession. IGP Islamabad Qazi Jamil Ur Rehman and DIG (Operations) Afzaal Ahmed Kausar have appreciated this performance and announced cash rewards and commendation certificates for the team. SSP (Operations) emphasized that, Islamabad Police is determined to curb snatching incidents in the city and numerous gangs have been apprehended previously. "Safety and Security of the citizens is our duty and no stone would be unturned in this regard" he added.

Briefs

Over 1m vaccine administered in Rwp dist.

SHAHEEN HANIF

RAWALPINDI: More than one million people had taken at least one shot of the COVID-19 vaccine in the district since the vaccine roll-out launched on March 10. According to the latest data shared by the district health authority here Sunday, 108 more COVID-19 positive cases were reported during the last 24 hours, with thirty-three belonged to Rawal Town, twenty-eight from Potohar town, thirty-eight from Rawalpindi Cantt, four from Taxila, two from Gujjar Khan, and one from Kotli Sattian, Murree and Islamabad. "Presently 91 confirmed patients were admitted to various city facilities, counting 19 in Holy Family Hospital, 18 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 29 in Institute of Urology, 23 in Fauji Foundation Hospital and 2 in Hearts international hospital," the health authority report said.

Strict action against one wheeling ordered

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief Traffic Officer, (CTO) Rawalpindi, Rai Mazhar Iqbal said that strict orders have been issued to all the traffic wardens, inspectors, deputy superintendents of police (DSPs) of all the sectors that action in accordance with the law should be taken against the one-wheelers on the occasion of Eid ul Azha. The motorcycles, especially prepared for one wheeling should also be impounded. He said that several arrangements were made to curb the activity, particularly at the Airport Road, Peshawar Road, Jhelum Road, Ayub Park, and other areas aimed at protecting the youngsters as one-wheeling is one of the causes of death and severe injuries for the riders. CTO said that though the activity was already being checked by the traffic officials deputed on the city roads but special arrangements have also been made to control the rash and dangerous driving and one-wheeling in the city. He said that the traffic wardens were directed to keep a vigilant eye on the one-wheelers so that action in accordance with the law could be taken against them. He said that the one-wheelers are not only playing with their own lives but also is a threat for other road users. He urged the parents to play their role to curb the activity as one-wheeling, rash, and negligent driving are the main causes for fatal accidents.

CDA to construct special ramps in parks

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is constructing special ramps and washrooms at parks and markets in the federal capital for the facilitation of special people. According to the details, on the direction of CDA management, parking space should also be allotted near the ramps in accordance with international standards for the convenience of special persons with at markets and recreational places. Restrooms are also being built and separate parking lots are being designated for them. The construction of washrooms has entered the final stages. In addition, the building construction by laws have been amended to make it mandatory for the buildings to have ramps, parking and washrooms to accommodate the needs of special people. The purpose of these initiatives is to provide a pleasant environment for special people in recreational areas so that they too can participate in healthy activities. In addition, the Department of MPO and MR&R is working on lane marking and safety science throughout the city.

District admin to plant over 3.247 million saplings

Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Syed Gulzar Hussain Shah and Regional Police Officer, Rawalpindi on July 12 launched the monsoon plantation campaign by planting a sapling here at Gymkhana Club

ZUBAIR AHMAD

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district administration on the directives of Punjab government would plant over 3.247 million saplings under 'Hur Bashir Aik Shajar,' monsoon plantation campaign. According to a district administration spokesperson, Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Syed Gulzar Hussain Shah and Regional Police Officer, Rawalpindi on July 12 launched the monsoon plantation campaign by planting a sapling here at Gymkhana Club. The Punjab government had issued a schedule for June 28 to August 1, five weeks period for the program 'Khidmat Aap Ki Dehleez Par' under which public sector water tanks were also being cleaned besides changing filters of water filtration plants in the district. She informed that a special plantation campaign titled 'Hur Bashir Aik Shajar' launched here to plant maximum



saplings in the district. A special cleanliness programme would be finalized for 'Eid ul Azha' which would start from July 19, she said adding, and eidgahs would be cleaned besides proper arrangements for removal of offal of sacrificial animals during Eid holidays.

The performance of all the departments concerned would be monitored on the dashboard monitor on daily basis. Second phase of the government of Punjab's revolutionary program Khidmat Aap Ki Dehleez Par" kicked off here on June 30, was in full swing as the government

offices including district 'Kutchery' offices were being cleaned, public sectors schools were being whitewashed and the premises of the offices being renovated. The authorities concerned had been directed to ensure that all the departments concerned to achieve the targets set in this regard in an efficient manner and the reports of the tasks should be uploaded on the App developed by Punjab Information Board. The citizens can also use 'Karkardagi' App launched by the Punjab government and get registered their complaints, she added. The foremost priority of the administration would be to fully involve the people in this program so that the plantation and cleanliness could not remain limited for just few weeks rather, such efforts should be continued in future as well. The administration wants to give the people, a model to make their surroundings as clean and healthy as possible so that the change at the grassroots could be made possible, she added.

PHA to make city clean and green

RAWALPINDI: Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi is striving to reduce air pollution and make the city green, said PHA Vice Chairman Malik Abid Hussain. Talking to APP he said that the authority was trying to provide an attractive and healthier natural environment to the residents. He urged the citizens to come forward and play a role to make the monsoon plantation campaign launched by PHA a success. He said, the PHA had come up with a tree planting plan on the banks of Nullah Leh and Sowan River. As many as 25,000 seed balls were thrown on the banks of Sowan River under monsoon tree planting campaign. He said that all possible steps were being taken in the light of the directives of the Chief Minister Punjab to make the city green. PHA had earlier tested seed balls in Murree area which was very successful and hoped that good results would be seen in Rawalpindi as well, he said adding, seeds had already sprouted in most of the seed balls during the preparation phase and it is hoped that these seeds would find a conducive environment on the banks of Sowan River and Nullah Leh. - APP

Students from Varsity of Peshawar visit Safe City Project Islamabad

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of 60 students from Philosophy Department of University of Peshawar visited the Safe City Project Islamabad and were briefed about the its efficient functioning as well as contribution in ensuring effective security in the city. The delegation led by Dr. Samina was briefed by Director (Operations) Safe City Syed Muhammad Bilal. The students were informed that Safe City Project under the supervision of Director General Muhammad Saleem is watching over Operations and Monitoring Centre, Emergency Control Centre, Dispatch Control Centre, Corona Monitoring Desk, E-Challan and Rescue



15 Helpline. Following the directions of IGP Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman, he said that new techniques are being introduced in policing affairs. He said that E-Challan system

has been introduced and fine tickets are dispatched at the houses of those involved in violation of traffic rules. He said that helpline of Islamabad Police (Rescue

15) receives thousands of calls on daily basis and complaints of citizens are addressed through prompt action. Moreover, police officials investigating into various cases visit the safe

city project and its cameras are greatly helpful for prevention of crime and ensure arrest of criminals wanted in various cases. Dr. Samina appreciated the use of technology by Islamabad police in its affairs and said that it is really a great service to immediately respond to public complaints and address their issues. She said that latest policing techniques are being used by Islamabad police like other developed countries which are really helpful in securing the city. Director (Operations) Syed Muhammad Bilal also presented a shield to Dr. Samina and hoped that visit of the delegation would be helpful to understand the modern techniques in the policing affairs.

ICT police arrest 3 fraudsters

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have arrested three fraudsters from the area of Tarnol police station, said the officials on Sunday. On the directions of DIG (Operations) Afzal Ahmad Kousar, SSP (Investigation) Atta ur Rehman had directed the concerned police officials to apprehend those involved in plundering people by impersonating anti-corruption and police officials. Led by DSP (CIA) Hakam Khan. The accused have been identified as M Tariq son of M Yousuf resident of Mohra, Sagri, tehsil and district Islamabad (ring-leader); Yasir Mahmood son of Mir Afsar and Gulistan Abbasi son of M Yaqoob. The police have recovered looted cash Rs 10, 23,000, bogus service cards and other items from them. Police have registered a case against the accused under section 406, 170, 171, 34, 411 of the PPC and further investigation is underway. - DNA

Met Office alerts amid Monsoon active spell

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) on Sunday advised all provincial and federal authorities to remain "Alert" as the active phase of Monsoon season has been forecast from Monday to Wednesday. The forecast alert issued mentioned that rain-wind and thundershowers are forecast in upper and central parts. Strong monsoon currents are likely to start reaching upper parts of the country from Sunday (evening/night) and may persist till Wednesday, met office reported. Rain-wind-thundershower (with very heavy/torrential rain) is expected in Kashmir, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin, Sialkot, Narowal, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Lahore, Sheikhupura, Kasur, Okara, Faisalabad, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh, Sargodha, Mianwali, Khushab, Dir, Swat, Buner, Kohistan, Shangla, Masehra, Abbottabad, Hariapur, Mardan, Swabi, Charsadda, Nowshera, Peshawar, Waziristan, Kurrum, Bannu, Kohat, Lakki Marwat, Tank, Karak, Dera Ismail Khan and Gilgit-Baltistan (Chizer, Astore, Diamer, Skardu, Gilgit, Hunza Nagar, Ghanche and Kharmang) from Sunday (evening/night) to Wednesday.

Muslim histories are not Islamic histories: Speakers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "Religion can be a central part of one's identity. Different people have different experiences with their religions. When writing about the history of Muslims or history of issues related to Muslim societies, there is nowadays a tendency to call this entire area of study 'Islamic' without much thought as to the use of this important label." "For example, in modern times, there has developed a tendency to show all caliphs and sultans, governors and generals as 'Islamic' heroes. Islamic denotes something/somebody as mandated by Islam or having Islamic credentials to reflect Islamic character. The word Muslim, on the other hand, denotes an individual who happens to be a Muslim. It does not show what that individual did that was Islamic", observed renowned historian Prof Dr. Aslam Syed on Saturday while responding to a question during a Webinar on Weak ends of Discourse on History. Prof Dr. Aslam Syed has been currently serving Center for Religious Studies, Ruhr Universität, Bochum, Germany. He remained Chairman, Department of History, Qaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad and served the NIHRC as its Director. Responding to a question on history's relationship with religion, Dr Syed answered that the study of history has long been connected to the history of religions. Historical thought is integral to religious practice.

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ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying wooden stools to be used for slaughtering sacrificial animals on the eve of Eid-ul-Azha. - APP

Chilli farming under CPEC to expand over 5000 acres

Pakistan is amongst the top ten chilli producing nations which enjoy a combination of warm, humid yet dry weather and a Well-drained sandy loam with rich organic content

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: After a successful pilot project at 100 acres under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the next phase of Chilli farming will be ready for launch with upcoming sowing. Referring to an article published by China Economic Net, Chairman CPEC Authority, Lt Gen (Retd) Asim Saleem Bajwa on Sunday in a tweet said, the Chilli farming could spread over an area of 5000 acres in various regions of the country. According to the article of China Economic Net, Pakistan has ideal conditions for Chilli/Pepper (Capsicum Annum L.) cultivation. Pakistan is amongst the top ten chilli producing nations which enjoy a combination of warm, humid yet dry weather and a Well-drained sandy loam with rich organic content. However, Pakistan's chilli production has been lower than the world average for the same period since 2015. From FY2014-15 to FY2017-18, the average annual production of chilli in Pakistan was around 143,428 tons, but it plummeted to 126,943 tons in FY2018-19, accounting for 85.7% its peak in FY2017-18

of 148,114 tons. In Pakistan, Sindh province is the major producer of chilli followed by Punjab and Balochistan. The major constraints in production faced by chilli farmers here are lack of modern irrigation system, imbalance use of fertilizer and pesticide, and lack of training. "In Pakistan old methods of 1970s, 1960s or 1980s are adopted by farmers. Now Pakistan has to adopt modern technology to increase its production," recommended Zahid Gishkori, a Special Investigative Correspondent in Pakistan. What is worse, growers are troubled by some marketing issues, including unreasonable commission agent charges, improper weighing, price fluctuations and lack of proper storage facilities. Pepper growers are unable to make a proper profit from chilli due to marketing channel barriers. Talking to China Economic Net, Khurum Javed Maqbool, Director Marketing of Fatima AG Solutions Limited, Pakistan, pointed out that at present the whole ecosystem in Pakistan is inefficient. "From harvesting to sowing and storing of the crop and then selling it and then farmers getting financing and then the returns for their pro-

duce... All these operations require improvement." In July, a pilot Chilli farm project under the cooperation between Pakistani farmers and their Chinese partners - CMEC & Sichuan Litong Food Group - began to bear fruit, with a yield around 3 times Pakistani varieties. Chen Changwei, Chairman of Sichuan Litong Food Group, China, noted that their pilot Chilli farm project successfully completed 100 acres of plantation in the first half of 2021 in Lahore. For the 100-acre-pilot-project, the quantities of seeds are 380 grams per acre, with a yield reaching 3 tons per acre. The total production is expected to reach 300 tons. While as per Ministry of National Food Security & Research (Economic Wing), chilli is grown on 47,349 hectares in Pakistan with a crop yield of about 2.68 tons per hectare (1.072 tons per acre) and an annual production of around 126,943 tons in FY2018-19. As per Chen, they brought a total of 13 varieties of Chinese chillies to Pakistan since 2019. It took them three years to conduct the pilot program, and of all these 13 varieties, two varieties, namely, PJH-302 and PJH-407, have been certified for cultivation in Pakistan.

"Seed is the basic input for agriculture sector and has imperative role in enhancing agriculture productivity, food security and poverty alleviation," said YEAR BOOK 2019-20 released by Ministry of National Food Security and Research (NFS&R), Pakistan. On top of seeds, field management is also of great significance. Correct and careful management of farming and farmers could increase efficiency and reduce risk. "We're gonna arrange a team of 3 agricultural experts on each chilli field of around 0.165 acres," Wu Guang told China Economic Net. And these agricultural experts will train Pakistani staff in planting technology. Advanced Chinese irrigation systems have also been introduced into the field. Umer Diyal, a farmer who worked in the pilot Chilli farm in Qasbi, Lahore, said the Chinese introduced an irrigation system, and the expense of fertilizer has been reduced and every plant was getting water. "Watering of plants is not complex and expensive anymore," he added. Also, contract farming helps a lot when it comes to addressing farmers' concerns about marketing. Agriculture-related economy is vulnerable, so "we're conducting

contract farming with Pakistani farmers," Wu Guang told China Economic Net. That is, Pakistani farmers undertake to supply agreed quantities of chilli, based on the quality standards and delivery requirements of CMEC. In return, CMEC agrees to buy the chilli, at a price that is nailed down in advance. "When the chillies are ripe, they are naturally dried and then shipped back to China for further processing," Chen Changwei noted. "If there is a farmer, who has harvested 100 acres of chilli crops in Nawabshah, Sindh, and his profits from the local markets would be low. About 70% of the households in Pakistan grow on their own, so they wish to export the chilli to other countries," Zahid Gishkori said, hinting that contract farming might be a feasible way for them to "export" at doorstep during the pandemic period. "This model generates employment in the rural economy, reduces risk for firms, and provides income for farmers," Wu Guang told China Economic Net. He further mentioned that in the next phase of the pilot Chilli farm project, as many as 3000 acres of land would be brought under chilli cultivation.

Eating too much meat harmful for heart

RAWALPINDI: Eating too much meat harmful especially for heart patients, said Medical Practitioner Dr. Waseem Khawaja talking to APP here Sunday. On the eve of Eid-ul-Azha, he urged the people not to take too much meat adding that meat contains lots of saturated fats and cholesterol, which can lead to heart disease. He explained in details that tobacco smoking, high cholesterol diet, sedentary life style, high blood pressure, obesity, stress are the most common causes of heart diseases which can be avoided through balance diet, regular exercise and regular medical checkup. He said that the ratio of death from cardiac disorder could be minimize through preventive measures. He said that by adopting preventive measures three million deaths from heart diseases can be protected every year. He said prevention is the best and only way to control the rising death toll due to heart diseases. He said that vegetarian diets are great for your heart adding that the vegetarians lived longer, healthier lives than those who eat meat. So the more meat you eat, the more you expose yourself to these negative factors. - APP

Rise in prices

IF the masses thought a record-breaking rise in petrol prices was the worst it could get, they were wrong. The government on Friday gave another shock to the already economically pressed people by raising prices of three basic necessities at the utility stores- wheat flour, ghee and sugar by up to 53pc for sale through the Utility Stores Corporation (USC). The price of wheat flour has increased by 19pc from Rs800 per 20kg bag to Rs950, the price of ghee at USC outlets by almost 53pc from Rs170 to Rs260 per kg, and the price of sugar was raised by 25pc from the existing rate of Rs68 to Rs85 per kg. The decisions were taken at a meeting of the federal cabinet's Economic Coordination Committee (ECC). While painful, the price hikes are not surprising. An increase in the price of petrol is bound to have an impact on all other items. The decisions by the ECC are aimed to reduce Rs 116 BN in the circular debt stock. Anticipating the outrage that these changes will understandably cause, the ECC in an official statement explained that the rise in prices was due to an increasing gap between the subsidised prices offered by the USC and the prevailing market prices, and the increased price was to justify the subsidies. However, until structural changes are made to curtail unethical practices and unprofitable investments in the market, these price hikes will become regular occurrences rather than a one-time decision to adjust the subsidies. Cartelisation, as well as rapid devaluation, are all contributing factors, and if the former is not managed well, then we can continue seeing price increases, with the masses burdening the brunt of them. The government is trying to balance the inflation that it has been unable to prevent through several welfare programs- one of such initiatives has been the provision of micro-loans to entrepreneurs and farmers, as well as low-cost housing loans. However, this is no alternative to non-management of price hikes- the government must figure out how to curtail the heightened inflation happening under its administration.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 66

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GSP and labour rights

THE General Scheme of Preferences (GSP) of the European Union has been beneficial to Pakistan in many ways. One of them is the enhancement of bilateral trade and economic ties between the EU and Pakistan. Recently, the ambassador of the EU in Pakistan and the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) held talks to strengthen business with a particular focus on small and medium enterprises (SMEs). One of the areas of concern for the EU has been the implementation in Pakistan of conventions on human rights and labour standards so that the GSP Plus status that the EU granted to Pakistan could continue without any hurdles. Since Pakistan gains special trade incentives thanks to its GSP Plus status, it cannot afford to lose any of these privileges at this time when the economy is in dire need of succour from wherever it can get. If the EU ends up withdrawing these incentives from Pakistan just because it is not fully abiding by the obligations, it will not be an unforeseen punishment as the EU has been clarifying. Each biennial report of the EU must testify that substantial progress has been made in the direction of implementing labour rights and standards. There are 27 conventions that Pakistan has signed including the one calling for legislation for the protection of journalists. As we have seen in the past, just by signing various conventions countries do not make sure that they are meeting all their commitments. There is a need to expedite reforms and steps for legislation on disappearance, torture, abuse, and inspection of factories to meet all EU obligations. Pakistan must appreciate that the GSP Plus status from the EU has created employment opportunities at multiple levels of the economy. We need to keep these jobs secure so that Pakistan can avert an impending economic crisis which is already knocking at our doors. The GSP Plus status has helped Pakistan in dealing with economic and financial challenges that the country finds itself in every now and then. If we lose this status, it will adversely affect Pakistan's economy to a great extent. That is why the government must take it seriously and continue working for the fulfillment of all its obligations in terms of human rights and labour standards.

EU's balancing act between Beijing and Biden

Andrew Hammond



Broader bilateral tensions are rising, too, with EU foreign ministers agreeing this week to give new impetus to their recently announced "Globally Connected Europe" strategy. This is widely seen as a rival to China's Belt and Road, and pushes for investments in projects to link Europe to the world. CAI, which would see European and Chinese firms get better access to each market, has been discussed since 2014 by Brussels and Beijing

THE surprise signing in December of the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI), despite the coronavirus chill in bilateral relations, was always likely to cause ratification headaches for Brussels and Beijing.

Fast forward almost seven months and that is being borne out, with growing signs that any final approval may be "kicked into the long grass." Relations remain thorny, post-pandemic, and uncertainty is mounting over whether the Brussels-based institutions and the EU-27 will finally ink the deal.

In May, the European Parliament slammed what were then recently imposed Chinese sanctions against EU lawmakers and said that it will refuse to even consider ratifying CAI while those measures remain.

Moreover, the parliament last week approved a resolution criticizing the human rights clampdown in Hong Kong, with MEPs calling on the European Commission, the council and EU countries to decline invitations to attend the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics unless China demonstrates a verifiable improvement in the situation on the island.

Broader bilateral tensions are rising, too, with EU foreign ministers agreeing this week to give new impetus to their recently announced "Globally Connected Europe" strategy. This is widely seen as a rival to China's Belt and Road, and pushes for investments in projects to link Europe to the world.

CAI, which would see European and Chinese firms get better access to each market, has been discussed since 2014 by Brussels and Beijing, but suddenly de-

veloped new momentum around Christmas — a peculiar point in the diplomatic calendar for such an unscheduled breakthrough, with no official negotiating deadline to force the issue. Much of the sudden urgency at the time reflected Beijing's desire to get the agreement "over the line" before Joe Biden's inauguration as US president on Jan. 20, given his concerns about the deal.

With the CAI now at a pivot point, key officials in Brussels and European capitals are performing a balancing act between Biden and Beijing. The tricky tightrope that the EU-27 are standing on may well result in this issue being pushed to one side.

One plausible scenario is that ratification may not happen till 2023 given Germany's federal election in September, plus French President Emmanuel Macron's re-election campaign next spring. This, along with the fact that Chinese President Xi Jinping may not be in a position to compromise, either, before the National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in autumn 2022, could mean that any ratification may have to wait.

Even if a quicker breakthrough happens, there is unlikely to be a significant warming in ties in the near term following the chilliness of recent months. While the new investment deal could do much to improve the atmospherics in diplomacy between Brussels and Beijing, it is significantly less likely to promote a fundamental positive reset in relations for many reasons.

First, there are so many issues clouding the bilateral agenda, in the short term at least. These include the opaque way that Beijing is perceived by Europe to have handled the coronavirus outbreak

in early 2020, the new Chinese security law in Hong Kong, and growing pressure on continental European leaders to reject Huawei technology in their 5G networks.

Moreover, Brussels also has become increasingly concerned in recent years about whether China's external interventions in Europe represent a "divide and rule" strategy to undermine the continent's collective interests. In this context, several western European countries, in particular, are thinking carefully about their future ties with Beijing.

Rather than seeing a fundamental reset in relations, the most likely outcome of any ratification of the investment deal would be to inject new impetus into Europe's constructive engagement approach with China. This will see differences, diplomatically, called out while emphasising areas of common interest, including the importance of an open financial and multilateral trading system, and tackling climate change.

Brussels asserts that the new deal will help progress toward the goal of an open, transparent financial and multilateral trading system. The two sides are also likely to place growing emphasis on global warming, long an area of fruitful bilateral dialogue, in 2021 and beyond.

The EU and China share a vision of a prosperous, energy-secure future in a stable climate. Indeed, their 2015 bilateral climate change declaration was one of the key drivers of the Paris deal, and this may be replicated ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, underlining that both powers still recognize that they have much to gain from their partnership despite post-pandemic tensions.

— Courtesy: Arab News

Indian double game could damage Afghan peace process

Muhammad Akhter



India is currently negotiating with the Taliban on the one hand and providing heavy weapons to the Afghan administration to use against them on the other. According to media reports, India provided heavy weapons and ammunition to the Afghan security forces through special military planes being sent to Kabul

THE withdrawal of US and coalition forces from Afghanistan under an agreement reached between the United States and the Taliban in the Afghan peace process is expected to be completed next month, but the United States has set an official deadline of September 11, 2021.

During the 20-year US presence in Afghanistan, many countries and groups, including India, used Afghan soil for their nefarious agenda. Now that the US is gone, all these elements will not be able to stay in Afghanistan because the faster the Taliban occupy different parts of the country, the sooner they will reach Kabul, and the Taliban's occupation of the capital will mean that someone Even an element that is using Afghan soil for its nefarious purposes will be targeted by the Taliban.

That is why India is fleeing Afghanistan, but even after leaving Afghanistan, it is constantly engaged in conspiracies and playing a double game with the Taliban and the Afghan administration.

India is currently negotiating with the Taliban on the one hand and providing heavy weapons to the Afghan administration to use against them on the other. According to media reports, India provided heavy weapons and ammunition to the Afghan security forces through special military planes being sent to Kabul and Kandahar in the name of withdrawing its diplomatic staff from Afghanistan.

On Saturday and Sunday, two Indian Air Force planes arrived at Kandahar and Kabul airports with weapons, respectively. Media reports also cite sources who saw weapons being dropped from planes coming to pick up Indian personnel at airports in Kabul and Kandahar. Some,

such pictures have also come to light in which weapons, etc. can be seen coming down from Indian planes.

Thus, by supplying arms and ammunition to the Afghan security forces, India is adding fuel to the fire, which will further aggravate the situation. Many countries, including India, and some elements in Afghanistan want the situation to worsen so that the United States can use it as a basis to withdraw the announcement of the complete withdrawal of its troops, and thus allow all these elements to remain on Afghan soil.

Sitting in Afghanistan over the past two decades, India has hatched a number of conspiracies to destabilize Pakistan and the Indian intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) has created elements in the Pakistan-Afghanistan border areas that have created terror in Pakistan. As the horrific series of riots began, Pakistani intelligence agencies thwarted many of RAW's plans and uncovered elements involved in terrorist activities in Pakistan at the behest of India.

In this regard, a lot of evidence was presented to the international community with the aim of showing the world the ugly face of India, but it is unfortunate that despite the existence of clear evidence against India, the international community nothing was done beyond mere verbal deposit.

Due to the indifference of major international bodies, including the United Nations, the situation today is such that India wants to ensure its presence in Afghanistan to the detriment of Pakistan, and what it is doing to the detriment of the entire region. Peace and stability may be threatened.

India's current situation in Afghanistan is that

all its diplomatic staff and all RAW agents have fled Kandahar and the consulate in Kandahar has been closed. India has confirmed the evacuation of its staff from Kandahar, but has denied closing the consulate.

Afghan affairs experts say that given the rapidly deteriorating situation for India in Afghanistan, it is likely that India will soon have to close its embassy in Kabul. The closure of the embassy would mean that India has completely withdrawn from Afghanistan.

On the other hand, it is a bitter truth that India will not accept this in any way, so it is playing a double game and trying to use both the Taliban and the Afghan government against each other so that it can somehow pursue its interests in Afghanistan. Both the Taliban and the Afghan government are aware that India is playing a double game with them and they also know why India wants to stay in Afghanistan.

The world powers that are directly involved in the Afghan peace process are also not unaware of India's nefarious intentions. What is needed now is for all major powers to work together to stop India's conspiracy from succeeding, as the Indian double game could not only jeopardize the Afghan peace process, but also the region as a whole.

Hence, it is finalized that all major international organizations, including the United Nations, must step forward and play a positive role, as the deterioration of the Afghan peace process will not only harm Afghanistan or Pakistan, but also the fires that will burn here. And if not today, then tomorrow the flames will reach Washington, London, Paris and other important western centers.

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Briefs

CA & SA
conference
brings
laurels to
Uzbekistan

FROM PAGE 01

all such challenges shall be scaled, was the personality of the President. He said he had no doubt that the President will win the upcoming Presidential elections to be held in October this year, simply because Uzbekistan cannot have a better choice than President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

The holding of the Central Asia and South Asia Conference in Tashkent was yet another feather in the cap of the Uzbek government. Participation of over 40 countries and that too at the highest level unequivocally speaks volumes for the dynamic and robust foreign policy of Uzbekistan. The demand for conceptualizing foreign policy is due to the high dynamics of transformation of Uzbekistan, the transition to a new stage in the formation of a democratic rule of law with a developed market economy. Without exaggeration it is worth noting that the foundation of a new era of the Renaissance is being laid in the country, requiring qualitatively new approaches in the foreign policy.

In a word, Uzbekistan's foreign policy interests are based primarily on the priorities of internal development, which actually means an obvious shift towards the economization of the country's international cooperation and the strengthening of economic pragmatism in external relations.

The CA&SA conference was a clear manifestation of this approach. It not only earned laurels for the President at home but abroad as well. The presence of Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan and other leaders undoubtedly contributed greatly towards the success of the conference. In the new scenario that has emerged after the withdrawal of US troops, it is up to the neighboring countries now to join hands in order to ensure regional peace and stability.

While all the stakeholders remain committed to achieving this goal, President Ghani of Afghanistan still seems to be obsessed with his pro-India posture, which he clearly manifested during his speech at the conference by propagating the Indian narrative. Those who are privy to the latest developments in Afghanistan believe the days of Ashraf Ghani's rule are almost over. He has no future in Afghanistan if he continues to pursue a belligerent approach and does not engage with Taliban.

Summing up, the conference indeed provided both Pakistan and Uzbekistan to come further close to each other. The agreement to form the strategic partnership, of course, is a landmark step in terms of strengthening and deepening bilateral relations. Pakistan, on its part, is very keen to expand and promote ties with the Central Asian states and the CARs too have a candid understanding that how their engagement with Pakistan and other regional countries including Afghanistan, can help them in reinforcing their economies.

It is ostensibly a win-win situation for all. But having said that, peace in Afghanistan holds the key to regional connectivity and stability therefore the neighboring countries must utilize all channels to ensure peace in Afghanistan if they really want their initiatives to see light of the day.

PM Imran
Khan shares
glimpses...

FROM PAGE 01

The prime minister concluded his stay in Uzbekistan by visiting the mausoleums of great Islamic personalities in the historic cities of Samarkand and Bukhara.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Imran Khan took to Twitter to share his experience of his trip to Uzbekistan's Samarkand.

"It was a wonderful experience to finally visit Samarkand, the greatest city in the world at the beginning of the 15th century," the prime minister tweeted. He said he visited the tombs of Amir Taimur and Imam Bokhari in this historic city.

Clinical England cruise to 45
run victory against Pakistan

SPORTS DESK

LEEDS: England cruised to a 45-run victory against Pakistan, after a clinical performance, in the second Twenty20 International (T20I) between the two sides at the Yorkshire Cricket Ground in Leeds on Sunday to level the three-match series at one apiece. Chasing a daunting target of 201 runs, Pakistan were off to a solid start as openers Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan stitched together a breezy 50-run partnership.

Pacer Saqib Mahmood dealt the first blow, removing Babar (22 off 16), caught by fielder Dawid Malan. Explosive batsman Sohaib Maqsood came out with a lot of intent, racing to 15 runs off 10 balls, before being stumped by wicketkeeper Jos Buttler off the bowling of leg-spinner Rashid Khan.

The England spinners then applied a chokehold on the run-scoring options as Pakistan's batsmen struggled to find regular boundaries. Rashid took advantage of the mounting pressure, removing batsman Mohammad Rizwan (caught and bowled) after he had managed 37 runs off 29 balls.

Off-spinner Moeen Ali joined the fun picking up two crucial wickets to leave Pakistan in all sorts of trouble against the rising required run rate. Ali first removed batsman Mohammad Hafeez (10 off 12), caught by fielder Jonny Bairstow, before cleaning up batsman Fakhar Zaman (eight off eight).

Young batsman Azam Khan (one off four) stepped out of his crease but missed a Rashid Khan delivery that was collected by wicketkeeper Jos Buttler for an easy stumping.

All-rounder Imad Wasim played a quick-fire 20-run knock off 13 balls, before falling to pacer Tom Curran, caught by fielder Jason Roy. Mahmood then removed tailender Shaheen Shah (two off four), caught by fielder Chris Jordan, and clean bowled tailender Haris Rauf for a golden duck. In the end, Pakistan could only manage 155 runs for the loss of nine wickets in their allotted overs, losing by 45 runs, as all-rounder Shadab Khan remained



unbeaten after scoring 36 runs off 22 balls. Saqib Mahmood was the most successful bowler for his side picking up three wickets at the expense of 33 runs in his allotted overs. Earlier, after losing the toss and being asked to bat first, England were off to a shaky start. Opener Jason Roy (10 off 4) went hard after all-rounder Imad Wasim, only to sky the fourth delivery of the match into the hands of fielder Mohammad Hafeez.

Imad returned in his next over to remove batsman Dawid Malan (one off five) as Pakistan looked to tame the explosive England batting line-up. The fall of wickets however did not impact England's intent as batsmen Moeen Ali and Jos Buttler combined for a whirlwind 67-run knock off just 31 balls to provide a solid foundation for their side.

Pacer Mohammad Hasnain got the better of Moeen Ali, caught by fielder Babar Azam, after he had raced to 36 runs off 16 balls.

Batsman Liam Livingstone then joined the explosive Buttler on the way to a 52-run partnership off 34 balls as England looked to impose themselves in the match.

Mohammad Hasnain then returned to provide a crucial breakthrough for Pakistan removing Jos Buttler, caught by Babar Azam, after he had raced to 59 runs off 39 balls. The opening paved the way for more wickets as Pakistan looked to stem the flow of runs from the bat of the Englishmen.

Leg-spinner Shadab Khan removed dangerous batsman Jonny Bairstow (13 off seven balls), caught by fielder Fakhar Zaman, as the batsman tried to clear the boundary but failed. Liam Livingstone (38 off 23) appeared to be in sublime form, similar to his incredible touch in the first T20I, before falling because of a mix-up with fellow batsman Tom Curran.

Curran (nine off seven) himself fell shortly after off the bowling of Mohammad Hasnain, caught by fielder Sohaib Maqsood. Pacer Haris Rauf then removed tailenders Chris Jordan (14 off eight) and Adil Rashid (two off four) in quick succession to further dent England's onslaught.

Islam Makhachev vows to prove
Tony not same level as Khabib

LONDON: Islam Makhachev wants to face Tony Ferguson next to prove the US fighter is not in the same league as his mentor Khabib Nurmagomedov. The Russian stretched his unbeaten streak to eight with a resounding win over Thiago Moises in Las Vegas on Saturday but no sooner had he taken care of the Brazilian, he was setting his sights on his next opponent.

"If they were to give me a choice, let's do it with Tony because we have good history with him," Makhachev told reporters after beating Moises

in the fourth round via submission. Khabib, who was in Vegas to support Makhachev, never met Ferguson in the cage during his incredible, unbeaten career.

Ferguson, 37, was widely regarded as one of the best 155 pound fighters around and seen as one of the few people capable of beating Khabib.

The pair were scheduled to face each other on five occasions but the fight everyone in UFC craved never saw the light of day before Khabib retired in October with an

unblemished 29-0 record.

And Makhachev referred to his mentor's unfinished business with Ferguson, pledging to do Khabib's bidding against him.

"Khabib was supposed to fight with him like five, six times. Let's finish this, you know," he said.

"I'm going to finish this. I'm going to show Tony not Khabib level. People don't understand how Khabib pressures." Makhachev, 29, praised Khabib as a 'humble guy' and said he had many of the same qualities as him and was almost as good a fighter.

"If somebody says I'm almost the same as Khabib, I agree with this," Makhachev added.

"I want to be like Khabib, you know. He's a great man, he's champion, he has a lot of money and he has everything, but he's still a humble guy. He's coming to U.S. without his family. He stays here one, two months to help us. He doesn't take money, nothing. He just comes and does the whole thing. We came to U.S. and he rent big house for team and a lot of cars for team and nobody pay. He pay for everything. I cannot explain Khabib. He does a lot of stuff, but not everyone knows this." - APP

AC Milan complete
signing of Olivier Giroud

AGENCIES

MILAN: AC Milan have completed the signing France striker Olivier Giroud from Chelsea. The 34-year-old striker struggled for minutes under both Frank Lampard and Thomas Tuchel but had a habit of popping up with vital goals in his rare outings, including six strikes in eight Champions League games - just two of which were starts.

With his playing time limited, Giroud was made available for transfer this summer and spent Friday in Milan finalising a move to the Rossoneri which is expected to earn Chelsea up to £2m. Giroud posted a message to Chelsea fans on social media as he swaps Stamford Bridge for San Siro.

"To all the Blues, to my teammates, to all my coaches, to the whole club, a huge thank you for these special moments," he wrote. "I'm starting a new journey with a light and happy heart. Our victories in the FA Cup, Europa League and Champions League have been magnificent.

"Love, Oli G." Giroud becomes the second Chelsea player to join Milan this summer, following centre-back Fikayo Tomori, who was snapped up permanently after an excellent loan spell at San Siro last season.

There could yet be further dealings between the two clubs as Milan are also

understood to be keen on midfielders Tiemoue Bakayoko and Hakim Ziyech, both of whom have been made available for transfer this summer. As first revealed by 90min, Chelsea are preparing themselves for a monster bid for Borussia Dortmund striker Erling Haaland, and the Blues are now looking to trim their squad and raise the £150m needed to get a deal done.

With Chelsea hunting for a new striker, Giroud could also be followed out the exit door by Tammy Abraham, who is valued at £40m and has attracted interest from Arsenal, Aston Villa and West Ham.

US: 4 people
shot outside
stadium

WASHINGTON: Four people were shot outside a baseball stadium in Washington, D.C. on Saturday night, police said, adding that there was "no ongoing threat." The Metropolitan Police Department initially said it was responding to the incident "in which two people were shot outside of Nationals Park."

"Two additional victims associated with this incident walked into area hospitals for treatment of gunshot wounds," police said in a subsequent tweet. "This is currently an active investigation and it appears there is no ongoing threat at this time," it added.

According to preliminary information, one of the victims was an employee at the stadium, said Metropolitan Police Department spokesperson Dustin Sternbeck. The shooting halted a baseball game between Washington Nationals and the San Diego Padres, and spectators were asked to exit the stadium in the US capital. - APP

Lionel Messi breaks
Instagram record with
most-liked picture

LONDON: Lionel Messi finally put some international football demons to bed as he helped inspire Argentina to Copa America glory, beating fierce rivals Brazil in the process. As a result of the success, Messi also broke a record that was previously held by long-term rival Cristiano Ronaldo. In the wake of the victory on July 10, Messi took to Instagram to toast his triumph with a picture of him in the changing room proudly holding the trophy alongside the caption: "What a beautiful madness! This is unbelievable! Thank you, God! We are the champions!" As things stand, the photo has been liked more than 20 million times, thus making the image the most popular Instagram post ever posted by an athlete.

Ronaldo's record lasted just under a year, as the previously most liked post came in the form of his touching tribute to the late Diego Maradona after his death in late 2020. Coincidentally, Messi's own tribute to Maradona, someone he worked closely with in the international set-up, also featured in the top 20 most popular posts from an athlete, having been liked 16.4 million times, placing it 16th in the list. The tournament success was well-earned, with Messi comfortably the player of the tournament, a constant thorn in the side of just about every team he faced. - DNA

Palestinians
hail FC
Barcelona

SPORTS DESK

GAZA CITY: The Palestinian Football Association has welcomed the scrapping of a friendly football match between Spanish giants FC Barcelona and Israel's Beitar football team, which was scheduled to take place on Aug. 4 in Jerusalem.

"We express our appreciation for the respect of

the Catalan club [FC Barcelona] to the feelings of millions of its fans worldwide who were appalled by the idea that the club which appreciates human rights will play with one of the most racist clubs in the world," the association said in a statement. Jibril Rajoub, the Secretary-General of Fatah group's Central Committee and head of the Palestinian Football Association, described the move by FC Barcelona to cancel the match as "an honest expression of Barcelona's true identity and its respect to millions of its fans worldwide."

Whole
saga is a
conspiracy,
says Rashid

FROM PAGE 01

her phone was stolen, "and later handed her phone over but with the data deleted". He said that the CCTV footage of the time of the incident had been reviewed and it was found that there were not two, but three taxis that she had used.

"She took a taxi from Daman Koh and did not return home," said Rasheed. The minister said three videos had been reviewed, whereas an attempt to acquire a fourth is being made. Earlier in the day, Sheikh Rashid said that suspects in kidnapping of Afghanistan ambassador's daughter will be arrested in a day or two.

Pakistan
terms
Afghan...

FROM PAGE 01

the Embassy and Consulates of Afghanistan in Pakistan has been further beefed up. The Foreign Secretary met the Ambassador of Afghanistan today, highlighted all the steps taken by the Government in this context, and re-assured him of full cooperation. We hope that the Government of Afghanistan would reconsider its decision.

PM stresses
reduction
in violence

FROM PAGE 01

has consistently emphasized that there is no military solution to the Afghan conflict. The Prime Minister stressed that instability and conflict were not in Pakistan's interest. The Prime Minister reiterated the call for immediate reduction in violence. It was also emphasized that imposition of a government by force will not lead to the resolution of Afghan conflict and a negotiated political settlement among the Afghan sides was the only way forward. Pakistan will continue its efforts to urge all parties to engage constructively and secure an inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political solution.

The two leaders agreed to further enhance Pakistan-Afghanistan bilateral relations. It was stressed that negative statements from Afghan side vitiated the environment and there was a need to build trust.

Elect honest
leaders,
PM urges...

FROM PAGE 01

hear later that many coronavirus cases emerged due to this rally," he said. The premier also lauded the spirit and determination of the crowd gathered, receiving a loud roar in response.

"A large portion of my life was spent playing cricket under the sun. Sitting on the stage here I felt my clothes drenched in sweat. So when I look at all of you packed here together, I wish to pay special tribute to all of your determination," he said. PM Imran Khan said he thinks of the future of the people of the country, especially the youth. "I want our country to be such that when one travels with the Pakistani passport they should be admired. The world should look at us with respect. The green passport should be respected. We should become a great nation," he said.

Construction
on Dasu
Project to...

FROM PAGE 01

the Dasu Hydropower Project. "The Chinese construction company, China Gezhouba Group Corporation (CGGC) through its latest notification has declared its earlier notice, about contract termination of employment of Pakistani personnel working on Dasu Hydropower Project, null and void," FO spokesman Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri said. He said that matters regarding security and execution of the project are being looked into, and the relevant authorities from Pakistan and China are in close contact on the same. The construction of the project will be resumed soon. "Both Pakistan and China remain committed to timely completion of Dasu Hydropower."

Olympic cluster scare as athletes test positive

The Olympic Village, a complex of apartments and dining areas in Tokyo, will house 6,700 athletes and officials at its peak when the delayed 2020 Games finally get underway

AGENCIES

TOKYO: Two athletes have tested positive for the coronavirus in the Tokyo Olympic Village after a team colleague was also infected, officials said on Sunday, raising fears of a cluster just days before the opening ceremony.

The first cases involving athletes in the Village come a day after a member of their entourage returned the first positive test in the complex, which will house thousands of athletes.

The three infections were revealed as competitors fly in from around the world for the pandemic-delayed Olympics, which are facing significant opposition in Japan due to their Covid risks.

Tokyo 2020 spokesman Masa Takaya said the three cases "were

from the same country and sport". They are "isolated in their rooms and Tokyo 2020 is delivering meals to them", he said, adding that the rest of the team have also been tested. The team was not identified. The Olympic Village, a complex of apartments and dining areas in Tokyo, will house 6,700 athletes and officials at its peak when the delayed 2020 Games finally get underway.

The Tokyo Games, which will be held largely behind closed doors to prevent infections, are unpopular in Japan where opinion polls have consistently demonstrated a lack of support. Olympic officials have been at pains to play down the health risks of the Games, which are taking place in stringent anti-coronavirus conditions with athletes tested daily.

"Mingling and crossing of populations is very limited. We keep the risk to an absolute minimum level," Olympic Games executive director Christophe Dubi said on Sunday. "We can ensure that transmission between the various groups is almost impossible."

Fifty-five cases linked to the Games, which open on Friday, have been discovered this month, including four athletes.

On Saturday, International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach appealed for Japanese fans to show support, saying he was "very well aware of the scepticism" surrounding the Games.

Athletes are arriving to find a restrictive environment, with daily testing, social distancing and no movement possible outside the Olympic "bubble". They are under orders to leave Japan 48 hours after their event.

In another example of the difficulties, Australia's entire athletics team was quarantined before departure after a member of their entourage returned an inconclusive test. The official later tested negative.

"We expect that there'll be cases associated with these Games and really what's going to matter is how we respond to that and to ensure that there's no complacency," said David Hughes, medical director of the Australian Olympic team.

Australia has 194 athletes in the Olympic Village backed by support staff including psychologists to help them deal with the "extra strain" of the anti-Covid measures.

Australian basketball star Liz Cambage was one of the athletes to pull out of the Games, citing mental health fears, while tennis player Nick Kyrgios withdrew due to the lack of fans.

Australian chef de mission Ian Chesterman said a "buoyant" mood in the camp was tempered by caution over possible mental health problems in the unusual environment. "The mood and everything is sort of buoyant and excited to be here, and that we're conscious of the fact that it's like no other," he said.

"We have to make sure that athlete, mental health and wellbeing is at the forefront of all their thinking." On Saturday, Games chief Seiko Hashimoto admitted athletes are "probably very worried" about coming to Japan, pledging full transparency over Covid cases. Japanese and Olympic officials have also been forced onto the defensive over a welcoming reception for Bach attended by 40 people while Tokyo remains under a coronavirus state of emergency.

Briefs

PA covering up critic's death

MONITORING DESK

RAMALLAH: The family of a political activist who died in the custody of Palestinian security forces last month has accused the Palestinian Authority (PA) of trying to cover up his death. Relatives of Nizar Banat, 43, said on Saturday they still have not received a document with an official cause of death, and said the PA has made efforts to settle the matter out of court. "The behaviour of the Palestinian Authority until this moment is criminal behaviour, covering up a crime," Ghassan Banat, Nizar's brother, told reporters. Nizar Banat was an outspoken critic of the PA who called on Western nations to stop providing aid to the PA due to human rights violations and growing authoritarianism. In a series of posts and live videos on Facebook, Banat had criticised the authority's close security coordination with Israel, seen by many Palestinians as betrayal, and its corruption. He also lashed out at President Mahmoud Abbas in April for calling off what would have been the first Palestinian elections in 15 years. Banat was a candidate on an opposition slate.

Turkey condemns CJEU's ban on headscarf

NEWS DESK

ANKARA: Turkey's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that the CJEU's decision disregards religious freedom and creates a basis and legal cover for discrimination. Turkey has slammed a ruling by a top European Union court allowing the banning of headscarves under certain conditions, if they need to do so to project an image of neutrality to customers. The Turkish Foreign Ministry said in a statement the ruling was a sign of rising Islamophobia at a time when it said Muslim women in Europe are being subjected to increasing discrimination for their religious beliefs. "The CJEU decision, at a time when the Islamophobia, racism and hatred that have taken Europe hostage are rising, disregards religious freedom and creates a basis and legal cover for discrimination," the ministry said.

On Saturday, the Turkish presidency's communication director Fahrettin Altun condemned the move, saying "this wrong decision is an attempt to grant legitimacy to racism."

Israeli settlers storm Al-Aqsa complex

DNA

JERUSALEM: More than 1,000 Israeli settlers forced their way into the flashpoint Al-Aqsa Mosque complex on Sunday, amid tension over a planned settler incursion into the flashpoint site, according to a Palestinian agency. In a statement, the Islamic Endowment Department in Jerusalem said that 1,210 settlers broke into the complex through its Israeli-controlled Al-Mughrabi Gate, southwest of the mosque, and performed their rituals inside. According to eyewitnesses, groups of settlers attempted to storm the complex through the Bab Huta Gate and King Faisal Gate but were confronted by Palestinian worshippers. Earlier Sunday, Israeli forces shut all entrances and gates to the Al-Aqsa complex. Israeli settler groups have called on supporters to force their way into Al-Aqsa complex in large numbers on Sunday to mark what they call the "destruction of the temple" in ancient times.

Only presidential form of govt to salvage Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani-American, Hafeez Uz Rehman Choudhary, who has filed a petition in the Supreme Court on Presidential form of government, on Sunday said that only Presidential form of government could solve Pakistan's problems. Parliamentary form of government is a system of minority rule. He said that Pakistan's poor people could get rid of hereditary style of politics and groups and bands indulging in politics of blackmail only through this system. And this system could put Pakistan on the path of development and progress, which is a voice coming from the hearts of Pakistani people. He made these remarks in a press conference on Sunday. "Only through this system we can get rid of politics of blackmail and politics of groups and bands indulging in make or break politics at the constituency level" he said. He said that he had filed a petition in the Supreme Court for seeking the re-

peal of parliamentary form of government in the country. The petition, he said, was filed through his lawyer and constitutional expert, Khalid Abbas Khan. He said he has made federation of Pakistan, prime minister, governors and chief ministers of four provinces responded in the petition. The petition is pending in the Supreme Court and he would not file an application of the immediate hearing of the petition. With the introduction of parliamentary form of government the people of Pakistan have been deprived of political justice, which has been promised under the provisions of the constitution. He said that parliamentary system has caused instability in the country. He said that Prime Minister Imran Khan should be directed to hold a referendum on national in which "Yes" or "No" vote should be sought from the people and country's political system should be restructured in the light of the result of the referendum. He said that People of Pakistan had been deprived of



political justice which had been promised by article 2(a) of the constitution. He said that it was because of parliamentary form of government that party will less than majority vote have been ruling the country since 2008. He said that in 2008, 2013 and 2018 the ruling party received 25.6, 32.7 and 31.4 percent vote respectively, which mean they didn't represent the majority of Pakistani people. He said that in presidential form of government the President, governor and city Mayor is required to re-

ceive more than 51 percent of the vote. In parliamentary form of government the people elect their representatives as legislators but in the process they also become administration of the country, which is a basic flaw in the system. The petition states that under the constitution "the state has to exercise its power through the chosen representatives of the people" and there is no specific provision of the constitution which restricts that the chosen representatives have to be elected under a parlia-

mentary system of government. This could be done under a presidential form of government either. He said that there was no bar in 1973 constitution that the legislator and administration should be elected through a parliamentary or presidential form of government. We can do it either way, he said. He said that if in a country people are not getting political justice, they would also not get social and economic justice as a consequence. Narrating the history of Pakistan's constitutional development, he said that at the time independence, India Independence Act 1947 made it mandatory on Pakistan to adopt Government of India Act 1935 as provisional constitution of the country. In this provisional constitution certain provisions were missing which were necessary for running the governmental affairs of an independent country. Therefore a constituent assembly came into existence to prepare a new constitution. The constitution making process remained delayed for 9

years which was a very unfortunate situation. Intra-assembly fights between assembly member, political tussles and lack of priority were the reasons behind this delay. He said that the constitutional process remained marred in palace intrigues, political squabbles and this led to dissolution of successive cabinets. The members of the assembly and political leaders remained focused on petty issues related to their constituency politics. He said that the absence of a constitution led to dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971. He said that 1956 constitution and 1962 constitution, both were illegitimate because in the case of former approval was given by a nominated assembly and in case of later approval was given by a dictator. He said that there were structural flaws in the 1973 constitution, and it was because of those structural flaws that 1977, 1999 and 2007 political crisis hit the country. He said that the lawyer movement which led to the restoration of Supreme court also led to restoration of Pakistan's image abroad.

Facebook refutes Biden claim

WEB DESK

CALIFORNIA: Facebook refuted remarks made by President Joe Biden that social media platforms are "killing people" by allowing coronavirus vaccine misinformation on their services and argued that vaccine acceptance among its users has actually risen in the U.S. In a blog post, Guy Rosen, Facebook's vice president of integrity, pointed to data suggesting that vaccine hesitancy among U.S. its users has declined by 50%, and 85% of users said they have been or would like to be vaccinated against Covid-19. "These and other facts tell a very different story to the one promoted by the administration in recent days," Rosen wrote. Rosen also pointed to the Biden administration's narrowly missed goal to vaccinate 70% of Americans by July 4, arguing that Facebook "is not the reason this goal was missed." The response from Facebook comes after the president, on the South Lawn of the White House on Friday, was asked what his message was to companies like Facebook with respect to Covid misinformation. In response to the question, Biden responded: "They're killing people." "I mean they really, look, the only pandemic we have is among the unvaccinated, and that's - they're killing people," the president said, echoing earlier comments from White House press secretary Jen Psaki. Psaki, at a news briefing last week, said the Biden administration was flagging problematic posts for Facebook that spread misinformation, including false information that the Covid-19 vaccine causes infertility.

Turkey's Erdogan to visit TRNC

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is set to travel to the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) on Monday for a two-day official visit. He has said he will deliver "good news" in the breakaway state. But the visit could also further stoke tensions with Greek Cypriots and the European Union over the divided Eastern Mediterranean island, already high over Turkish ambitions in the region and its support for a two-state solution to the Cyprus dispute. On Tuesday, Erdogan will attend an event marking the 47th anniversary of Turkey's military intervention - seen as an invasion by Greek Cypriots - on the island and will address the Northern Cyprus parliament in a special session. "I hope we will give messages in the best manner possible for the establishment of the world peace for the island and the whole world through the ceremonies [in Northern Cyprus]," he said in remarks on Friday. "We have a good step. We have finished the preliminary studies," the Turkish president said, without giving any further details on the issue.

Assad regime kills six civilians

WEB DESK

IDLIB: Six Syrian civilians, including two children, were killed Saturday in shelling from the Bashar al-Assad regime and Iran-affiliated terrorist groups, in breach of a truce in northwestern Idlib de-escalation zone. Regime forces stationed in the Al-Hamidiya base in southeast Idlib violated the cease-fire by shelling a village with surface-to-surface missiles. According to the Syria Civil Defense, or White Helmets, an initial assessment of a village in the Jabal al-Zawiya province found that three women were also killed and several civilians injured in the attack. Six civilians, including three children and one civil defense volunteer, have been killed in attacks by regime forces on the Sirce village since Friday.

Explosion kills several in Kenya

WEB DESK

NAIROBI: Police said 13 people were killed and many others seriously burned when an overturned petrol tanker exploded in western Kenya as crowds thronged to collect the spilling fuel. The fuel truck collided with another vehicle and toppled over late on Saturday near Malanga, some 315km (195 miles) northwest of Nairobi, on the busy highway between Kisumu and the border with Uganda. Onlookers rushed to the scene with jerrycans but the cargo exploded, engulfing those around in a fireball. "It burst into flames as they scooped fuel that was flowing," said Charles Chacha, a local police chief in Siaya

County where the accident occurred, on Sunday. "We counted twelve bodies at the scene. Another person died in hospital from their injuries." Fire crews arrived on the scene two hours later to douse the inferno while those injured in the blast were taken to hospital. "Many others have been taken to hospital with serious burns and they include young children," Chacha said. The cause of the explosion is not yet known. Images broadcast by Kenyan media showed the blazing tanker lighting up the night sky and in the morning following, crowds gaping at the twisted, smouldering wreckage. Deadly fuel truck accidents along perilous roads are not uncommon in Kenya and the wider East Africa region.



BAKU: A delegation led by President of the European Council Charles Michel visits Alley of Martyrs in Azerbaijan. - DNA

UK 'interested' in hosting US radar station

AGENCIES

LONDON: An American space force plan to develop a global monitoring system to track objects up to 22,000 miles from Earth could establish radar stations in the US, UK and Australia. The head of the RAF, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Wigston, is in the US for talks over the plans, and said on Saturday the British were "very interested" in the project and hosting one of the American radar stations. China is challenging US military and technological dominance in a number of theatres, including in space. There are fears that anti-satellite arms held by Beijing - which Washington also possesses - are capable of threatening US orbital fleets. The Deep Space Advanced Radar Capability (Darc) would require three radar stations around the globe with possible sites in the UK, US and Australia, Wigston said, in order to get a "full picture" of what is happening. "The first priority above all is to understand what is going on in space. We know that it is becoming more congested; there were 1,000 satellites launched in the last year alone," he told BBC Radio 4's Today programme. "We see activity by countries like China and Russia which is a cause of concern. It is reckless activity, deploying and testing of systems that look like weapons in space. So any system like the radar we are talking about which gives us a better picture of what is going on is incredibly important to us." However, the new American military branch, US Space Force, established by former president Donald Trump, has been criticised as an unwise and costly escalation that could lead to a dangerous new arms race. A spokesperson for the Campaign Against the Arms Trade said the plans were "totally misguided" and that the money would better be spent on reducing poverty. "The huge sums of money involved would be far better spent building fairer and more equal societies here rather than further militarising space," they said. The stations, covering around a square kilometre, would host an array of large radar dishes, known as parabolic antenna, each 15 metres in diameter. The US already operates an early warning system to detect ballistic missiles in space, which includes a facility at RAF Fylingdales in North Yorkshire. However, that can only detect objects up to 12,000 miles away while Darc would look much further into space.

Baku warns about Yerevan's destructive approach

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Leyla Abdullayeva has said that it is easy to predict the consequences of Armenia's destructive approach for itself. She made the remarks while commenting on Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's latest claims alleging that Azerbaijan has territorial claims to neighbours, creates border tensions and obstructs the delimitation process, which he made at a press briefing with European Council President Charles Michel on July 17. "We bring to Pashinyan's attention that, unlike Armenia, Azerbaijan has not had a territorial claim against any state. Azerbaijan respects the territorial integrity of states within their international borders and demands that the same approach be demonstrated in relation to Azerbaijan," Abdullayeva said. She described the claims as another completely false and slanderous statement by the Armenian prime minister. "Let me remind you that these absurd allegations are made by the leader of the country, which has been pursuing a policy of aggression against Azerbaijan for almost 30 years, occupying its

territories and violating the fundamental rights of more than one million Azerbaijanis," she said. Abdullayeva stressed that based on illusions about "Greater Armenia", Pashinyan, who continues his territorial claims against Azerbaijan today and whose claims are reflected in the country's Constitution, seems to be trying to create any "basis" for his country's aggressive, destructive and irreconcilable policy.

relations on the basis of the principles of international law, start the process of delimitation and demarcation and has taken practical steps in this direction," the spokesperson said. She reiterated that Armenia takes the position of aggravating the situation, revanchism and conditioning peace. "It is not difficult to predict the consequences of this destructive approach, which has been exhibited

trials were deported from this area three times during the 20th century, the last in 1988. The Zangazur region and its division into Eastern and Western parts is also a historical reality. The return of our compatriots to those territories is their most natural right. This is not a territorial claim, but the return of refugees to their homes; as the trilateral statement of 10 November 2020 contains," she stressed. On July 14, President Aliyev described West Zangazur as Azerbaijan's historical land handed over to Armenia during the Soviet era. "The East Zangazur economic zone has been established. Armenia has now raised hysteria about this issue. There is no need for that because East Zangazur is our historical land. West Zangazur is our historical land. We cannot forget history. We cannot become hostages of anyone's political interests. Let them look up historical documents and maps and see when the Soviet government tore Zangazur apart from Azerbaijan and handed it over to Armenia. This is a relatively recent date - 101 years ago," he said. The head of state underlined that Azerbaijanis will return to their historical lands.



"As for Pashinyan's claims of 'border tensions and obstruction of the delimitation process', this is nothing but the hypocrisy of the Armenian prime minister. By eliminating the factor of occupation of its territories and ensuring its territorial integrity Azerbaijan has stated its readiness to normalize

for years, for Armenia," Abdullayeva added. She underlined that in the national historical memory of the Azerbaijani people, the territory of modern Armenia, where Azerbaijanis historically lived as an indigenous people, is called Western Azerbaijan. "As is known, our compa-

Europe reels from worst floods in years

AGENCIES

BERLIN: The death toll in the devastating floods that hit Europe climbed to 183 on Sunday as rescue workers searched for bodies amid the receding waters while new storms hit alpine areas further south. Heavy rain drenched parts of the German states of Bavaria and Saxony overnight as flooding also spread to Austria and Switzerland. At least 156 people have died in Germany alone since once-in-a-century summer rainfall caused rivers and dams to burst. So far 27 people have died in Belgium. On Saturday night, areas of Bavaria were declared a disaster zone as the southern state on the border with Austria was also

hit by flash floods. At least one person died in the Berchtesgaden district. As new areas prepared for flooding, others were still reeling from the earlier inundations. German Chancellor Angela Merkel was expected to visit the village of Schuld in the state of Rhineland Palatinate on Sunday, where entire homes were swept away last week by the swollen Ahr river, a tributary of the Rhine. Picture perfect villages along the Ahr, with stone bridges and traditional timber frame houses, were some of the worst hit. At least 110 people died in the state, according to police. Another 45 were killed in neighboring North Rhine Westfalia. The death tolls are still expected to rise as rescue workers pick their way through flooded homes checking for bodies. Teams with sniffer

dogs have been sweeping mounds of debris clogging streets. The force of the water ripped facades off houses, left cars hanging in trees and crumpled roads and bridges. Many died as the surging waters turned roads into rivers or drowned as they went to scoop floodwater out of their basements. German military personnel and fire crews were still working to winch cars and lorries off a submerged highway on Sunday. Rescue workers said they did not know if the people had enough time to get out of their cars before the floodwaters rose. Thousands had to be rescued from rooftops. "The street was like a running creek," said Williams Horst, 71, who was trapped over night Wednesday with his 86-year-old landlady and her carer. They

were all helicoptered out in harnesses, picked from the backyard of the house in waters up to their chests. In Austria, floodwaters swept through the town of Hallen, near Salzburg, picking up cars and debris in its wake, but no fatalities were reported as of Sunday morning. Residents were told to stay out of basements. In Germany's Saxon Switzerland, a hilly national park around the Elbe, some areas were cut off due to the flooding, ZDF television reported. The receding waters in parts of Germany have allowed the first assessments of the scale of the damage. Finance Minister Olaf Scholz told Germany's Bild am Sonntag newspaper that he would submit a plan for at least 300 million euros in emergency aid to the cabinet this week.

Briefs

UK PM self-isolating; urges public to be cautious

MONITORING DESK

LONDON: Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Sunday urged the public to remain prudent against Covid on the eve of lifting pandemic curbs in England, as he confirmed he is self-isolating until July 26.

"Please, please, please be cautious, and go forward tomorrow into the next step with all the right prudence and respect for other people, and the risks that the disease continues to present," he said in a video message. Johnson and finance minister Rishi Sunak were required to isolate after Health Secretary Sajid Javid confirmed on Saturday he had tested positive for Covid-19.

Initially, a Downing Street spokesperson said both Johnson and Sunak were taking part in a government pilot that enables them to continue working from their offices, while self-isolating outside of work. But in an update after an outcry over the announcement, the spokesperson reversed position and said neither official was participating in the pilot, and would conduct business remotely. "We did look briefly at the idea of us taking part in the pilot scheme which allows people to test daily. But I think it's far more important that everybody sticks to the same rule," Johnson said.

Accused by opposition politicians of carving out special rules for himself, Johnson urged everyone to respect a national tracing system as infection rates soar.

At least 30 killed in Mumbai landslides

NEWS DESK

MUMBAI: At least 30 people died in three Mumbai suburbs after several houses collapsed when heavy rain triggered landslides, officials said on Sunday, and forecasts of further downpours could force authorities to relocate people living in danger zones.

Rescuers resorted to using their hands to dig up the ground in an attempt to find survivors, local television showed, as authorities said more people could be trapped inside the debris. Emergency workers carried the injured through narrow lanes on makeshift stretchers.

Several areas of Mumbai have been hit by floods due to heavy rainfall over the past 24 hours, crippling India's financial capital. The mega-city and the coast of India's industrial Maharashtra state are expected to receive heavy to very heavy rainfall in the next four days, the weather department said.

"We'll take the decision to shift the people who are living in a dangerous situation to permanent settlements immediately," said Nawab Malik, a state cabinet minister, according to a tweet by news agency ANI, a Reuters partner. Torrential rain, especially during India's July-September monsoon, often triggers the collapse of buildings, especially older or illegally built structures. Within the last 24 hours, authorities have reported 11 incidents of houses or walls collapsing in the Mumbai area, officials said.

Outgoing Kyrgyz envoy given a warm send off

Zahid Latif Khan, CEO ISE REIT and former president of RCCI fetes the outgoing ambassador at the Islamabad Serena Hotel

SAIFULLAH

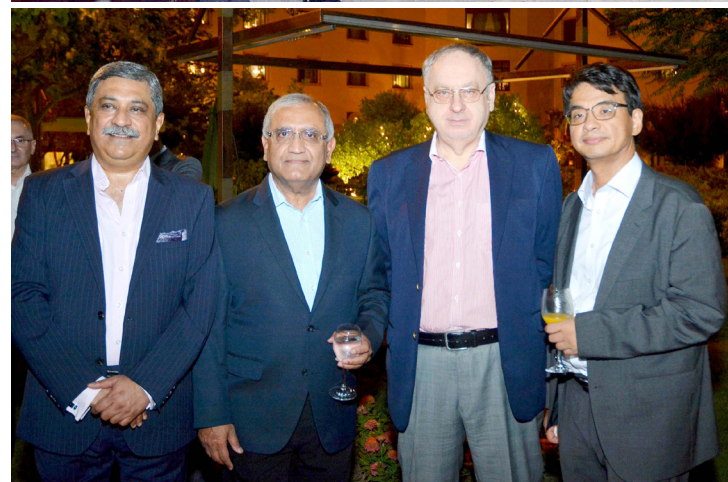
ISLAMABAD: To bid farewell to the ambassador of Kyrgyzstan, Erik Beishembiev, a warm farewell reception was hosted by Zahid Latif Khan, CEO ISE REIT and former president of RCCI at a local hotel in Islamabad.

Romanian ambassador, Nicola Goia, ambassador of Turkey in Pakistan Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul, Palestine ambassador Ahmad Jawad Rabaei, ambassador of Kazakhstan, Yerzhan Kistafin, Ibrahim Almadani of Jordan, among others, representatives from chamber of commerce and a large number of dignitaries, and Business men attended the farewell reception.

In his welcome remarks, Zahid Latif Khan said that Central Asia has enormous potential for boosting bilateral trade and cooperation. Pakistan attaches immense importance to its relations with Kyrgyzstan. Largely agrarian economies and given the geographical proximity between Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan, both countries can create a wide range of marketable Agri-based raw and value added products - both for trade and consumption within the two countries.

Both countries should focus on establishing direct links between their private sectors to explore untapped areas of mutual cooperation, he suggested.

Kyrgyz Ambassador Erik Beishembiev said in his address that he has spent more than four years in Islamabad and that he is grateful for the hospitality and the best impression of the Pakistani people. His country greatly val-



ues relations with Pakistan that is why it seeks further diversification and strengthening of these relations, the envoy said. He said that our region is rich in oil, gas, mineral and

water resources and we also want to benefit from these resources for Pakistan and the region, so that the countries of the region benefit from each other's resources. He said that currently

10,000 Pakistani students are studying in Kyrgyzstan. He said Pakistani and Kyrgyz businessmen may open joint ventures on textile production as Kyrgyzstan is already a major supplier of textile

goods to Russia and Kazakhstan and Pakistan is one of the world's top textile producers. Of course, agriculture and livestock are dynamic sectors, where both sides can

explore opportunities of opening joint ventures on agricultural products processing to increase exports to Eurasian Economic Union, European Union or Arab world.

Pakistan condemns attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan condemns the recent violent attacks carried out by the Israeli Occupation Forces on the worshippers and the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied territories and urges the international community for prompt action to protect the Palestinians. Such attacks are against all humanitarian norms and human rights laws. The Government of Pakistan stands in solidarity with the Government and people of the State of Palestine in their just demands for their ba-

sic rights and equality. Pakistan also renews its call for the establishment of a viable, independent and contiguous Palestinian State, on the basis of the internationally agreed parameters of the pre-1967 borders and Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. On Sunday, more than 1,000 Israeli settlers forced their way into the flashpoint Al-Aqsa Mosque complex on Sunday, amid tension over a planned settler incursion into the flashpoint site, according to a Palestinian agency. In a statement, the Islamic Endowment Department in Jerusalem said that 1,210 settlers broke into the complex through its Israeli-controlled

Al-Mughrabi Gate, southwest of the mosque, and performed their rituals inside. According to eyewitnesses, groups of settlers attempted to storm the complex through the Bab Huta Gate and King Faisal Gate but were confronted by Palestinian worshippers. Earlier Sunday, Israeli forces shut all entrances and gates to the Al-Aqsa complex. Israeli settler groups have called on supporters to force their way into Al-Aqsa complex in large numbers on Sunday to mark what they call the "destruction of the temple" in ancient times. The so-called Sovereignty Movement in Israel is also

preparing to organize a march for settlers around the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem on the same day. On Saturday, hundreds of settlers staged a march in occupied East Jerusalem ahead of their planned incursions on Sunday. Al-Aqsa Mosque is the world's third-holiest site for Muslims. Jews call the area the "Temple Mount," claiming it was the site of two Jewish temples in ancient times. Israel occupied East Jerusalem, where al-Aqsa is located, during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. It annexed the entire city in 1980, in a move never recognized by the international community.

Lahore: 56 more cases of Delta variant

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: The Delta variant of the novel coronavirus has been detected in 56 more people over the last three days in the provincial capital of Punjab, media reported Sunday, citing the health department. Per the report, out of 85 COVID-19 positive samples

tested at a laboratory, 65 turned out to be carrying the highly contagious Delta variant. A spokesman for the provincial health department said that the spread of the Delta variant is 50% faster as compared to other variants, adding that the situation could only be controlled if more and more people get themselves vaccinated.

Peace can only be achieved through talks: Fawad

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Chaudhry Fawad Hussain has said that peace cannot be established in Afghanistan unless all warring factions sit together. In an interview with a private television channel, he said durable peace in Afghanistan is imperative for economic progress of the whole region. Chaudhry Fawad categorically



ly said that Pakistan will not interfere inside Afghanistan, but always ready for playing a role for restoration of peace. He said that the situation inside Afghanistan could only be improved by the Afghan people and not by Pakistan.

The Information Minister said that a train service from Tashkent to Karachi via Kabul is being planned and a truck system also in the pipeline, but peace is a prerequisite for all the projects. About internal situation, Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said PM Imran Khan is focusing on the welfare of the tribal people and 54 billion rupees have been earmarked for the development of merged districts of Pakhtunkhwa.

Army Jawan martyred in Waziristan

RAWALPINDI: Security Forces conducted an Intelligence Based Operation in Senai Narai, South Waziristan District, on reported presence of terrorists. During intense exchange of fire with terrorists, Sepoy Junaid, age 20 years, resident of Balakot, District Mansehra embraced shahadat. Cordon and search operation is in progress to eliminate any terrorists found in the area, said an ISPR statement. - DNA

PM plans on making AJK a new province

She said there were talks of "minus Nawaz Sharif", but the people of Pakistan had reversed the narrative in favour of the PML-N leader

DNA

DHIRKOT: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz on Sunday claimed that Prime Minister Imran Khan plans on making Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) a new province of Pakistan, insisting that "a decision has already been taken in this regard."

AJK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider had raised similar concerns during a ses-

sion of the AJK Legislative Assembly last month, and remarked that the region would not become a province until "the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir decides to do so through vote."

In her address to a public meeting in Dhirkot, Maryam said PM Imran wanted to bring a "puppet PM" to power in Kashmir in order to impose his decisions on people but warned that "the PML-N will not allow this."



She also lambasted the government over its much used slogan of bringing "Tabde-

li" (change) to Pakistan, saying any change the government actually ended up bringing was "destruction". She alleged that the prime minister's rally in AJK was organised through taxpayers' money, also saying that the ruling party couldn't even gather enough people to call it a public gathering. She said there were talks of "minus Nawaz Sharif", but the people of Pakistan had reversed the narrative in favour of the PML-N leader.

"I can safely declare that this is a revolution as people have converged here in large numbers and Nawaz Sharif has clearly won and his enemy has been defeated," she added. Maryam said the PML-N campaign was so strong that PM Imran had to personally pay AJK a visit. "He (the prime minister) thought of initiating his campaign from Kashmir Bagh to match the popularity of the PML-N," she said.

Hajj 2021 begins

DNA

MAKKAH: Pilgrims in Saudi Arabia have begun Hajj from Sunday as the pilgrims arrived in Mina.

Like last year, Hajj is being held with a limited number of pilgrims and foreign travellers being barred from performing the annual pilgrimage this year.

Saudi Arabia has allowed only 60,000 pilgrims to perform the annual pilgrimage this year from citizens and residents.

"In light of what the whole world is witnessing from the continuing developments of the coronavirus pandemic and the emergence of new mutations, Hajj registration will be limited to residents and citizens from inside the Kingdom only," the Saudi Hajj ministry had announced on Twitter last month.

Only people aged between 18 and 65 who have been vaccinated will be able to take part, it added.

The ministry added that those wishing to perform Hajj must be free of any chronic diseases.

Last year, only 1,000 people residing in the kingdom were selected to perform the pilgrimage.

Karachi's positivity ratio rises to 23%

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The COVID-19 positivity ratio in the metropolis has reached 23% due to the presence of the Delta variant, media reported Sunday, citing data released by Karachi University's International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS).

According to the report, out of 90 samples tested at the ICCBS labs on July 14, the Delta variant was detected in 83 of them. Health experts say that if the cases continue to increase, the death toll in the country is also likely to get higher. Health authorities say that owing to the Delta variant, the number of coronavirus cases in Karachi is rapidly increasing, so much so that hospitals are on the verge of reaching capacity.

Several hospitals in Karachi, including the Civil Hospital, had to postpone scheduled operations due to the growing number of coronavirus patients being admitted there, the report said, adding that at present, the COVID-19 positivity ratio in Karachi has reached 23%.

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