



Islamabad POST

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Turkey is ready to discuss peace process with Taliban: Erdogan

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UN Secy Gen welcomes Doha accord

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Universal reach to Covid vaccine crucial: Munir

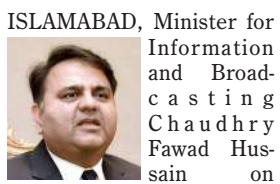
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Briefs

Fawad extends Eid greetings

STAFF REPORT



ISLAMABAD, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry on Tuesday extended his best wishes to all Muslims on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. "Happy Eid to the world of Islam," he tweeted. May Allah Almighty keep our festivals safe, bring us blessings and happiness and guarantee peace, he said. In another tweet, Fawad Chaudhry expressed the hope on Tuesday that Pakistan will start exporting ventilators this year. He revealed that a fourth firm has been issued a licence to manufacture ventilators as a result of the efforts the Ministry of Science made during the Covid-19 pandemic. "I am very hopeful that we will start exporting vents this year," he said, adding a health city was set up in Faisalabad. In addition, he said the country will start producing auto disposable syringes in September.

UK PM 'opposed' second lockdown

LONDON: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson sought to avoid a second lockdown last autumn, arguing that most dying were over 80, his former aide claimed to the BBC on Tuesday. Dominic Cummings, who was Johnson's top adviser until November, made the claim in an interview with the BBC, to be broadcast in full this evening, arguing that his former boss "put his own political interests ahead of people's lives". Cummings shared WhatsApp messages apparently from Johnson with the BBC, in the latest of a series of attacks on the government following his resignation. The British prime minister has faced serious criticism for his handling of the virus, with UK death figures soaring to among the worst in Europe before the successful vaccine rollout. - APP

Holiday Notice

The offices of Daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed for four days from July 21 to July 24 therefore there shall be no newspaper on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. - Editor

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Fewer women to regain jobs during virus recovery: UN - Page 07

Russia says Taliban ready for political 'compromise' - Page 08

US recognizes Pak efforts in FATF plan

Ned Price said that the US encourages Pakistan to continue working with the FATF and the int'l community

NEWS DESK / DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States has appreciated and recognised Pakistan's continued efforts to remove obligations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). State Department spokesperson Ned Price while briefing the media in Washington said Pakistan has made significant progress on its first action plan with 26 of 27 action items largely addressed. Ned Price said that the US encourages Pakistan to continue working with the FATF and the international community to swiftly complete the remaining action item by demonstrating that terrorism financing, investigations, and prosecutions target senior leaders and commanders of UN-designated groups. He said that we do further encourage Pakistan to expeditiously implement its new second action plan.

The global watchdog had, in its virtual plenary meeting last month, retained Pakistan in the 'grey list' for failing to comply with the laid down action plan. "We encourage Pakistan to continue working with the FATF and the international community to swiftly complete the remaining action item by demonstrating that terrorism financing, investigations and prosecutions target senior leaders and commanders of UN-designated groups," Price further said. Pakistan was pushed into the 'grey list' in June 2018 and given an action plan to complete by October 2019. However, the failure to comply with the FATF mandates resulted in the country continuing to stay on the list. Remaining in the 'grey list' has made it increasingly difficult for Pakistan to get financial assistance from

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PM Khan's 'phone hacked during Sharif's tenure'

Farrukh Habib says the PML-N supremo has a "history of tapping phones of judges"

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information Farrukh Habib said Tuesday Prime Minister Imran Khan's "phone was hacked" during former premier Nawaz Sharif's tenure, as he was friends with India's Narendra Modi - whose

Indian opposition disrupts parliament

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Indian opposition parties disrupted parliament on Tuesday, demanding an investigation into reports that the government used Israeli-made Pegasus spyware to snoop on scores of journalists, activists and

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ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Ambassador of Poland Piotr Opilinski in a group photo with his EU colleagues on the occasion of his last meeting. The Polish ambassador is leaving after completing his assignment. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan Erik Beishembiev hosted Eid gathering at his embassy. Diplomats and his Pakistani friends were invited to be part of the event. More pictures on page 3. - DNA

President, PM Imran felicitate nation on Eid



SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that without spirit of sacrifice, a nation could not aspire to achieve development as the very human essence had a global significance. In a message on Eid-ul-Azha 1442 Hijra, the prime minister conveyed his felicitations to the whole Pakistani nation and the Muslim world. The prime minister said sacrificing an animal on this holy festival manifested that a person has to sacrifice human desires for the achievement of the highest ideals. Such a passion generated a quality in humans that would not let them side-track from the right path, he observed.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan condemns blast in Sadr City

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan joins the international community in strongly condemning the bomb blast at a crowded market in Sadr City of Baghdad neighbourhood on 19 July, which resulted in loss of 35 precious human lives and injuries to many others. We convey our deepest condolences to the bereaved families and pray for speedy recovery of those injured in this heinous terrorist attack. Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stands in solidarity with the brotherly government and people of Iraq in their fight against terrorism.

Three rockets hit Afghan capital

Militant Islamic State group (IS) claimed responsibility

AFP / DNA

KABUL: At least three rockets landed near the Afghan presidential palace on Tuesday as the country's leader Ashraf Ghani held outdoor prayers with top officials to mark the start of the Muslim Eid al-Adha holiday. Although there was no immediate claim of responsibility, it was the first rocket attack on Kabul since the Taliban launched a series of offensives to coincide with the final drawdown of foreign troops from the war-ravaged country. The early morning holiday calm was shattered by incoming rockets heard across the heavily fortified Green Zone, which houses the presidential palace and several embassies, including the US mission. In a video posted on the official palace Facebook page, dozens of men gathered in the gardens

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UN chief praises Doha accord

AGENCIES

UNITED NATIONS, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is "encouraged" by the agreement between the Afghan government and the Taliban to expedite peace talks, according to his Deputy Spokesman Farhan Aziz Haq. "The secretary-general is encouraged by the joint declaration issued in Doha, Qatar, on Sunday, under which the two sides agreed to accelerate their high-level engagements in order to find a 'timely and just solution' to the conflict," the spokesman said in response to a question. In this regard, the UN chief echoed the joint statement by the diplomatic missions of 15 countries, NATO and the European Union to Afghanistan calling for the end of violence, a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire and meaningful peace negotiations. "The secretary-general underscores the importance of reaching, as a matter of urgency, a negotiated settlement that responds to the needs of all Afghan men and women," the spokesman said. Guterres urged the parties to make good on their commitment to accelerating negotiations and meeting the humanitarian needs of the population. He also called on the international community to unite its efforts in support of the peace process. "The Secretary-General hopes the Eid al-Azha holiday will be celebrated in peace in Afghanistan," the spokesman added.

COVID-19 national tally reports surge in daily cases

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The national tally on Tuesday of total active COVID-19 cases was recorded 49,929 with 2,145 more people testing positive for the deadly virus and 1,029 people recovering from the disease whereas 65 infected persons were admitted in the hospitals in critical condition during the last 24 hours. Thirty-seven corona patients have died during past 24 hours, 35 of whom were under treatment in the hospitals and two of them perished in their respective homes or quarantine facilities, according to the latest update issued by the

Vaccination centers to be closed only on 21st

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) has said that vaccination centers across the country will remain closed for only one day (21st July). In a Tweet on Tuesday, NCOC asked the citizens to get vaccinated and ensure that COVID SOPs are being followed. NCOC wished a safe Eid to the citizen.

National Command and Operation Center (NCOC). Most of the deaths occurred in Sindh and followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Out of the total 37 deaths occurred, 22 of them died were under treatment on ventilators. There were 2,697 Covid infected patients under treatment in critical condition and 65 of them were admitted in various Covid dedicated healthcare facilities of the country during past 24 hours. The National Covid pos-

itivity ratio during past 24 hours was recorded 5.25%. The Covid positivity ratio is the percentage of actual positive cases appearing in every 100 tests performed to identify infected individuals. The maximum ventilators were occupied in four major cities including Islamabad 22%, Lahore 20%, Peshawar 14% and Multan 15%. The maximum Oxygen beds (alternate oxygen providing facility other than ventilator administered as per medical requirement of COVID patient) was also occupied in four major cities of Gilgit 47%, Karachi 45%, Abbotabad 28% and Muzaffarabad 28%.

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Briefs

India is facilitator of terrorists: Ch. Sarwar

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar on Tuesday said that India was a facilitator of terrorists and enemy of peace. In a message on Twitter, Governor said that shameful role of India in keeping Pakistan on grey list of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) had been exposed. He said that Indian external affairs minister's recent statement about Pakistan showed the real face of India. "There is no doubt that India has become a facilitator of terrorists and enemy of peace", he added. Chaudhry Sarwar said that India, the biggest danger for peace of the region, could not tolerate progress, peace and stability of Pakistan. He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan Pakistan would succeed, and India would fail in its ambitions, he added. However, he said that the world must end its silence over India's facilitation for terrorists, adding that Pakistan has been giving precious sacrifices for peace and abolishing terrorism. - APP

Rs 1200 subsidy being given to farmers

PESHAWAR: The agriculture department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was working on new varieties of wheat, rice, sugarcane and other crops' seeds to improve the yield while giving subsidy to the farmers on cultivation, said Director Agriculture department Charsadda Ali Khan. Talking to APP on Tuesday he said that the department has distributed 8,637 bags of newly introduced variety of wheat seed among farmers this year and gave Rs 1200 subsidy on each bag to increase the wheat production. He said that new seeds gave very good results during the experimental period, adding that the new variety is expected to give considerable profit to farmers besides making the production wheat crop double. Ali Khan said the department was also giving Rs 5000 subsidy on cultivation of sunflowers, canola and sesame to make the KP province self-sufficient in production of edible oils. Referring to rice cultivation in district Charsadda, he said that Rs 1200 subsidy is being given on each acre on cultivation of new variety of rice, adding that agriculture department has set up multiple branches in different tehsils and at union level for guidance, facilitation and purchase of new varieties of seeds. In order to bring barren land under cultivation, he said the department has constructed small rain dam in Pallai area to store rain water and irrigate the barren lands, adding that in the area the department has also planted three orchards of mangos, apricot and peach on six acre of lands for eight farmers. He said the department has recently introduced new and improved variety of sugarcane which gives 4,000 kilogram jaggery from 80 "Maan" (3200 kg) seeds. The farmers are also being given Chip Bud technology to get seed from sugarcane crop for re-cultivation, he said adding that it reduced the cultivation cost to zero for the farmers. - APP



PESHAWAR: In collaboration with Dept. of Social Welfare and Women Empowerment KP, UN Women Flag of Pakistan organized trainings on Standard Operating Procedures for Dar ul Aman. - DNA

Sound economy assures well being of people

Iftikhar Ali Malik who is also chairman UBG also urged the government to conduct market research to find out new foreign destinations for the Pakistani products which are best in the world as far as quality and price is concerned

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: President SAARC chamber of commerce and Industry Iftikhar Ali Malik Tuesday said sustainable political stability is pre-requisite for sound economy which will promise greater weal for the people from different strata of the society. Addressing a high level delegation of Karachi traders here led by President United Business Group Zubair Tufail through webinar he said Pakistan at this crucial juncture of time since its inception in the wake of Covid 19 can neither endure political turmoil nor afford

political instability. He said what we need is uninterrupted stable democracy which is prerequisite for sustained economic growth to cope with the multiple challenges in Pakistan. He said that politics of confrontation, agitation, protest, violence and agitation is not solution. He said time has changed as now the influential nations are paying more attention to financial warfare to continue their dominance. These countries are successfully using their weapons of economic destruction to weaken economics of poor nations to achieve their unholy designs while Pakistan's economy is not strong enough to



withstand economic terrorism. Iftikhar Ali Malik said it is indeed important to increase our exports

and for that purpose we need to reduce our cost of doing business so that our products remain competitive in the world markets. He further said trade facilitation is the key to promote industries and we need to remove all the obstacles and create the culture of trade facilitation. He stressed the urgent need for consistency in the government policies and a clear roadmap to move forward," he added. The veteran trade leader was of the view that all the sectors including the industrial sector should discharge their national obligations and play their key role in strengthening the econ-

omy while the government should introduce reforms and control the smuggling of raw material and finished goods. Iftikhar Ali Malik who is also chairman UBG also urged the government to conduct market research to find out new foreign destinations for the Pakistani products which are best in the world as far as quality and price is concerned. He said that Pakistani missions abroad should be duty bound to introduce Pakistani products to the foreign buyers and also ensure dissemination of trade related information so that Pakistan entrepreneurs could avail trade opportunities to the maximum.

Two schools of Mansehra sealed

MANSEHRA: District Administration Mansehra Tuesday sealed two schools after confirmation of 24 Coronavirus positive cases of students and teaching staff. According to details, on the recommendations of Health department Mansehra both schools including Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School (GGHS) No. 2 Mansehra where 18 students and teachers were tested coronavirus positive and sealed for 14 while 6 students were found COVID-19 positive at Global Wisdom Public School Mansehra and were sealed for 10 days. The fourth wave of coronavirus strikes Hazara division where besides other people once again educational institutions are becoming the victim. During the last 24 hours, 29 new cases of COVID-19 have been reported in district Mansehra where 24 cases were from educational institutions, teaching and administrative staff of both schools were directed to stay at homes during the prescribed time. DC and District Police Officer (DPO) Mansehra directed all concerned departments particularly police to strictly enforce Coronavirus SOPs to stop further spread of the outbreak while the health department was directed to immediately start vaccination campaigns at educational institutions. - APP

13 buses impounded for overcharging

MULTAN: District administration launched crackdown against various bus companies for overcharging and impounded 13 buses here on Tuesday. In line with special directions of Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad, Secretary Regional Transport Authority (RTA) Rana Mohsin raided against buses which were involved in overcharging and overloading during Eid days. He also used to challan 16 buses and imposed Rs 98,000 fine on various bus owners. - APP

Heavy rains lash central Punjab

DNA

LAHORE: Heavy rain that lashed Lahore and other parts of central Punjab in the early hours of Tuesday turned the weather extremely pleasant besides inundating low-lying areas. It also rained cats and dogs in Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Kasur, Gujrat, Narowal, Sialkot, Wazirabad, Nankana Sahib and Sangla Hill. Soon after the downpour started in Lahore, Commissioner Captain @ Muhammad Usman contacted the concerned officials and received updates on water drainage. Talking to the media, he said that WASA MD was himself inspecting arrangements made to deal with any eventuality during the rains. The commissioner hoped that it would not

take long to drain out the water accumulated so far. He directed all concerned officials to wake up and go straight to the affected areas to monitor water drainage. He also stressed the need for keeping the machinery ready for the purpose. "Flush out the water accumulated at cattle markets with the help of machinery," Commissioner Usman ordered. He asked the people to dial the numbers given by the administration in case of an emergency. He also advised people to stay away from wires and electricity poles during the rains. The amount of rain received by different parts of the provincial capital till 11 AM is as under: Nishtar Town received 68 millimeters of rain followed by Johar Town (56.3 mm), Panipala (56 millimeters).

MQM-P announces protest rally

HYDERABAD: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has announced to hold a Hyderabad Rights (Huqooq) rally, in the second largest city of Sindh on July 31. This was announced by MQM-P senior leader Amir Khan. He also visited Hyderabad today to review arrangements regarding the upcoming protest demonstration in the city. He said that MQM-P was taking out a rally against the "bigotry" and "discriminatory attitude" of the PPP government towards the people of urban cities. MQM had flexed its political muscles at a public rally on July 4 in Karachi where it reiterated its demand to create a new province in Sindh. Terming a new province "unavoidable", MQM-P convener Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui while addressing the participants of the rally said. - APP

Quality Health Services in Punjab

HAMID JAVAID AWAN



PUNJAB government has introduced revolutionary reforms in the health sector in a short period of time to provide quality healthcare services to the people. Universal Health Insurance is government's flagship program under which, free medical treatment facilities will be made available to 110 million people by December 31. The program has been started in Dera Ghazi Khan and Sahiwal Divisions. Each family will get treatment facilities of Rs. 720,000 annually. Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Bazardar said that our government has introduced revolutionary reforms in the health sector in a short span of time. The purpose of these reforms is to provide quality healthcare to the public in hospitals. He said that the total budget of the health sector has been increased by 118 percent in the last three years and Rs. 369 billion has been allocated for the current financial year while Rs. 1.5 billion has been allocated for the purchase of Corona vaccine. Chief Minister Usman Bazardar said that Universal Health Insurance Program is the flagship program of our government under which every citizen will get free treatment and every family will get standard treatment facilities of Rs. 720,000

per year absolutely free of cost. He said that this program has been started in Dera Ghazi Khan and Sahiwal divisions and by December 31, 110 million people of the province would be provided free medical treatment. Punjab Government has given due priority to Primary and Secondary Health Care Facilities both in urban and rural areas of Punjab with the objective to make Basic Health Unit Rural Health Center Tehsil Headquarters Hospital and District Headquarters Hospital fully functional. During the first second third and fourth wave of COVID 19 Punjab Government managed smart lock down efficiently and conducted vaccination Program in the province in an organized manner. No doubt all the other allied departments join hands with health authorities and made it possible to undertake vaccination and preventive measures in accordance with directions of concerned authorities Local administration as well as police department also rendered meritorious services implemented the directions issued by the Chief Minister Punjab to prevent COVID-19 in letter and spirit. As for as fourth wave of COVID 19 is concerned once again it is a challenge for government specially for the Health Department to manage the prevailing situation by adopting appropriate preventive measures to overcome this challenge. Punjab Government has issued SOPs for the masses to safeguard them to become the victim of this fatal virus.

عید کے رنگ احتیاط کے سنگ

احتیاطی تدابیر

خریداری اور مبارک

- عید کی خریداری آن لائن کریں
- عید مبارک کے لئے فون یا ویڈیو کالنگ تک محدود رہیں

قربانی

- مندرہائی کا حساب اور آن لائن مندرہیں
- مندرہائی کا گزرتا ہو تو ماسک اور دستاے پہن کر حسابیں

عید نماز

- گھر سے باہر نہ نکلیں اور اپنی جگہ پر نماز کریں
- عید نماز پڑھنے سے احتیاط
- نماز کے دوران مسابئی ماسک لگائیں
- ہاتھ ملانے یا لگنے سے گریز کریں

PID (I) 466/21

Briefs

President Alvi signs two bills

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has signed Senior Citizen Bill 2021 for Islamabad and Enforcement of Women's Property Rights (Amendment) Bill 2021.

Under the Senior Citizen bill, measures will be taken for the welfare of senior citizens of Islamabad. Senior Citizen Council and 'Dar ul Shafqat' (old age home) would be established for the senior people, a press release said on Tuesday. Residents with more than sixty years would be eligible for the senior citizen card. According to bill, they will get free facilities of museum, parks and library whereas they would be also entitled to treatment facilities, subsidy on medicines and separate wards. Financial aid would also be provided to the deserving senior citizens. The senior people would get benefits of twenty per cent subsidy on air and railway travel.

The president also separately signed Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Bill (Amendment) 2021, in which section 5 of the relevant Act 2020 had been amended. It will provide filing of appeal to the president within thirty days against a decision of Mohtasib. - APP

Usman Mirza, others sent to jail on judicial remand

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: A session court in Islamabad on Tuesday sent Usman Mirza and other accomplices to prison on judicial remand in a case pertaining to harassment and torture of a couple.

The suspects were presented before the court after their four-day physical remand, where the court ordered to send them to the prison on judicial remand until July 30. Another suspect in the case, Idris Qayyum Butt, was also arrested in yet another case at the I-9 police station, in which he was blamed for torturing an owner of a gym and his wife. The details were shared by the government counsel in the case as he added that more suspects in the case would be arrested soon. "Idris Butt should be sent to jail in this case also," the counsel pleaded before the court. In the last hearing, the district and session court in Islamabad extended the remand of Usman Mirza and other accomplices in a case related to sexual harassment and torture of a couple.

The court extended the remand of four suspects including Usman Mirza, Idris Qayyum Butt, Farhan, and Atta ur Rehman by three days and directed the police to present them before the court on July 20.

During the proceedings, the counsel of the suspect Farhan and Atta ur Rehman sought bail for their clients and said that they were neither given new clothes nor allowed to meet the family. "These two have nothing to do with the case," he said.

12 arrested for possessing illegal weapons

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) launched operations in different areas and rounded up 12 lawbreakers for possessing illegal weapons besides recovering 12 pistols, 30 bore and ammunition.

According to a Police Spokesman, Gujjar Khan, Airport, Pirwadhai, Bani, Race Course and Morgah, police conducted raids in their respective jurisdictions and arrested Shahid Mehmood, Nisar Hussain, Khurram Shahzad, Shahzad Bilawal, Bilal Abbasi, Husnain, Muhammad Zakir, Muhammad Umair, Ahmedullah, Habib ur Rehman, Kamran and Zubair Abbasi.

He said, the operations would continue and the lawbreakers would be sent behind the bars. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan hosted an Eid event at his embassy. The ambassadors of Central Asian states and a select group of Pakistanis were also invited to the event. The Kyrgyz ambassador presented traditional souvenirs to CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani, GM Marriott Hotel Maurizio Romani and Zahid Latif Khan Chairman REIT. - DNA

Pakistan facing unannounced int'l hybrid war, says Rashid

During investigation of incident occurred with the daughter of Afghan Ambassador, it has been proved that this incident was not abduction or kidnapping

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad says Pakistan is facing unannounced international hybrid war by the elements who want to destabilize Islamabad's relations with China and Afghanistan. Talking to media in Rawalpindi on Tuesday, the Interior Minister said that we will foil the nefarious designs prepared by enemies and Pa-

kistan will continue its journey towards development under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. He said during investigation of incident occurred with the daughter of Afghan Ambassador, it has been proved that this incident was not abduction or kidnapping. He said Islamabad Police has reviewed over 7 hundred hours footages of 300 cameras installed on the travelling route of Afghan Ambassador's daughter



while interviewed over 200 citizens. He said that all four taxi drivers have no criminal record. He said that Afghan Ambassador should join the investigation process for logical conclusion of the case as the FIR was lodged on his application. He said Pakistan is a responsible country and full security is being provided to all foreign diplomats in the country. Referring the Dasu incident, the Interior Minister

said Chinese government has expressed satisfaction over the investigation being carried out by Pakistan to find out culprits. Sheikh Rashid said that peace in Afghanistan is necessary for peace in Pakistan and Islamabad will continue its efforts to establish peace in Afghanistan without interfering into the internal affairs of Afghanistan. He said Pakistan will accept any decision taken by the Afghan's about their affairs.

Central Secretariat of UBG inaugurated at Blue Area

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: United Business Group (UBG) Patron-in-Chief SM Munir inaugurated the Central Secretariat of UBG at Khyber Plaza (Blue Area Islamabad). On this particular occasion, President Zubair Tufail, Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary Information Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, Former President of

FPCCI Abdul Rauf Alam, Senior Vice President Amir Ata Bajwa, Vice President Nasir Qureshi, Former Vice Presidents Zahid Iqbal Chaudhry, Noor Ahmad Khan, Mian Akram Farid, Ejaz Abbasi, Sh Abdul wahid, Khalid Javed, Tariq Sadiq, Karim Aziz Malik, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Chaudhry Waheed ud din, Shaikat Masood, Qazi Muhammad Akbar, Malik Sohail Hussain and Khalid

Chaudhry were present. SM Munir in his address said that the establishment of Central Secretariat in Islamabad would enable better communication between traders, industrialists and government departments. He further added that this office will not only guide the business community but also help them to solve their problems. In addition, as the Presidency, Prime Minister House,

Cabinet offices, FBR, Diplomatic Missions and other Government department are located in Islamabad, so the effective role of UBG will improve the efficiency of the government setup. Expressing confidence in the capabilities of Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, SM Munir stated that he is striving hard to solve the problems of traders and industrialists by performing his best abilities.



ISLAMABAD: Mr. SM Munir Patron in Chief United Business Group inaugurating UBG Center Secretariat at Khyber Plaza Blue area Islamabad while President Zubair Tufail, Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary Information Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, Abdul Rouf Alam, Nasir Qureshi, Mian Akram Farid, Sheikh Abdul Wahid, Ejaz Abbasi, Amir Ata Bajwa, Ch Wahid ud din, Noor Ahmed Khan, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Zahid Maqbool, Ahsan Bakhtawari and Malik Sohail Hussain are also present. - DNA



Federal College of Education honors graduates

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal College of Education (FCE) Islamabad organized a convocation ceremony to award its graduate students in hybrid mode. Sixty six bachelor and forty seven postgraduate level students were conferred degrees. Mr. Shafqat Mahmood Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training and Mrs. Farah Hamid Khan Secretary Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training virtually participated in the convocation ceremony. They were the chief guest and guest of honor respectively. In her welcome speech Prof. Dr. Samia Rehman Dogar, Director FCE sharing the history of FCE said that college was established in 1974 as a directorate of In-Service teacher training and resource material center. Through In service teacher training programs, FCE has trained more than 50,000 teachers throughout Pakistan. She highlighted that FCE is a unique institution of National integration having students from all over Pakistan with a mandate of pre-service and in-service teacher training programs. Speaking on the occasion Dr Hamid Hassan, Dean Academics congratulated the students and their parents on their achievement. Federal Secretary Mrs. Farah Hamid Khan also graced the occasion on video link as guest of honor. Congratulating the students, she advised them to equip themselves with the skills to cope the challenges of 21st century to serve the nation.

Never miss a group call again on WhatsApp

DNA

ISLAMABAD: At a time when so many of us are apart, there's nothing better than getting together on a group call with friends and family, and there's nothing worse than realizing that you missed a special moment. As the popularity of group calls continues to grow, we've been working to improve the experience for our users - while of course still providing the security and privacy of end-to-end encryption.

Today we're introducing the ability to join a group call, even after it's started. Joinable calls reduce the burden of answering a group call as it starts, and brings the spontaneity and ease of in-person conversations to group calling on WhatsApp. Some of the best conversations happen when you least expect it. Now, if someone in your group misses a call when the phone rings, they can still join whenever they like. You can also drop-off and re-join so long as the call is still ongoing.

RCCI to organize ICEE2021 on July 31

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) is going to organize a three-day Exhibition on Interior, Construction, Electrical and Electronics, "ICEE2021" on July 31. Giving the details, Rawalpindi Chamber President Mohammad Nasir Mirza said that the purpose of the exhibition was to promote the industries related to the construction sector and to highlight the challenges faced by allied Industries such as Interiors, HVACR, Home Appliances, Sanitary, Electric and Electronics. He said that in line with the vision of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, to promote clean and green culture in the housing sector, emerging ideas and innovations have to be adopted. At the same time, new technologies will have to be introduced to make housing cheaper and affordable.

Briefs

'Intl. media exposes Sharif, Israel nexus'

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Political Communication, Dr. Shahbaz Gill on Tuesday said Maryam Safdar kept chanting against Imran Khan but, international media once again exposed the nexus between Nawaz Sharif and Israel.

"Today the international media once again exposed the nexus between the father of Maryam Safdar and Israel", he tweeted. International media reported that Nawaz Sharif, with the help of Israel, was involved in hacking the phones of Pakistani officials and Imran Khan.

While Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the same cooperation, kept hacking the phones of his opposition, he said.

Of course, Allah is the absolute truth (Al Haq), Shahbaz Gill added.

RWMC kicks off Eid cleanliness drive

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) on Tuesday kicked off its special cleanliness campaign for EidulAzha besides deploying as many as 3539 workers.

According to a RWMC spokesman, the administration had finalized all the arrangements under a special cleanliness program prepared for EidulAzha while 3539 workers had been deployed to ensure proper sanitation in Rawalpindi, Murree, Taxila, Kahuta, KalarSyedan and Gujranwala areas during EidulAzha holidays.

He informed, the administration on the directives of Chief Minister Usman Buzdar had finalized all the arrangements. The holidays of all the staff of RWMC had been canceled. Total, 3539 workers would perform cleanliness duties in different shifts, round the clock from Tuesday to third day of EidulAzha, adding, 3225 workers had been deployed in Rawalpindi and Murree while 314 workers were performing their duties in Taxila, Kahuta, KalarSyedan and Gujranwala tehsils.

A total of 413 vehicles were being used for Eid cleanliness operations. Loaders and dumpers were also being used in Murree, Gujranwala, Taxila, KalarSyedan and Kahuta tehsils, he said adding, 12 permanent and 26 temporary waste transfer stations had been set up in the district.

He said the administration was distributing a large number of biodegradable bags among the citizens to properly dispose of entrails of sacrificial animals. Under the special cleanliness program, all eidgahs and graveyards were being cleaned besides proper arrangements for removal of offal of sacrificial animals. - APP

'Curbs to be lifted only after vaccination'

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar on Tuesday said that complete restrictions could only be lifted in the country until a major portion of the population fully got vaccinated against COVID-19.

"The number of people administered vaccine in a single day crossed 600,000 mark yesterday (Monday) for first time in the country", the minister who also chairs meeting of National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) said in a tweet. However he said although the rising number of inoculated people is an encouraging sign but it needed further boost so that all type of restrictions in every field of life were lifted as soon as possible.

Asad Umar said the UK was an excellent lesson of vaccination minimizing health impact of COVID. Sharing graphs in his tweet, the minister pointed out that the cases had risen in current wave in UK at about the same rate as previous wave, but number of people needing hospitalization was much less due to high rate of vaccination achieved. - APP



ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib speaking during a ceremony organized by the Turkish Embassy. - DNA

Ehsaas Digital Hunar programme on the anvil

Given the complex nature of the Digital Hunar training subjects, Ehsaas will largely focus on the blended framework for curriculum design aligned with needs of subject and students

ZUBAIR AHMED

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Sania Nishtar convened a meeting with the technology team of Ehsaas on the forthcoming Ehsaas Digital Hunar programme. The Ehsaas Digital Hunar programme is rooted in the philosophy to empower the disadvantaged youth through digital skills, in order to make them employment ready. The programme is expected to train 25,000 young people from the Ehsaas ecosystem. Pakistan currently has one of the youngest populations in the world. According to last census, 60% of the country's population is under 35. Also, as per the estimates of Higher Education Commission, we are producing 500,000 graduates every year. "The pandemic has created massive demand for digital skills. Post-COVID, the future of employment is in the online world. The Digital Hunar programme is expected to serve trainees not only in learning new digital skills but will also prepare them for the job market", said

Dr. Sania. Further, she added, "We are in the final stages of designing the programme for board approval."

Ehsaas Digital Hunar is expected to deliver 3 - 6 month virtual programmes with in-demand market skills and hundred percent employability. The programme includes the five resources: curriculum design & development; learning management system; affiliation programme with academia and private institutes; training programme; and

freelance portal.

Given the complex nature of the Digital Hunar training subjects, Ehsaas will largely focus on the blended framework for curriculum design aligned with needs of subject and students. Live sessions will be led by course instructors on virtual training platform where participants will be able to interact with the instructors. All trainings will be delivered and monitored through the Learning Management System (LMS). Online learning resources and courses are expected to be based on module-format fea-

turing reading content, video content, practice exercises, quizzes, and other learning materials. Lessons will cover textual content, externally related articles, and media presentations for the purpose of elaborating on concepts from the modules. To keep the course content interactive and engaging, each module is expected to include video content as well. Ehsaas Digital Hunar is being designed in an evidence-based manner taking stock of need and options.

One of the key challenges being faced by Pakistani freelancers is the lack of financial integration of international freelance platforms with our financial systems. Moreover, all international freelance portals charge 5 to 20 percent as commission from employees as well as employers separately. To this end, a freelance portal will be built under Ehsaas that will be free to use, assisting employees as well as international employers. Secretary Ismat Tahira, DG Technology Meer Anwar and other senior officials were also present in the meeting.



Petroleum companies directed to ensure staff's vaccination

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) Tuesday asked all petroleum sector companies and operators to ensure anti-coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination of all their staff by August 15) to stem the spread of deadly virus in the country. "OGRA has directed all companies operating in mid and downstream petroleum sector to comply with the NCOC instructions in 'letter and spirit'. As we care about you and your loved ones. Let's contribute in saving the lives by getting vaccinated for the COVID-19," OGRA spokesman Imran Ghaznavi said in a tweet. Referring to a NCOC meet-

ing, chaired by Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar, he said the forum had urged to get vaccination done on 'SOS' basis for safe and secure working environment. "It is essential that regulated sectors should not become stimulant in the transmission of COVID-19," he shared one of the NCOC observations made in the meeting. In line with the NCOC directives, OGRA would ensure vaccination of all employees of oil refineries, tank lorry drives & helpers, pipelines' operational staff, oil terminals, staff engaged at the retail outlets, lube blending & reclamation plants, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminals, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) storage/

filling plants & allied facilities besides Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) stations. The OGRA spokesman said the NCOC had also advised to start effective promotional campaigns for internal and external stakeholders with 'strict measures' for the compliance in that regard. Moreover, incentives would be given to 'high achievers,' Imran Ghaznavi, who is also focal person for the drive titled "Get Vaccinated, Save Human Lives," asked the concerned companies to share their action plan by August 1 and 100 per cent compliance by August 15. As per the drive, all vaccinated personnel's data should be readily available with each concerned company.

Pakistan will start exporting ventilators this year: Fawad

DNA

ISLAMABAD, Information and Broadcasting Minister Fawad Chaudhry expressed the hope on Tuesday that Pakistan will start exporting ventilators this year. Taking to Twitter, Fawad Chaudhry revealed that a fourth firm has been issued a licence to manufacture ventilators as a result of the efforts the Ministry of Science made during the Covid-19 pandemic.



"I am very hopeful that we will start exporting vents this year," he said, adding a health city was set up in Faisalabad. In addition, he said the country will start produc-

ing auto disposable syringes in September. The Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (Drac) has given the go-ahead to production of two locally-developed intensive care unit (ICU) ventilators.

The National Engineering and Scientific Commission (NESCOM) developed one of the two ventilators and named it "Pakvent-I" while the other developed by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) was named "i-LIVE"

Making Pakistan green for future generations, says PM Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday said his government was focused on carrying out plantations in the country for the sake of its coming generations.

"The greening of Pakistan (is) for our future generations," the prime minister said in a tweet, with regard to his vision of a Clean and Green Pakistan.

The prime minister shared a video clip showing the barren land of Bhakkar in 2019 turned into lush green land under the government's plantation drive.

"Amazing results of billion tree plantation drive in just over two and a half years," he said, mentioning the Bhakkar's before and after the video. - DNA

Rescue-1122 devises plan

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Emergency Service, Rescue 1122 Rawalpindi on Tuesday finalized all the arrangements for Eid ul Azha while more than 400 rescuers would remain on special duties in Rawalpindi district. According to DEO Rawalpindi Ali Hussain, the Rescue-1122 personnel would remain alert during Eidul Azha holidays at emergency rescue stations with fully equipped emergency ambulances, fire vehicles, rescue and recovery vehicles. - APP

Pakistan achieves another milestone

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ullah said Pakistan had achieved another milestone by exceeding the target of \$ 2 billion IT sector exports as of June 30, 2021.

"The ICT export remittances, including telecommunication, computer and information services have surged to US \$ 2.123 billion (largest exporter in services sector & highest net exporter with US \$1.573 billion in net exports) at a growth rate of 47.43% during FY 2020-21 in comparison to US \$ 1.440 billion during FY 2019-20," he said in a press statement. He expressed confidence that by the grace of Allah Almighty the target of \$ 5 billion IT sector exports would be achieved by 2023. The minister congratulated the Pakistan Software Export Board and IT companies' management for the historic increase in the exports. - APP

Faithful to celebrate Eid with religious zeal

ISLAMABAD: Faithful will celebrate EidulAzha on Wednesday with great religious zeal and fervor across the country to commemorate the supreme sacrifice of Prophet Hazrat Ibrahim (AS), under strict anti-COVID-19 SOPs introduced by the government to prevent the virus spread.

The day will dawn with special prayers in mosques for the well-being of the Ummah and progress, prosperity, safety and security of the country. Religious scholars, in their Eid sermons will highlight the importance to follow the Sunnah of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS). In the federal capital, the main Eid congregation will be held at the Faisal Mosque. Following the Eid prayers, the Muslims will perform the ritual of sacrificing animals, spend their time feasting with family and friends, and distribute sacrificial meat among their family members, friends, and the poor. - APP

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Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman
Mobile: 0300 8553342

India's machinations

ON Sunday, India's negative role in the FATF was exposed after the Minister for External Affairs S Jaishankar remarked that the BJP government has ensured that Pakistan remains on the grey list. This really does not come as a surprise for Islamabad, however the international community must now take note of India's duplicitous role. Pakistan has been drawing attention towards the politicisation of FATF and the undermining of its processes by India for a while now. The latest statement from Mr Jaishankar is only further proof of New Delhi's continued efforts to use an important technical forum for its parochial political designs against Pakistan. Even though Pakistan has been engaging with the FATF in a sincere manner during the implementation of the action plan, India has consistently attempted to cast doubts on Pakistan's progress through reprehensible means.

It is encouraging to see the Foreign Office state that Pakistan will bring this recent confession to the FATF's and the international community's notice. This revelation should also raise serious questions over India's credentials for assessing Pakistan in FATF as a co-chair of the Joint Group. There can be no doubt whatsoever that India is a heavily biased actor and is undeserving of a seat in the Joint Group. FM Shah Mehmood Qureshi has also rightly remarked that the Indian statement is disgraceful but not surprising for the Modi government. Earlier during the month, when India's involvement in Lahore's Johar Town blast was revealed, FM Qureshi urged the financial watchdog to take appropriate action after evaluating the provided evidence. It is after all the responsibility of the FATF to hold India accountable for its terror financing. If no action is taken, the double standards will be there for everyone to see, and it would imply that the forum is political in nature rather than technical. Meanwhile, Pakistan must continue raising its voice regarding India's malicious intentions and the government should formulate a clear strategy for pursuing both legal and political measures.

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Combating Covid

PAKISTAN appears to have begun a struggle to deal with the growing number of Covid-19 cases it is encountering in the country. While the country had managed to keep case numbers relatively low compared to the rest of the world till now, the Delta variant now appears to be taking its toll and pushing up the number of people infected by the illness as compared to past months. We already know that the Delta variant is present in Pakistan. Other variants are also believed to be circulating in parts of the country. On Sunday, out of 85 tests selected for genotype testing, 56 were found to be positive for delta in Lahore alone. This is alarming given that the Delta spreads far more quickly than earlier variants and can grow by massive numbers within just days, often affecting all members of a household rather than just two or three, as was the previous pattern. Pakistan currently has 50,000 active Covid-19 cases.

As is the case with the rest of the world, vaccination is the key weapon available to combat Covid-19. Despite campaigns and media coverage, the vaccination rate in Pakistan remains low with about 500,000 doses being given out each day. While this is an improvement over previous months, the fact is that only two percent of Pakistan's population of 220 million people is fully vaccinated; 4.5 million people will not be enough to prevent an all-out break-out, flooding hospitals and leaving Pakistan in a perilous situation similar to that faced by India and now Indonesia. We must also take measures to ensure that those without CNICs can get vaccinated. The current system requires the sending of the CNIC number to a designated helpline which then allocates the vaccination centre and the place where the person can receive his or her vaccination. The reality is that many Pakistanis, most of them women, do not possess CNICs. Then there are the many who are stateless and living in Pakistan for decades. All these people cannot be left out of the vaccination process. Pakistan must somehow ensure that at least 70 to 80 percent of people are vaccinated before the virus overtakes us and inflicts terrible damage on the country.

US aims to pass Russia, China in vaccine diplomacy

Kerry Boyd Anderson



The US has other motivations, as well. For many policymakers, there is a moral imperative to help the rest of the world, especially now that most Americans who want a vaccine can access one. One priority for the Biden administration is making foreign policy more relevant and clearly beneficial to average Americans, and the White House has highlighted that the Pfizer deal will benefit US manufacturing and jobs

THE US may have joined the vaccine diplomacy race late, but it is trying to outdo Russia and China, both of which had head starts.

Amid a focus on vaccinating its own population first, the US domestic vaccination campaign has been fairly successful, with 48 percent of Americans now fully inoculated. Most Americans who were keen to get a COVID-19 vaccine have received their jabs. The campaign now has shifted to conducting clinical trials for children and trying to persuade Americans who are hesitant about the vaccine to get jabbed. This progress has allowed the US to start focusing more on helping other countries combat the pandemic.

When President Joe Biden took office in January, his team was well aware of criticisms that the US was not doing enough to help global efforts to fight the pandemic. Biden took an initial step in February, when he pledged \$4 billion to Covax, the multilateral organization established to provide equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. In March, Washington announced that it would send 4 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine to Mexico and Canada. In April, the administration announced plans to share 60 million doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine with other countries, once US regulators approve it. These initial steps were relatively small, especially as Russia and China were sending their own vaccines to multiple countries, though their domestic vaccine programs lagged. However, in recent weeks, the US has jumped into providing vaccines to countries around the world. The shift in approach began with the announcement that it would donate 80 million doses from its own vaccine supply this summer. Seventy-five percent of those doses are going to Covax, to be distributed to countries in South and Central America, Asia and Africa. The US is directly send-

ing the remainder to specific countries, such as neighboring Mexico and Canada, regional hotspot Haiti, ally South Korea, Afghanistan, and several other nations in Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Biden followed that step with a major announcement in June that the US government would buy 500 million doses of the Pfizer jab to donate globally. The US will work with Covax to distribute these doses. It is also supporting efforts to expand local production of vaccines in other countries, and Biden expressed support for the controversial idea of a patent waiver for vaccines.

The US donations represent major steps forward for efforts to vaccinate the world. In terms of scale, the 500 million Pfizer doses constitute far more than the 121 million vaccines that Covax has delivered so far, but still fall far short of Covax's goal to distribute 2 billion doses this year.

There are several reasons the US has an interest in donating vaccines to other countries. Fundamentally, all countries will benefit from ending the pandemic. As long as the COVID-19 virus rages in other countries, it will continue to be a threat to the health of Americans. The US economy is deeply linked to the global economy, which will not fully recover until the pandemic is under control.

The US has other motivations, as well. For many policymakers, there is a moral imperative to help the rest of the world, especially now that most Americans who want a vaccine can access one. One priority for the Biden administration is making foreign policy more relevant and clearly beneficial to average Americans, and the White House has highlighted that the Pfizer deal will benefit US manufacturing and jobs.

Competing with Russia and China in the vaccine diplomacy race is another factor. Both nations promised to provide vaccines far

earlier than the US, and Moscow and Beijing repeatedly contrasted their willingness to share with the supposed stinginess of the US and Europe. These efforts helped both gain influence and burnish their reputations. However, Russian and Chinese efforts have run into significant problems. The World Health Organization (WHO) has not yet approved Russia's vaccine, and Russia faced significant problems and delays with production and supply, often failing to meet expectations for delivery. As Russia's domestic vaccination program picks up, its ability to export vaccines may decline further. Two Chinese vaccines are approved by the WHO and appear to help prevent severe illness, but there are serious questions about the vaccines' effectiveness at preventing the spread of COVID-19. Several countries that extensively used Chinese vaccines still experienced major COVID-19 outbreaks.

While Russia and China had a head start, the US is hoping to use its highly effective vaccines to beat both at the vaccine diplomacy game. Biden has expressed the hope that the US can be the "arsenal of vaccines" in defeating the pandemic, and placed that effort in the context of a wider competition between democracy and authoritarianism. The UK has announced plans to donate 100 million doses to Covax, and EU leaders have said they will offer at least 100 million doses. Much will depend on how smoothly the US, European, Russian, and Chinese efforts go in the next few months. Vaccines are now part of a global geopolitical struggle. This might have positive consequences for the world. If competition motivates several countries to provide more vaccines to others, it could benefit many people and help end the pandemic, regardless of who wins the vaccine diplomacy race.

Courtesy: Arab News

Pegasus: The ultimate spyware

Muhammad Akhter



These organizations revealed on Monday that Rahul Gandhi, the biggest political rival of the Indian Prime Minister, had been selected at least twice as a target of the software. In addition, senior Pakistani officials were also possible targets of the software, including the closest Special Assistant to PM of Pakistan

THE technology world has replaced conventional espionage, and access to information and targets is now easier than in the past, as exemplified by the stories published in international newspapers on Monday. In addition to this, On Tuesday, Pakistan's one of the credible newspaper published a story in this regard.

"Governments around the world are facing bombshell allegations that they used Israeli-made malware to spy on the phones of activists, journalists, corporate executives and politicians". (DWAN)

According to a report in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz published on Monday, Paris-based "Forbidden Stories" and Amnesty International have access to 50,000 phone numbers, which were selected by NSO users for surveillance. (NSO stands for Niv, Shalev and Omri, the names of the company's founders).

The report suggests that reviled numbers have been leaked to seventeen (17) media outlets around the world that have been covering the issue for over a month.

According to Haaretz, the Guardian and the Washington Post were partners in the Pegasus project, while the Indian

newspaper The Wire was also involved. These organizations revealed on Monday that Rahul Gandhi, the biggest political rival of the Indian Prime Minister, had been selected at least twice as a target of the software. In addition, senior Pakistani officials were also possible targets of the software, including the closest Special Assistant to PM of Pakistan. Some Kashmiri leaders and Tibetan religious leaders are also on the list. It should be noted that most of the mobile phone numbers in the list were from Mexico, in addition to a large number of these numbers also belong to the Middle East. NSO Group A spyware has been found to be involved in monitoring targets in the Middle East and Mexico. Countries with mobile phone numbers include France, Hungary, India, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Pakistan.

What is Pegasus software used for espionage and how does it work? The software 'Pegasus' is a very advanced artificial intelligence based spy program created by the Israeli company NSO Group. This company is also known as Q Cyber Technologies. NSO is an Israeli firm whose services can be obtained for a fee.

Pegasus is capable of extracting and transferring all data from a mobile

phone. Experts believe that this is one of the most successful spy programs ever.

Pegasus can record phone calls. It can copy data from mobile phone and forward it. It can even take a video or photo of you with your mobile camera.

Pegasus has been targeting the world's most widely used mobile operating systems, Android and Apple's iOS.

Researchers say that NSO's methods of targeting targets are so innovative and the software is so advanced it can spy on a user without using the "zero click" method. Once the spyware is installed on the mobile phone, it can access the phone's private data, including its password, its calls, its text messages and its e-mail.

This dangerous spy software turns a smartphone into an entire spy system. This program has been designed in such a way that it cannot be identified and its activities remain secret. It can be used to deceive the forensic analysis of mobile phones. It can also avoid anti-software.

Pegasus uses minimal bandwidth to run on a mobile phone so that the mobile phone user does not have any doubts.

- The Writer is a Freelance Columnist

Briefs

Cyprus:
Erdogan
presses
hard line

NICOSIA: Turkey's visiting President Recep Tayyip Erdogan insisted Tuesday on a two-state solution in Cyprus, in an uncompromising speech on the 47th anniversary of his country's invasion that divided the Mediterranean island. "We don't have another 50 years to waste," he told a crowd at a parade in the north of the capital Nicosia, referring to decades of failed UN-led efforts to reunite the Greek and Turkish Cypriot-controlled sectors of Cyprus. "No progress can be made in negotiations without accepting that there are two peoples and two states with equal status," he said. - APP

President,
PM Imran
felicitate
nation on Eid

FROM PAGE 01
The prime minister opined that it was the passion which helped the Pakistani nation to save itself from the global coronavirus pandemic with wisdom, national strategy and patience. The prime minister noted that celebration of Eid-ul-Azha reminded them of the unprecedented and supreme sacrifices of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and Hazrat Ismail (AS). Allah Almighty liked their act of sacrifice so much that it was declared an obligation for the rest of the Ummah to perform till the Day of Judgement. The prime minister further said that economic situation with which the country was confronted, had been changing now. The country's economy was put on the right track and as a result of government's steps, the economic indicators were showing positive trajectory, he added. The prime minister said through different schemes launched by his government, the people were being provided with relief. The day was not far, he resolved, when Pakistan would be standing equally in the ranks of developed countries and the whole nation would feel pride among the comity of nations. Meanwhile, President Dr Arif Alvi stressed upon the people to extend all possible help and support to the poor and the needy on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. In a message on Eid ul Azha, 1442 Hijra being observed across the country on Wednesday, the president felicitated the Pakistani nation and the whole Muslim Ummah on the holy occasion and expressed his best wishes.

He said the day rekindled the lessons of supreme sacrifices and obedience of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) and Hazrat Ismail (AS). The day reminded that Allah Almighty had tested His pious personalities through different ordeals and it was a lesson for us to remain prepared and determined for any test in life. Giving sacrifices to achieve an objective, was a key to success, he observed. The president said the world was passing through coronavirus pandemic which had badly affected the humanity across the world. Even the big and powerful governments had failed to provide relief to their people, he said. He appealed to the nation to strictly observe coronavirus precautionary measures including wearing of masks, hand washing and social distancing, so that they could succeed in overcoming the global challenge with determination.

Three
rockets...

FROM PAGE 01
continue their prayers even as the rockets fizzle overhead and explode nearby. President Ghani, dressed in traditional Afghan clothing and a turban, appears not to flinch as he continues the prayer ritual. "The Taliban have proved that they have no will and intention for peace," he said in a speech afterwards. Interior ministry spokesman Mirwais Stanikzai said three rockets had been fired from a pickup truck, but one failed to detonate. "Based on our initial information, we have no casualties," he added.

Turkey ready to discuss peace process with Taliban: Erdogan

First, the US will be on our side at the point of diplomacy, in diplomatic relations," Erdogan explained. "Secondly, [the US] will mobilize their means for us at the logistics point, and will transfer whatever power they have to Turkey in terms of logistics

NEWS DESK

LEFKOSA: Turkey is considering operating a major airport in Afghanistan and Ankara is ready to discuss the Afghan peace process with the Taliban, the Turkish president said on Tuesday. "By negotiating this process with the Taliban, just as the Taliban made some of the talks with the United States, the Taliban should hold these talks with Turkey much more comfortably," Recep Tayyip Erdogan told reporters after offering Eid prayers in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Erdogan is in TRNC on the 47th anniversary of Turkey's Cyprus Peace Operation. Referring to crucial Afghan peace talks in the Qatari capital Doha, Erdogan said: "I think we will make good use of this process. There are other alternatives (as well), and we are currently work-



ing on these alternatives." "Turkey is considering handling the operation of Kabul Airport," if some conditions are met, he said. "Now there is a new era," Erdogan said, adding: "Three main authorities are seen here; NATO, the US, and Turkey." Noting that the US announced its

decision to withdraw from the region, Erdogan said that Washington wanted Kabul Airport to be operated by Turkey as it had been doing so for several years. "We are currently looking at this positively," he said, adding but Turkey has "some conditions." "First, the US will be on our side

at the point of diplomacy, in diplomatic relations," Erdogan explained. "Secondly, [the US] will mobilize their means for us at the logistics point, and will transfer whatever power they have to Turkey in terms of logistics." Lastly, Erdogan said that Turkey will need "financial and administra-

tion" support during this process. Intense fighting between Afghan forces and the Taliban continues amid the withdrawal of foreign troops from the country, US President Joe Biden has said the US military mission in Afghanistan will conclude on Aug. 31. Talks between the US and Turkey over security at the airport following the US pullout remain ongoing. Biden and his Turkish counterpart Erdogan discussed the issue at a recent NATO leaders' summit in Brussels. Ankara has been running the military and logistic operations of the Kabul airport for six years as part of the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission. Turkey, whose forces in Afghanistan have always been noncombatants, has reportedly offered to guard the airport amid questions over how security will be assured along major transport routes and at the airport, which is the main gateway to the capital.

China table tennis boss says Olympic playing areas too small

BEIJING: China's table tennis chief on Tuesday claimed the "smaller than usual" size of the playing areas may affect players' performance and safety, in his latest complaints about the Tokyo Olympics. China have won 28 of the 32 table tennis titles awarded at the Olympics, dominating a sport in a way that has rarely been matched. But the lead-up to the pandemic-delayed Games has thrown up several challenges, from inconsistent form among China's top players to new rules to stop the coronavirus spreading. "The whole playing space is smaller than usual... world competitions normally have

areas measuring seven by 14 metres... I just measured it at six by 11 metres," Chinese Table Tennis Association president Liu Guoliang told state broadcaster CCTV. "I'm a little worried about the athletes' running and safety. It's quite different from before." Players on the team also voiced concerns. "We have been noticing the size of the playing area throughout. Several side serves hit the screen board (at the side of the court) and we were slightly affected," men's player Xu Xin told CCTV. The trending hashtag "Liu Guoliang uses his foot length to measure the Olympic venue" gained 250

million views on social media site Weibo. Liu previously complained about what he viewed as the Tokyo Olympics' excessive virus prevention measures which made the team's preparations "extremely difficult". "We didn't expect some epidemic rules like not wiping the game table with your hand, or blowing (on the ball)," he told CCTV last week. Last week, the Chinese sailing team also complained of poor pandemic prevention measures at their hotel, saying competitors were forced to mix with other guests. China's six-member table tennis squad this year includes reigning Olympic

champion Ma Long and world number one Fan Zhen-dong in the men's singles, while world champion Liu Shiwen will play the mixed doubles and women's team events. Aside from China, the only other countries to win Olympic table tennis titles are South Korea (three times) and Sweden (once). However this year fierce rivals Japan are counting on home advantage and some notably strong players - raising fears that the Chinese team might not have it all their own way in the delayed Tokyo Olympics. China is taking a record delegation of 777 athletes and staff to Japan - its largest to an overseas Games.

SA court postpones Zuma's trial

FOREIGN DESK

JOHANNESBURG: The long-running corruption trial of former South African President Jacob Zuma, who is currently serving a 15-month prison term related to a separate charge, has again been postponed. Judge Piet Koen said on Tuesday, a day after Zuma appeared virtually in the Pietermaritzburg High Court, that the trial would be adjourned until "10 or 13 August". Zuma faces 16 charges of fraud, corruption and racketeering related to the 1999 purchase of fighter jets, patrol boats and military gear from five European arms firms when he was deputy president. He is accused of taking bribes from one of the firms, French defence giant Thales, which has been charged with corruption and money laundering. As the trial, which began in May, faced repeated delays, the former president was found guilty on June 29 for contempt of court for disobeying a Constitutional Court order to testify before a judicial panel conducting a separate probe of corruption during his presidency. His resulting imprisonment sparked days of protests, looting and arson, predominantly in his home province of KwaZulu-Natal, as well as nearby Gauteng province. The unrest left at least 200 people dead. Zuma's legal team cited the unrest, as well as the ravages of the coronavirus pandemic, as they petitioned for the delay.

US recognizes Pak efforts in FATF plan

FROM PAGE 01

The International Monetary Fund, World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the European Union, especially at a time when it's struggling with a financial crisis. Thanks to China, Turkey and Malaysia, Pakistan has managed to escape the 'black list', for which a country needs the support of three nations. Commenting on the Afghan situation, Price said Pakistan's role in the Afghan peace process is important. US State Department spokesperson said that Afghanistan's neighbors do have a role to play for peace in the war-torn country and added that Pakistan has the potential to play its role in this regard. Pakistan has reacted strongly after the remarks of Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, last week, that the Modi government ensured that Pakistan remained on the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

PM Khan's 'phone hacked...

FROM PAGE 01

government has been named as a client in the NSO Group's spyware scandal. A global investigation had revealed that India had targeted a number which was earlier in PM Imran Khan's use through the Israeli firm's malware, igniting fears of widespread privacy and rights abuses. The prime minister was selected as potential targets of the Israeli-made Pegasus spyware program by clients of the NSO Group cyberespionage firm. "Forbidden Stories, a Paris-based nonprofit journalism organisation, and Amnesty International had access to a leak of more than 50,000 phone numbers selected as targets by clients of NSO since 2016," reported the Guardian. The minister of state, addressing a press conference in Islamabad, said: "Nawaz Sharif had attended Narendra Modi's swearing-in ceremony and did not meet [Indian Occupied Jammu and] Kashmir's Hurriyat leadership." Habib said questions were being raised in the country as to why the premier's "phone was hacked and why was Nawaz Sharif's included in Modi's network".

The state minister, continuing his onslaught against the PML-N supremo, said he has a "history of tapping phones of judges". Habib added that Modi had tapped the phones of Pakistani officials through the Israeli NSO Group's spyware, Pegasus. "Who else might have Nawaz asked for help in this regard [if he had sought Modi's assistance]?" The state minister said the government would not let this matter slide adding it would seek answers from those responsible.

Indian opposition disrupts parliament

FROM PAGE 01

politicians, including the main opposition leader Rahul Gandhi. Shouting out slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, the opposition members said they wanted an independent probe into the complaints of spying and the resignation of Interior Minister Amit Shah. Opposition leaders said the Modi administration was spying on journalists, activists and politicians who were opposed to its policies. "It is an attack on the democratic foundations of our country," Congress said in a statement. It said the government had illegally accessed the conversation of many people by hacking cell phones with the Pegasus spyware. Ashwini Vaishnav, the minister for Electronics and Information Technology, told lawmakers on Monday there was no substance to the reports of spying.

Stabbing attempt on Mali's president

BAMAKO: The attack took place on the two-time coup leader in Bamako during prayers for the Muslim festival of Eid al Adha. Two armed men, including one who wielded a knife, attacked Mali's interim president Assimi Gouita in the Great Mosque in the capital Bamako. The attack, witnessed by an AFP journalist, took place on Tuesday during prayers for the Islamic festival of Eid al Adha. - APP



MANCHESTER: Pakistani cricketers and officials pose for a group photo after offering Eid prayer. Pakistan team offered the Eid-ul-Adha prayers under the imam of former captain Sarfaraz Ahmed. - DNA

Bollywood star Shetty's husband arrested in porn case

MUMBAI: Mumbai police have arrested Bollywood star Shilpa Shetty's husband Raj Kundra for allegedly producing and broadcasting pornographic films online, six years after the businessman was banned from cricket-related activities over match-fixing charges. Police announced Kundra's arrest late Monday, calling the 45-year-old "the key conspirator" in a case involving the creation and publication of adult films via internet apps. "We have sufficient evidence regarding this," police said in a press release, adding that investigations were ongoing. The arrest is the latest scandal to hit Kundra, who has two children with Shetty, the 2007 winner of British reality show "Celebrity Big Brother". In 2015, Kundra was banned for life from all cricket-related activities, following an investigation into match-fixing during his stint as the co-owner with Shetty of the Rajasthan Royals, a franchise in the hugely successful Indian Premier League. India has stringent laws against publishing and transmitting "obscene material", but watching pornography in private is legal. According to the adult site Pornhub, the nation of 1.3 billion was its third largest source of traffic in 2018, behind the United States and Britain. In 2015, a government-appointed board of censors blocked the release of the erotic film "Fifty Shades of Grey" in cinemas, despite being shown a toned-down version, sparking claims of moral policing. - DNA

Carey to take over Australia captaincy for WI ODIs

SYDNEY: Alex Carey will captain Australia in the first one-day international against the West Indies, Cricket Australia announced Tuesday, after Aaron Finch was ruled out through injury. Finch re-aggravated a right knee injury during last week's fifth Twenty20 against the West Indies and Cricket Australia said his availability for the second and third ODIs will be assessed on a daily basis. All three matches are being played in Barbados, starting on Wednesday. Carey, 29, will become Australia's 26th ODI captain and takes the mantle in the absence of regular vice-captain Pat Cummins, who is sitting out the West Indies tour along with a host of senior players including Steve Smith and David Warner. - APP

Hockey Federation calls 32 players for fitness test

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has invited 32 probables of National Senior Hockey Camp for fitness test to be reviewed at the National Hockey Stadium, Lahore from July 25 to 27. PHF has issued instructions to 32 players of the National Senior Hockey Camp to report to PHF Headquarters Lahore. The head coach national hockey team Olympian Khawaja Junaid has been posted as Camp Commandant while National Hockey Coach Ajmal Khan Lodhi and Pakistan Hockey Team Physical Trainer Abid Amin will assist him, said a press release issued here. The players include: Goalkeepers: Amjad Ali Sui Southern Gas, Waqar Wapda, Muneeb-ur-Rehman Sui Southern Gas, Abdullah



Mari Petroleum. Defenders: Mubashir Ali Wapda, Aqeel Ahmed Mari Petroleum, Moins Shakeel Sai Southern Gas, Abu Bakar Mahmood National Bank, Tazeem Al Hassan Mari Petroleum, Rizwan Ali Wapda, Danish Army, Asif Hanif

Mari Petroleum, Adeel Latif Sui Southern Gas, Rizwan Ali Pakistan Air Force. Forwards: M Rizwan Senior Army, M Umar Bhatta Wapda, Ali Shan Sui Southern Gas, Azfar Yaqub Sui Southern Gas, Rana Sohail Riaz Sui Southern Gas, Rana Waheed Wapda, Hamad Anjum Wapda, Ejaz Ahmed Wapda, Roman Khan Wapda, Mohsin Hassan Punjab, Ahmad Nadeem Sui Southern Gas, Hamza Sui Southern Gas, Waqar Ali Mari Petroleum, Salman Razaq Wapda, Naveed Alam Sui Southern Gas, Obaidullah Sindh, Umair Sattar Mari Petroleum, Nohiz Malik National Bank of Pakistan. The players have been directed to report to camp commandant and head coach national hockey team Olympian Khawaja Junaid till July 25 afternoon. - APP

Muslim athletes, officials celebrate Eid at Tokyo

The administration of the Olympics arranged Eid prayers where the individuals prayed for each other success in the upcoming mega event

WEB DESK

TOKYO: Muslim athletes and officials celebrated Eid-ul-Adha here at Olympic village. Pakistan's contingent was also part of the festivity. The administration of the Olympics arranged Eid prayers where the individuals prayed for each other success in the upcoming mega event. Athletes from Pakistan and other countries congratulated each other on Eid after the prayers. It must be noted that



10 athletes from Pakistan will participate in the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. The list of Pakistani participants in the Olympics includes Arshad Nadeem (Javelin Throw), Najma Parveen (200m sprint), Mahoor Shahzad (Badminton), Shah Hussain Shah (Judo - 100kg category), Ghulam Mustafa Bashir, Mohamad Khalil Akhtar, Gulfan Joseph (Shooting), Bisma Khan, Syed Muhammad Haseeb Tariq (Swimming) and Talha Talib (Weightlifting - 67kg category).

Briefs

IIOJK reports
123 fresh
positive cases

ISLAMABAD: One more person died due to Covid-19 in Indian illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). According to Kashmir Media Service, with the reporting of one more Covid death from Chest Disease Hospital Srinagar and the death toll in Kashmir Valley and Jammu region has reached to 4,365 and 123 fresh positive cases has pushed the tally of positive cases to 320,024.

The officials said that the total number of active cases are 1,773 including 1,019 from Kashmir valley and 754 from Jammu region. With 268 more recoveries, the tally of total recoveries in Kashmir valley and Jammu region has reached to 313,886 which is 98.08 percent of the total cases.

Meanwhile, authorities said that no fresh case of Mucormycosis popularly known as black fungus was reported and tally stands at 34. As per the daily information bulletin 2,658,983 persons in the territory are under observation while 9,226 persons have been kept under home quarantine besides that 1,773 persons are in isolation. Meanwhile, in Ladakh region as per the media bulletin released by the Directorate of Health Services said that, a total of 11 new positive sample reports of Covid-19 were received, eight in Leh and three in Kargil district. While a total of 1792 sample reports in Ladakh - Leh: 972 and Kargil: 820 were found negative.

No death from Covid-19 was reported in Ladakh. The bulletin further details that Ladakh has discharged 11 patients, five in Leh and six in Kargil. With this, the total number of COVID-19 active cases in Ladakh is at 103; 84 in Leh and 19 in Kargil district. - APP

Heavy rains
cause flash
floods in south
Kashmir

ISLAMABAD: Heavy rainfall during night hours triggered flash-floods and caused water-logging in several areas of south Kashmir's Islamabad district in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). According to Kashmir Media Service (KMS), at Srigufwara-Sirhama in Bijbehara, a cloud burst resulted into overflowing of streams and Dadi canal causing flash-floods. "The water entered many residential houses in Nowshera village and damaged standing crops and orchards," locals said. A 3-year-old girl drowned in a fast-flowing stream at Amad village near Aishmuqam area. She was identified as Toiba Jan daughter of Nazir Ahmad Mir. "The family immediately retrieved her from the stream and shifted her to a nearby hospital where doctors declared her brought dead," an official said.

The rainfall also inundated several areas in Islamabad town and the villages around. The water level in one of the canals in the peripheries of the town overran and inundated the Pehroo area. "The water entered several houses causing inconvenience to the people," locals said. They said the entire area is water-logged and people including elderly are stuck at their homes. "We fear for our lives and property if it rains again as has been predicted by the MET department," said Muhammad Ashraf, a local. - APP

Belgium
holds day
of mourning

BRUSSELS: Sirens are set to wail before streets fall silent on Tuesday in Belgium as the country holds a day of mourning for the victims of the devastating floods that left nearly 200 dead in western Europe. Heavy rains last week sent torrents of floodwaters sweeping through towns and villages, mostly in Germany and Belgium in the worst deluge in living memory.

At least 31 were killed in Belgium alone, with dozens still missing or unaccountable, while in Germany 165 were killed and rescuers are still scouring the rubble for victims. The number of missing in Belgium has fallen over the past two days as telephone contact is re-established and more people are traced. - APP



ISLAMABAD: German ambassador to Pakistan, Bernhard Schlagheck posing for a group photo along with alumni of different German scholarship programmes during the event of the Islamabad/Rawalpindi chapter of the DEPK alumni network. - DNA

Fewer women to regain jobs
during virus recovery: UN

Throughout the pandemic, women fared considerably better in countries that took measures to prevent them from losing their jobs and allowed them to get back into the workforce as early as possible: UN

DNA

NEW YORK: The inequalities between women and men in the world of work that have been exacerbated during the coronavirus pandemic will persist in the near future, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO).

A new policy brief finds there will be 13 million fewer women in employment in 2021 compared to 2019, while males' employment will have recovered to 2019 levels. Even though the projected jobs growth in 2021 for women exceeds that of men, it will, nonetheless, be insufficient to bring women back to pre-pandemic employment levels. The women's rights to work and at work at the core of the COVID-19 recovery, ILO highlighted that between 2019 and 2020, the women's employment declined by 4.2 percent globally, representing 54 million jobs, while men suffered a three percent decline or 60 million jobs.

The ILO paper suggests that women have seen disproportionate job and income losses because they are over-represented in the sectors hit hardest by lockdowns, such as accommodation, food services and manufacturing. Not all regions have been affected in the same way. For example, the study revealed that women's employment was hit hardest in the Americas, falling by more than nine percent. This was followed by the Arab States at just over four per cent, then Asia-Pacific at 3.8 per cent, Europe at 2.5 per cent and Central Asia at 1.9 per cent.

In Africa, men's employment dropped by just 0.1 per cent between 2019 and 2020, while women's employment decreased by



1.9 percent.

Throughout the pandemic, women fared considerably better in countries that took measures to prevent them from losing their jobs and allowed them to get back into the workforce as early as possible.

In Chile and Colombia, for example, wage subsidies were applied to new hires, with higher subsidy rates for women. Colombia and Senegal were among those nations which created or strengthened support for women entrepreneurs. In Mexico and Kenya, quotas were established to guarantee that women benefited from public employment programmes.

To address these imbalances, gender-responsive strategies must be at the core of recovery efforts, says the agency.

It is essential to invest in the care economy because the health, social work and education sectors are important job generators, especially for women, according to ILO.

Moreover, care leave policies and flexible working arrangements can also encourage a more even division of work at home between women and men.

The current gender gap can also be tackled by working towards universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection.

Promoting equal pay for work of equal value is also a potentially decisive and important step. Domestic violence and work-related gender-based violence and harassment has worsened during the pandemic - further undermining women's ability to be in the workforce - and the report highlights the need to eliminate the scourge immediately. Promoting women's participation in decision-making bodies, and more effective social dialogue, would also make a major difference, said ILO.

Covid recovery to drive all
time emissions high: IEA

DNA

PARIS: Carbon emissions are set to hit an all-time high by 2023 as just two percent of pandemic recovery finance is being spent on clean energy, the International Energy Agency said on Tuesday. Countries have allocated more than \$16 trillion (14 trillion euros) in fiscal support throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, mostly in the form of emergency financial help for workers and businesses.

The IEA's Sustainable Recovery Tracker found that just \$380 billion of this had been provided for clean energy projects. If all spending plans were to be realised, the intergovernmental body said, global carbon emissions would hit record levels in 2023 and continue to rise in the following years. Overall carbon pollution would be 3.5 billion tonnes higher than a scenario in which economies are compliant with the 1.5 degrees Celsius temperature goal of the Paris climate deal, it said. "Since the Covid-19 crisis

erupted, many governments may have talked about the importance of building back better for a cleaner future, but many of them are yet to put their money where their mouth is," said IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol. The United Nations says that to keep the 1.5 degree Celsius temperature goal in play, emissions must on average fall more than seven percent annually through to 2030. Although pandemic lockdowns and travel restrictions saw carbon pollution fall briefly last year, concen-

trations of planet-warming gases in Earth's atmosphere are still on the rise. With record-breaking heatwaves battering North America and parts of northern Europe submerged in unprecedented flooding, the impacts of climate change are hitting even developed economies harder than ever before. The IEA said investment measures announced among G20 nations were expected to meet 60 percent of the spending required to keep the Paris temperature goals within reach.

Iran locks down
capital amid
Covid-19 surge

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Provinces of Tehran and neighbouring Alborz have been put under lockdown by the Iranian government for six days starting on Tuesday as COVID-19 cases have risen sharply ahead of Eid al-Adha holidays. Iran celebrates the Muslim holiday on Wednesday and the following two days are the country's weekend, which usually prompt millions to travel, mostly to the cooler provinces to the north of the country. More than 200 daily deaths in July - about half of which are being recorded in the capital - and more than 25,000 daily cases - the highest figure since April - have spurred authorities to enforce the lockdown that will last until Sunday. More than 87,000 deaths have been registered in Iran since the emergence of coronavirus was acknowledged in the country in February 2020, making it the deadliest outbreak of the Middle East. Officials say the highly contagious Delta variant of the virus is now dominant across the country, which is now dealing with a fifth major wave of the pandemic. That is while, officials say, the rate of adherence to health protocols such as wearing face masks and observing social distancing has dropped to below 50 percent from above 70 percent last month. Tehran once more became a "red" zone under heavy restrictions earlier this month and health protocols stipulated that only emergency services could be operational. But the reality on the ground has been different with hardly any difference compared with a normal day in the capital as shops and cafes have remained open and the bustling city has been crowded amid low enforcement of protocols. This led to medical professionals again sounding the alarm while new images coming out of inundated hospitals show patients having to lie on the ground or in courtyards. Dire economic conditions, including rampant inflation, created by United States sanctions and local mismanagement have partly contributed to the lax enforcement of protocols as the state cannot afford to pay citizens to stay inside.

Pakistani community celebrates
Eid-ul-Azha with religious fervor in China

BEIJING: The Pakistani community living in the Chinese capital and other parts of China celebrated Eid-ul-Azha with religious zeal and fervor on Tuesday. Pakistan's Ambassador to China Mo'inul Haq, senior diplomats, officials, businessmen, teachers and students offered Eid prayers at Pakistan Embassy mosque. The ambassador exchanged Eid greetings with the community. The local Muslims and faithful from Islamic countries including Indonesia, Egypt, Sudan, Iran, Afghanistan and Bangladesh also celebrated Eid-ul-Azha with religious zeal. They sacrificed animals at the designated places and exchanged Eid greetings and best wishes to each other through text messages. Beijing's oldest Niujie Mosque, first built in 996, opened its doors early in the morning to both locals and foreigners willing to partake in the prayer. Muslims in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Gansu and Qinghai provinces as well as other parts of China also celebrated the Eid festival. The emphasis was on family reunions, meeting friends, enjoying meals and wearing new clothes. China is home to about 20 million Muslims from more than 10 ethnic minorities. The largest group is the Hui minority, which largely hails from northwest China's Ningxia Hui and Xinjiang Uygur autonomous regions. - DNA

Amb. Zaheer holds 6th virtual khuli katchery

Ambassador Janjua underscored that KhuliKatchery sessions have provided a forum for direct interaction between the Embassy and Pakistani community which has contributed towards improved service delivery. He emphasized that the Embassy will continue to remain closely engaged with the community

DNA

BRUSSELS: The Ambassador of Pakistan to the European Union, Belgium, and Luxembourg, Zaheer A. Janjua, held the 6th monthly Khuli Katchery in a virtual format with Pakistani diaspora in Belgium and Luxembourg. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Janjua underscored that KhuliKatchery sessions have provided a forum for direct interaction between the Embassy and Pakistani community which has contributed towards improved service delivery. He

emphasized that the Embassy will continue to remain closely engaged with the community to extend the best possible services by incorporating their inputs. Ambassador Janjua emphasized that despite economic decline around the world, Pakistan's economic growth is reflective of Government's sound economic recovery policies. Highlighting Government's strategic measures for accelerating the post-pandemic recovery, he referred to allocation of Rs. 20 billion for the health sector, special package given to the construction industry, issuance



of Eurobonds and spurring Industrial growth by 3.57 percent, manufacturing by 8.77 percent, construction by 8.34 percent and services by 4.43 percent.

The Ambassador underlined that Pakistan Stock Exchange has been named as the Best Asian Stock Market and the fourth-best stock market in the world. He stressed that as a result of all these measures, Pakistan recorded growth of 3.94%, which is almost twice the expected rate. The Ambassador also highlighted the success of Roshan Digital Account and Embassy's efforts to promote it. Appreciating Pakistani diaspora, the Ambassador highlighted that remittances from Pakistanis abroad have reached 29 billion, out of which \$ 226 million have

been sent from Belgium to Pakistan, witnessing an unprecedented increase of 246%, year on year basis. The event was organized in line with the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan, to maintain close engagement with the Pakistani diaspora and to provide seamless services. The virtual interaction was attended by a large number of diaspora members from different walks of life, including students, business, social services, and media. The community members appreciated the Embassy's outreach efforts and provision of efficient consular services.

Syria
intercepts
Israeli
missiles

DAMASCUS: Syrian air defences shot down Israeli missile over the northern province of Aleppo on Monday, state media reported, in an attack that a war monitor said targeted positions of pro-regime groups.

"At around 23:37 on Monday... the Israeli enemy carried out an aerial attack towards southeast Aleppo, targeting positions in the Al-Safira area," Syrian state news agency SANA cited a military source as saying "Our air defences intercepted the missiles... shooting down most of them," it added, saying the extent of damage was still being assessed. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the missiles landed near the Scientific Studies Research Centre in Al-Safira, destroying bases and a weapons depot used by pro-Iran groups.

There were no immediate reports of casualties, it said. Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, Israel has routinely carried out raids in Syria, mostly targeting Iranian and Lebanese Hezbollah forces as well as Syrian government troops. Israel rarely confirms strikes in Syria, but the Jewish state's army has said it hit about 50 targets in the war-torn country last year, without providing details. Last month, Israeli air strikes in central Syria killed at least 11 government troops and militiamen. - APP

Wealth
management
sends UBS
profits soaring

ZURICH: Swiss banking giant UBS said Tuesday its second quarter profits leapt 63 percent on the back of a strong performance by its wealth management division. The net profit of \$2 billion (1.7 billion euros) was well above the \$1.4 billion forecast by Swiss agency AWP. Operating income, the equivalent of revenue, jumped 21 percent to \$8.9 billion, UBS said in a statement. Pre-tax profits on its wealth management business, the bank's traditional pillar, surged 47 percent from the same period a year ago to \$1.2 billion, driven by the good performance of the financial markets and an increase in commissions. The division garnered a net influx of \$25 billion in new money. Its investment bank also saw pre-tax profits rise 9 percent to \$688 million.

"Our growth in the second quarter was underpinned by the relationships we have built and strengthened throughout the pandemic and by the trust our clients placed in our people and in our firm," CEO Ralph Hamers said in the statement. "All business divisions and all regions contributed to our results." - APP

Blinken
speaks to
Iranian
journalist

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken offered support Monday to an Iranian-American journalist after prosecutors say Tehran plotted to kidnap her in New York. "Good conversation today with @Alinejad Masih, who has demonstrated tremendous courage," Blinken tweeted after talking with MasihAlinejad, a journalist known for her criticism of the clerical state including its requirement that women veil themselves.

"I affirmed that the U.S. will always support the indispensable work of independent journalists around the world. We won't tolerate efforts to intimidate them or silence their voices," Blinken added. Alinejad wrote on Twitter after the virtual meeting that Blinken told her the United States "will pursue the kidnapping case of a citizen on American soil." Alinejad said she thanked Blinken for the call and urged him to take action on behalf of Western nationals who are in prison in Iran. The United States should "unite with Europe and take serious action against a regime that kidnaps and murders," she wrote. She also encouraged Blinken to "hear the voices of the various political groups" in Iran as President Joe Biden's administration holds indirect talks with the Middle Eastern nation to revive a 2015 nuclear accord. - APP

Briefs

Maryam, Jemima trade barbs on Twitter

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The politics is getting nastier and muckier with personal and private lives being sucked in. The latest example of it is Jemima Goldsmith, ex-wife of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice-President Maryam Nawaz Sharif who were indulged in a war of words on Twitter on Tuesday. While reacting to PML-N Vice-President Maryam Nawaz Sharif's remarks during an election campaign regarding her and Prime Minister Imran Khan's offspring, Jemima Goldsmith, ex-wife of PM Khan, lamented that she had left Pakistan owing to the antisemitic attacks but the hate sentiment still persisted. Jemima tweeted: "I left Pakistan in 2004 after a decade of antisemitic attacks by the media and politicians (and weekly death threats and protests outside my house). But still it continues." Responding to Jemima's tweet, Maryam Nawaz also held the Twitter fort and gave a rejoinder to her. She put the blame of getting being personal on PM Khan saying it was Imran Khan who first dragged the families into politics. Premier Imran Khan during his election campaign in Azad Kashmir taunted Maryam's son who was playing polo for Cambridge University and Nawaz Sharif was there to watch it. "The poor should go to jail and the powerful get NROs (National Reconciliation Ordinance) and go park themselves abroad and watch their grandson's polo match," Imran said in his speech.

Pak NIC found in Afghan Colonel's home

CHAMAN: A Pakistan's National Identity Card (NIC) has been recovered from the residence of an Afghan Army's colonel during a raid at his home in Spin Boldak, a border town of Afghanistan. According to details, the raid was carried out by a team of Afghan Taliban at the house of Afghan Colonel Ayub Kaki, where they found a Pakistani NIC bearing the name of the colonel. The NIC bore the address of the Pakistani border town, Chaman, and was issued in 2002 with its expiry in 2007. Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed had previously also announced apprehending the network behind issuing fake NICs. On July 08, the FIA has revealed that Afghan agency National Directorate of Security (NDS) had issued Pakistani national identity cards to the terrorists associated with outlawed TTP from the database of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA).

Universal access to vaccine crucial

FOREIGN DESK

NEW YORK: Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Munir Akram has said universal and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccine is essential to defeat the virus. Munir Akram, who is also President of UN Economic and Social Council in his address to the closing segment in New York urged the countries to build convergence to confront major tasks ahead. He said developing countries will need over four trillion dollars to recover from the triple crisis. Munir Akram urged the international community to combat rising poverty and hunger through measures that include social protection and relief programmes. He also stressed the need to mobilize the political will to address structural and systematic barriers to equitable growth and development.



ISLAMABAD: CEO and Founder of Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal hosted dinner for the outgoing Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan. Seen in the pictures are envoys of Jordan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine, Yemen, Egypt and Morocco. – DNA

PM Khan plans public gatherings in Sindh

NAZIR SIYAL

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan will be focusing on the Sindh province from August, where he plans to address public gatherings besides also expecting the joining of political heavyweights from the province in Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). According to sources, the decision was made in a meeting headed by Prime Minister Imran Khan today where he discussed his plans with Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani, Governor Sindh Imran Ismail, federal ministers Shah Mahmood Qureshi and, Ali Zaidi, Haleem Adil Shaikh, Saifullah Niazi and others. The meeting while taking key decisions regarding the province, according to sources, decided that the prime minister will visit the province in August. "Imran Khan will address public gatherings in the province," they said. It further emerged that the prime minister has tasked Sindh Opposition Leader Haleem Adil Shaikh to ensure the joining of people in the party with an emphasis mainly on youth leaders. On July 10, it emerged that PM Imran Khan approached influential political personalities in Sindh to form an anti-PPP alliance in the province to prepare for the next local bodies and general elections.

China building air base near Ladakh

DNA

NEW DELHI: China is developing an airbase for fighter aircraft operations close to the eastern Ladakh area in Shakche town in the Xinjiang province, reported Indian media. According to Kashmir Media Service, the media citing government sources said the base is coming up between the existing airbases of Kashgar and Hogan which have been carrying out fighter operations along the Indian borders for a long time. The sources said that this new base for fighter operations will fill up the gap for the Chinese Air Force in this region. The base would be ready for fighter aircraft operations in near future and the work has been expedited on it. Reportedly, the gap between the existing airbases in China close to the LAC for fighter aircraft operations was around 400 km.

Russia says Taliban ready for political 'compromise'

WEB DESK

MOSCOW: Russia said Tuesday that the Taliban was prepared for political "compromise", even as the insurgents launch offensives against government troops to secure greater swathes of Afghanistan while US troops draw down. The Taliban have capitalised on the withdrawal of foreign troops to capture scores of districts, border crossings, and encircle provincial capitals. Rounds of inconclusive talks appear to have lost momentum as the militants make battlefield gains.

But the Kremlin's envoy to Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, said during a conference with former Afghan leader Hamid Karzai on Tuesday that the insurgents were prepared to consider political offers put forward by other parties to negotiations. "Over the past 20 or so years, the bulk of the (Taliban) leadership has certainly become fed up with war and understand that there is a need to search for political solutions to the current deadlock," Kabulov said. He added that based on the statements and actions of the insurgent group, it had shown it was "ready for a

Russian tanks move to Afghan border

MOSCOW: Russian tanks stationed at Moscow's base in Tajikistan have arrived at training grounds near the border with Afghanistan ahead of army drills next month, the defence ministry said Tuesday. Russia will stage military drills from August 5 to 10 with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan at the Harb-Maidon training ground near the border with Afghanistan where the Taliban has led a lightning offensive against government troops. "As part of the upcoming joint tactical exercise, Russian tank crews from the 201st military base stationed in Tajikistan have covered the distance of 200 kilometres (124 miles) from the Lyaury range to the Harb-Maidon training ground near the border with Afghanistan," the defence ministry said in a statement. Troops from the Russian base in Tajikistan – Russia's largest outside the country's borders – and from the Central Military District will take part in the games. – DNA

political compromise". "But it's clear that from their viewpoint a political compromise should be decently presented to them," Kabulov added. His comments came after another round of inconclusive talks in Qatar over the weekend between the Afghan government and the Taliban that many hoped would kickstart the ailing peace process. Moscow is closely watching the conflict unfold. Soviet Union troops occupied Afghanistan in 1979, and the 10-year conflict claimed the lives of more than 14,000 Soviet troops. In recent years, Russia has sought to

reach out to the Taliban and has hosted Taliban representatives in Moscow several times, most recently in July. Moscow is also watching for a potential spill over of the instability into neighbouring ex-Soviet Central Asian countries where Russia maintains military bases. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has said Russia is concerned the instability could spur terror threats and proliferate drug trafficking. Next month Russia is taking part in joint military drills in Tajikistan, which has called up thousands of reservists to help secure its shared border with Afghanistan.

French prosecutors open probe into Pegasus spying

PARIS: Prosecutors in Paris said Tuesday they had opened a probe into allegations that Moroccan intelligence services used the Israeli malware Pegasus to spy on several French journalists. The investigation will examine 10 different charges, including whether there was a breach of personal privacy, fraudulent access to personal electronic devices, and criminal association. Investigative website Mediapart filed a legal complaint on Monday, and investigative newspaper Le Canard Enchaîné is set to follow suit, over the spying claims, which Morocco has denied. A collaborative investigation by The Washington Post, The Guardian, Le Monde and other media outlets, based on a leaked list of 50,000 phone numbers, claimed Monday that spying worldwide using the malware from the NSO Group had been far more extensive than previously thought.

Mediapart revealed that the phones of its founder Edwy Plenel and one of its journalists were among those targeted by Moroccan intelligence services. Other journalists working for French media companies were allegedly targeted by Moroccan security services, including employees of Le Monde and Agence France-Presse Morocco denied the claims, saying it "never acquired computer software to infiltrate communication devices". In India, India's main opposition Congress party has accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "treason" and compromising national security following revelations that dozens of Indians were potential targets of snooping by an Israeli-made spyware. Indian media reports said Modi's main rival, former Congress party president Rahul Gandhi, was among dozens of Indian politicians, activists and government critics identified as potential targets of the Pegasus spyware. "Is spying on India's security forces, judiciary, cabinet ministers, opposition leaders including Rahul Gandhi, journalists and other activities through a foreign entity's spyware not treason and an inexcusable dismantling of national security?" – APP

Afghan refugees celebrate Eid

PESHAWAR: The Afghan refugees settled in various parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tuesday celebrated Eid-ul-Azha along with their countrymen and women in Afghanistan. The Afghans settled in the province normally follow Saudi Arabia and the Arab world while starting the month of Ramadan, and celebrating Eid ul Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha. In Peshawar, Afghans living in various refugee camps located on the outskirts of the city and others living outside the camps as well as settled in urban and rural areas celebrated Eid-ul-Azha. The main gathering of the festival was held here at Board Bazar where the Afghans after offering Eid prayer. – APP

Pakistan growth underpinned by strong industrial output

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Tuesday said the improvement in Pakistan's GDP growth rate was supported by the strong industrial growth coupled with steady remittance inflows. "The government of Pakistan estimated the GDP growth at 3.9% and FY2021-ended 30 June 2021, the improvement underpinned by strong growth in industry and services and steady remittance inflow," the ADB said in a supplement "Asian Development Outlook" released on Tuesday. It said the inflation in Pakistan averaged 8.8% in the first 11 months of FY2021 on rising global commodity prices, especially for food and crude oil. Meanwhile the ADB projected 7.2%

economic growth for developing Asia this year, compared with its 7.3% forecast in April, as renewed coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreaks slow the recovery in some economies in the region. The growth outlook for 2022 is upgraded to 5.4% from 5.3%. Excluding the newly industrialized economies of Hong Kong, China; the Republic of Korea; Singapore; and Taipei, China, developing Asia's updated growth outlook is 7.5% for 2021 and 5.7% for 2022, compared with earlier projections of 7.7% and 5.6%, respectively. The supplement to ADB's flagship economic publication, Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2021, provides updated projections for the region's economies and inflation levels amid the COVID-19 pandemic. "Asia and the Pacific's recovery

from the COVID-19 pandemic continues, although the path remains precarious amid renewed outbreaks, new virus variants, and an uneven vaccine rollout," said ADB Chief Economist Yasuyuki Sawada. "On top of containment and vaccination measures, phased and strategic rejuvenation of economic activities—for instance, trade, manufacturing, and tourism—will be key to ensure that the recovery is green, inclusive, and resilient." The COVID-19 pandemic remains the biggest risk to the outlook, as outbreaks continue in many economies. Daily confirmed cases in the region peaked at about 434,000 in mid-May. They narrowed to about 109,000 at the end of June, concentrated mainly in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific.

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