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Speakers conference to solidify ties, says President Ilham

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Pakistan greatly values ties with SA, says COAS

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SBP maintains policy rate at 7%, says Raza

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Briefs

Shehroze scales summit K2

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A nineteen-year-old Pakistani climber, Shehroze Kashif, on Tuesday became the youngest mountaineer to summit K2, the world's second-highest peak. Prime Minister Imran Khan also congratulated Kashif on his achievement. The Embassy of the United States in Islamabad also congratulated the young mountaineer on his accomplishment. Read More: Legendary Ali Sadpara's body found on K2 The amazing feat from Kashif, a resident of Lahore, came about two months after he became the youngest climber to summit the world's highest mountain, Mount Everest as part of the SST Expedition 2021. A passionate climber, Shehroze first started climbing at the age of 11, summiting the Makra Peak (3,885m).

NATO chief urges 'negotiated settlement'

BRUSSELS: NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg on Tuesday reiterated calls for a "negotiated settlement" with the Taliban in Afghanistan, admitting the country faced a "deeply challenging" security situation as foreign troops leave. "The security situation in Afghanistan remains deeply challenging, and requires a negotiated settlement. NATO will continue to support Afghanistan, including with funding; civilian presence; and out-of-country training," Stoltenberg wrote on Twitter after speaking to Afghan President Ashraf Ghani.

Efforts afoot to bring health reforms

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services Dr. Faisal Sultan has said efforts are afoot to bring reforms in the health sector. He was speaking on the occasion of inauguration of Center for Disease Control at the National Institute of Health (NIH) in Islamabad on Tuesday.

Pak, KSA pledge to deepen links

Saudi foreign minister also meets President Dr. Arif Alvi; both sides vow to further strengthen relations

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) have underscored the need to broaden the spectrum of bilateral relations in all areas of mutual interests. Both countries reiterated their commitment to institutionalise the bilateral relations so as to make enhanced progress in the areas of trade and economy. This was discussed at a meeting between Prime Minister Imran Khan and the visiting Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, His Highness Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, who called on him, at the Prime Minister House. Welcoming the Saudi Foreign Minister, the Prime Minister said that Pakistan highly valued its ties with KSA and wanted to further expand economic and trade relations with the brotherly country. He highly commended the vision of Saudi leadership, particularly the Vision-2030 and the "Green Saudi Arabia" and "Green Middle East" Initiative, recently launched by His Royal Highness Crown Prince. He thanked the leadership of KSA for taking care of the Pakistani community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Saudi Foreign Minister said that both countries enjoyed true brotherly relations and Saudi Arabia desired to maintain the existing momentum of bilateral cooperation. He added that the leadership of his country attached importance to its ties with Pakistan and wanted to further push forward economic relations between the two brotherly countries. Earlier, the visiting foreign minister also called on the President of Pakistan and discussed with him matters of mutual interest. Both sides agreed to continue bilateral engagement even in the coming days.

FM Qureshi holds presser with Saudi counterpart

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on Tuesday agreed to strengthen their relationship particularly in the economic domain including cooperation in trade, investment and technology. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan in a joint presser held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, vowed to continue extending support to each other on issues of regional and international importance. The Foreign Ministers in his remarks said Pakistan was keen in further strengthening relations with Saudi Arabia adding Pakistan wants Saudi Arabia to invest in the CPEC project. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi calling the Saudi FM "my friend and my brother" said at the bilateral front, Pakistan was "comfortable how things were moving". He said the talks focused on ways to improve economic linkages through bilateral trade and investments. Qureshi mentioned that yesterday's senior officials-level talks about the structure of the Saudi-Pak Supreme Coordination Council for its activation. "Focal persons from both foreign ministries have been appointed to materialize a

Continued on Page 06

ELECTORAL REFORMS Cabinet re-invites Opposition for talks



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Information Minister Fawad Chaudhary said that government and the opposition were getting along quite well and the consultation process on the appointment of two members of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has begun. Fawad Chaudhary said that the Prime Minister will inform the

Continued on Page 06

PML-N announces to launch demonstrations

STAFF REPORT

MUZAFFARABAD: Rejecting the results of general elections held in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on July 25 (Sunday), Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) on Tuesday announced it would hold demonstrations to demand re-polling in different constituencies of the state.

Addressing a joint press conference in Muzaffarabad, former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, outgoing premier of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Raja Farooq Haider and former federal minister Ahsan Iqbal alleged that the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had rigged the elections to rob the PML-N of its mandate.

Some of the candidates of the opposition party, who had suffered defeat at the hands of their opponents in the AJK elections, and who were also present at the press conference demanded the AJK Election Commission recount the votes in their constituencies. They alleged that the Kashmir elections held on July 25 had been rigged in the same way as the general elections of 2018.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, called on Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan, on Tuesday. - DNA

Speakers moot to solidify ties, says President Ilham

Speaker congratulated the President and the people of Azerbaijan on the resounding victory in the 44 day Patriotic War

NEWS DESK / DNA

BAKU: President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev received the Pakistani Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker AsadQaiser at the Presidential Palace, on Tuesday.

Welcoming the Speaker, President Ilham hoped that First Trilateral Conference of the Speakers will contribute towards strengthening the relations among the three brotherly countries. Speaker AsadQaiser thanked the President for receiving him and conveyed the greetings and good wishes of



President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan. The Speaker also thanked the President for extending continued support on the issue of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir. Speaker congratulated the President and the peo-

ple of Azerbaijan on the resounding victory in the 44 day Patriotic War. The Speaker highlighted the need for further expanding the excellent relationship between the two brotherly countries to a broader array including education, health and climate change. The Speaker also proposed the creation of the Joint Working Group between the Commerce Ministries to focus and prepare action plan for increasing bilateral trade. President Ilham noted that Azerbaijan has always stood by Pakistan on its

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'US remarks on Pak judicial system slammed'

There is no question of any coercion or pressure on Pakistan's judiciary: FO

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Responding to media queries regarding the Investment Climate Statements for 2021 released by the US Department of State, the Spokesperson said on Tuesday Pakistan has taken a strong exception to the gratuitous and unwarranted comments made in the report on Pakistan's judicial system.

The judiciary in Pakistan is independent and the Courts are functioning in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the country. The allegations to the contrary are firmly denied as factually incorrect and misleading. As a vibrant democracy, the government of Pakistan firmly believes in the separation of powers between the Executive,

Continued on Page 06

New Azerbaijan envoy to Pakistan meets Amb. Bilal

BAKU (DNA) - Newly designated Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov met with Ambassador of Pakistan to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee in Baku to exchange views on enhancing cooperation between Azerbaijan and Pakistan. Ambassador Khazar will soon take responsibilities in Islamabad. It would be Ambassador Khazar's first ambassadorial posting abroad.

Earlier, Ambassador Ali Alizada left Pakistan few weeks ago after completing his tenure in Pakistan. Ambassador Alizada spent



an eventful tenure during which relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan were given new dimensions. - DNA

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Australia, Belgium light up men's tournament - Page 06

Azerbaijan, Turkey, Pakistan sign Baku Declaration - Page 07

Tunisia's president intensifies crackdown as Opp calls for talks - Page 08

UNODC, FIA join hands to combat human trafficking in Pakistan

The scope of project is laid down for two years, a joint initiative by the Government of Canada and the UNODC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Country Office Pakistan with the implementing partner Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) launched a project Combating Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in Pakistan in Islamabad. The scope of project is laid down for two years, a joint initiative by the Government of Canada and the United Nations



ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Canada Wendy Gilmour speaks on the launch ceremony of the project to combat human trafficking. - DNA

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Briefs

Capital police arrest six drug dealers

PESHAWAR: The Capital City police on Tuesday arrested six drug peddlers in different parts of the Peshawar city and recovered 4Kg of hashish besides 660gm ice-drug from their possessions, said a spokesman. The AJMS police arrested a suspect Akhtar, the Khazana police arrested an accused Farid Gul, the Faraqirabad police arrested an accused Farman, the Gulfat police arrested a suspect Aurangzeb, the Sarband police arrested an alleged drug dealer Saifullah, and the Razaq police arrested an accused Dilnawaz.

All the arrested confessed their involvement in supplying drugs to the customers while cases were registered in concerned police stations. The arrests were made in an ongoing operation against drug peddlers that was directed by Capital City Police Officer, Ahsan Abbas. The aim of operation on drug sellers was to save the young generation from narcotics and ice-drug. The operation was supervised by SSP Operation Yasir Afridi. — APP

Another dies of coronavirus in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: Another patient died of COVID-19 while 21 new cases were reported in the district during the last 24 hours.

A spokesperson for the health department said on Tuesday that 676 coronavirus tests were conducted in public and private sector labs during the same period. He said the total number of active cases in Faisalabad was recorded 272, and recoveries 20,550. He said

that 339 beds were allocated at the Allied Hospital, 133 at the DHQ Hospital and 150 at Govt General Hospital Ghulam Muhammad Abad for COVID-19 patients.

At present, 37 patients were under treatment at the Allied Hospital and 11 at DHQ Hospital. He further said that 117 confirmed patients were isolated at their homes in the district. — APP

Pakistan response towards...

From Page 08

Also the unique aspect of the book is sources of information and the data collection from the primary sources/stakeholders and the field trips conducted during her research.

Dr. Shabana Fayyaz, the author of the book and the Chairperson Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, thanked ISSI for launching her book. In her remarks she said that terrorism is a very deep topic, the topic she opted for the book is based on her research on doctoral level.

While writing a book, she had interviewed more than 100 people including Pakistani former President General Pervez Musharraf and Pakistani former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz. She further said that unless we invest in the fabric of the people, we cannot get desired objectives. Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Chairman, Senate Defence Committee expressed that it is very fascinating to see that a very important part of the history has been written by Pakistani writer. As a matter of fact, such books are mostly written by the foreign writers.

The Senator added that terrorism is an indigenous problem of Pakistan and its root causes are internal. While, internal weaknesses are exploited by the external actors. He further reiterated that though we established National Counter Terrorism Authority NACTA, we have not empowered NACTA as yet. And Security has to be refined, he added. Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI in his concluding remarks said there are many lessons we need to learn from the book. There is a linkage between internal and external security. The emerging challenges of non-state actors require deep analysis. New thinking has to be developed how to counter the new developments in security domain. We have to adapt the realistic approach, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs meeting of federal cabinet. — DNA

Special corona vaccination drive successfully underway

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali visited various areas to check the implementation of the special vaccination campaign against corona. He went to Jinnah Colony and Gulberg and inspected the presence of mobile teams in dispensaries and other static points to vaccinate citizens and in the streets he checked the working of mobile teams.

District Health Officer Dr. Bilal Ahmed was also with him. Deputy Commissioner confirmed the vaccination to citizens by texting 1166 from the mobile phones of the people in the streets and sent some people to the points for vaccination in his supervision. The Deputy Commissioner said that Corona Vaccination Special Campaign is being implemented which is also being monitored regularly. He urged the Health Department to successfully complete this important task by assigning a daily target. He asked the citizens that the fourth wave of corona is probably more dangerous so vaccination is essential to prevent the spread of the disease and every citizen over the age of 18 should be vaccinated to be safe from corona while SOPs should also be implemented and rumors should not be listened to. He told mobile teams to go door

to door and encourage people to be vaccinated and have teams in the streets to vaccinate those who do not get vaccinated under their supervision.

DHO said that vaccination centers are also function besides special campaign. He informed that as many as 789583 general and 44184 Health Care Workers have been vaccinated so far.

861,067 people vaccinated

As many as 861,067 people had

so far been vaccinated against the COVID-19 in the district.

District Health Officer Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Tuesday that 654,025 citizens had been given the first dose while 162,621 were administered the second one.

He said that sufficient stock of anti-coronavirus vaccine was available in the district, adding that 35 vaccination centers and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad.

To facilitate people, the centers had been set up in Allied Hospital, District Headquarters Hospital, Government General Hospital GM Abad, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital Samanabad, Children Hospital, Sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Head Quarters Hospital Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandianwala, Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Jaranwala, Government General Hospital Chak 224-RB, New Building RHC Khurrianwala, New Building THQ Samundri, New Building THQ Tandianwala, Social Security Hospital Madina Town, Wapda Hospital, Rural Health Centers Mureed Wala, Chak 174-JB, Chak 134-JB, Chak 229-Rb, Chak 65-GB, RHC Lundianwala Jaranwala, RHC Khurrianwala Jaranwala, Pindi Sheikh Musa, Kanjwani, Mamukanjan, RHC Chak 400-GB, RHC Chak 153-RB, RHC Chak 374-GB and Chak 469-GB, he added.

He said a special vaccination campaign was also in progress during which mobile teams were administering vaccine to people at their doorsteps.



FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali monitoring the process of special Corona vaccination campaign. — DNA

IMF revises up Pak GDP growth projection

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday revised up its projection for Pakistan's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate to 3.9%. In its World Economic Outlook report 2021 (Update), the IMF said "Projections are revised up for the Middle East and Central Asia due to robust activity in some countries (such as Pakistan). Earlier in April this year, the IMF had projected Pakistan's real GDP to grow at 1.5% in the year 2021 despite a higher projected rate of 3.0% by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

Pakistan government had already released the provisional data of GDP growth rate (3.9%) for the year 2020-21 backed by robust industrial growth and higher than expected agriculture output. The SBP on Tuesday forecast the GDP growth to rise from 3.9% in FY21 to 4-5% this year, and average inflation to moderate to 7-9% from its re-

cent higher out-turns. Meanwhile the IMF in its statement said economic prospects have diverged further across countries since the April 2021 World Economic Outlook (WEO) forecast. Vaccine access has emerged as the principal fault line along which the global recovery splits into two blocs: those that can look forward to further normalization of activity later this year (almost all advanced economies) and those that will still face resurgent infections and rising COVID death tolls, it added.

The recovery, however, is not assured even in countries where infections are currently very low so long as the virus circulates elsewhere.

The global economy is projected to grow 6.0 percent in 2021 and 4.9 percent in 2022. The 2021 global forecast is unchanged from the April 2021 WEO, but with offsetting revisions. Prospects for emerging market

and developing economies have been marked down for 2021, especially for Emerging Asia. By contrast, the forecast for advanced economies is revised up. These revisions reflect pandemic developments and changes in policy support. The 0.5 percentage-point upgrade for 2022 derives largely from the forecast upgrade for advanced economies, particularly the United States, reflecting the anticipated legislation of additional fiscal support in the second half of 2021 and improved health metrics more broadly across the group. Recent price pressures for the most part reflect unusual pandemic-related developments and transitory supply-demand mismatches. Inflation is expected to return to its pre-pandemic ranges in most countries in 2022 once these disturbances work their way through prices, though uncertainty remains high. — APP

Every district to have a university: Governor Sarwar

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar has said the Punjab government is committed to establish a university in every district of the province with a view to encourage higher education and promote research culture in education. During a meeting with Chairman Punjab Higher Education Commission (PHEC) Dr Fazal Ahmad Khalid at the Governor's House here on Tuesday, he said work had been started on the founding of 15 new universities in Punjab, adding that funds had also been released to 10 universities for research in health, agriculture, education and other fields. Earlier, Chairman PHEC Dr Fazal Ahmad Khalid called on Governor Muhammad Sarwar and presented the an-

nual report of the PHEC. He also briefed the governor on various projects of the commission. Governor Sarwar admired the initiatives and role of the Punjab Higher Education Commission as regulator and facilitator of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Punjab, adding that the Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) government was committed to raising literacy rate, improving academic standards and dissemination of knowledge in the province.

Lauding the role of the PHEC, he said the work of the PHEC in the promotion of higher education and research in the universities was exemplary, adding that the Innovation and Research Challenge program was also commendable. He said it was satisfying that the global ranking of the universities had improved significantly, adding that more dedicated efforts were needed to

further improve rankings. The governor, who is the chancellor of universities in the province, said all vice chancellors (VCs) in public sector universities had been appointed on merit while transparency had been ensured in all matters of the universities.

Sarwar said the PTI Government had purged universities of political interference and nepotism, adding that no compromise would be made on quality of education. He further said injustice with students at educational institutions would not be tolerated at all. In his briefing, the chairman PHEC said the commission had launched "Rehnumai Markaz portal" to provide timely information to students and solve their problems online keeping in view challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

BRT allocates separate seats for transgenders

DNA

PESHAWAR: BRT Peshawar has allotted separate seats or reservations for transgender in BRT Peshawar buses in a bid to facilitate the marginalized and underprivileged community.

BRT Peshawar Spokesperson Usman Khan said that eunuchs are a part of our society and BRT Peshawar took the decision to facilitate the transgender community members. He urged community members to avoid sitting on reserved seats for eunuchs in buses. Last year in August, Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurated the Peshawar Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, which became the flagship project of the PTI-led Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to make daily commute easier for the locals.

KP Chief Minister Mahmood Khan, along with Sindh Governor Imran Ismail and Defence Minister Pervez Khattak, was present at the launch of the project, where the premier also delivered a speech.

NAVTTTC allocates add'l trades to GTVC

PESHAWAR: National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) allocated seven additional trades for RPL (recognition of prior learning) assessment at Government Technical & Vocational Centre (GTVC), here at Gulbahar, said principal of the institute on Tuesday.

The new trades included HVACR, dress making, computer operator, carpenter / cabinet maker, auto-mechanic, motorcycle and generator mechanics. The principal has been given go ahead to receive and process applications on prescribed format from RPL candidates of newly allocated trades in addition to already/ previously notified trades under PM's Kamyab Jawan Programme. — APP

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5.	Legal	Bachelor's degree in Law	1
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Deputy Director (HR)
Competition Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad

PID (I) No. 502/21

Briefs

IHC restores ATA sections in Osama Satti case

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday restored the anti-terrorism act (ATA)'s clauses in Osama Satti murder case and turned down the decision of an anti-terrorism court (ATC). A division bench comprising Justice Mohsin Akhter Kiyani and Justice Baber Sattar announced the verdict on a petition challenging the decision of ATC. The petitioner's lawyer read out the first information report before IHC bench and said 17 bullets were shot at Osama Satti. The police personnel, he said, misused its authorities under ATA 1997. This was a criminal case, he added. Earlier, the bench reserved the judgment and later announced to restore the ATA sections in FIR. It may be mentioned here that a citizen Osman Satti had been killed by the police personnel in Islamabad. - APP

IRSA releases 293,700 cusecs water

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Tuesday released 293,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 418,700 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1497.60 feet, which was 113.60 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 212,400 and 135,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1182.15 feet, which was 144.15 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 57,600 and 10,000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 159,600, 151,700 and 70,300 cusecs respectively.

Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 35,800 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 77,000 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.

Man who 'killed' woman, her son surrenders

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A suspect who was wanted by Rawalpindi police in a case pertaining to a cool-blooded murder of a woman and her 14-month-old son has surrendered before the police on Tuesday. According to police, the suspect identified as Wajid Ali surrendered before the authorities at the Chuantra police station.

He is blamed for inviting the woman to his place and later sexually assaulting her. The suspect, who is a resident of the MohutaMohra area of Rawalpindi and worked as a carpenter, was blamed for killing the woman and the minor child.

Wajid Ali, according to police, initially assaulted the mother and her son and used a sharp object to attack them, leading to the immediate death of the child and inflicting serious wounds to the woman who later succumbed to her injuries. The police had previously shared the details of the suspect on their Twitter account, seeking public help in tracing the suspect.

The Inspector-General of Police (IGP) of Punjab InamGhan has taken notice of the incident and has instructed RPO Rawalpindi to furnish a report on the matter soon.

Business community supports Tanveer Ilyas as PM AJK

Sardar Yasir assured that if given a chance, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan would implement the vision of PM Khan for economic prosperity in AJK and play a proactive role to promote the welfare and betterment of the people of the region

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Ajmal Baloch, President, All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tijaran along with a delegation visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and congratulated Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan President ICCI on election victory of his elder brother Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan who won his seat from LA-15 Bagh-II as PTI candidate. Baser Daud, Khalid Chaudhry, Mehboob Khan, Abdul Ghaflar Chaudhry, Chaudhry Irfan, Akhtar Abbasi, Naveed Satti, Shafique Abbasi and others were in the delegation. Abdul Rehman Khan, Vice President ICCI was also present at the occasion. Ajmal Baloch President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tijaran and Ifthikhar Feroze, President, Anjuman-e-Tijaran Azad Kashmir in their joint statement said that Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has a business background and vast experience of investment and economic mat-



ters, therefore, they stressed that Prime Minister Imran Khan should appoint him as Prime Minister of AJK that would pave way for the better economic development of the region. They said that AJK has great potential for promoting tourism and Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan would be instrumental in attracting more investment to AJK to realize its tourism potential and making it

one of the fastest growing regions of the country. They said that appointment of Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan would give greater level of confidence to the business community and investors to make investments and start business ventures in AJK. They were of the view that Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan would also play a positive role in attracting local and foreign investors to-

wards AJK, therefore, they urged that Prime Minister Imran Khan should prefer him for appointment as Prime Minister of AJK to bring real change in the region.

Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry thanked Ajmal Baloch President All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tijaran, Ifthikhar Feroze President Anjuman-e-Tijaran

Azad Kashmir and delegation members for showing their support for appointment of Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan as Prime Minister of AJK. He said that AJK possessed tremendous potential for tourism as the region was endowed with picturesque spots for tourists.

He said that AJK has also great potential to promote marble, stones, forestry, wood and other industries that would create more jobs for youth, improve trade and exports of the region.

He was hopeful that the PTI government in AJK would make more conducive policies for realizing the actual economic potential of the region and make it an attractive destination for tourism and economic activities.

He assured that if given a chance, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan would implement the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan for economic prosperity in AJK and play a proactive role to promote the welfare and betterment of the people of the region.

IHC clubs ICAs in NBP president case

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) Tuesday clubbed the intra court appeals (ICAs) against the decision of single member bench in case pertaining to the appointment of the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) chairman and president.

A division bench comprising IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Amer Farooq heard the ICA.

Petitioner NBP staff union chief organizer Latif Qureshi appeared before the court and requested the bench to restore the decision of single member bench until the final judgment of the ICA comes.

NBP Chairman Zubair Soomro and President Arif Usmani had not challenged the decision of single member bench.

He said the NBP president had no relevant qualification required for the post. The court served notices to respondents and directed the registrar office to club the ICAs for hearing together. - APP

High to medium flood likely in rivers

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that high to very high flood is expected in river Jhelum (upstream Mangla) and in river Chenab at Marala, Khanki and Qadirabad Headworks while medium to high flood is likely in the nullahs of rivers Chenab and Ravi, besides, low to medium floods in river Indus at Tarbela (upstream) during Wednesday to Friday.

According to daily FFC report on Tuesday, currently all main rivers i.e. Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi and Sutlej are discharging "Normal Flows" and there is no riverine flood situation in the country.

The Combined Live Storage of major reservoirs of Tarbela, Mangla and Chashma is 6.608 MAF i.e. 49 percent of total value of 13.516 MAF. Moderate moist currents from Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal (India) are penetrating into upper parts of the country up to 5000 feet whereas yesterday's low-pressure area over Northwestern Madhya Pradesh (India)

has weakened. Trough of Westerly Wave continues to persist over Northern parts of Afghanistan with seasonal low continues to prevail over Northern Balochistan.

Flood Forecasting Division (FFD), Lahore has predicted scattered thunderstorm and rain of Moderate Intensity with isolated heavy falls over Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Lahore, Faisalabad and D.G. Khan Divisions of Punjab Province including upper catchments of all main rivers during the upcoming 24 hours.

Isolated thunderstorm/rain may also occur over Sahiwal, Multan and Bahawalpur Divisions (Punjab) and

UNODC for strengthening capacity of FIA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Country Office with the implementing partner Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Tuesday launched a project 'Combating Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM) in Pakistan'.

The scope of project is laid down for two years, a joint initiative by the government of Canada and the UNODC and it reaffirms that combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling is of the highest importance for Pakistan, Canada, and the UNODC as a whole.

This project is financially supported by the government of Canada through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

This project is a coordinated response to the TIP and SOM and aims to strengthen the capacity of the FIA for its fight against the TIP and SOM.

COMSTECH, ICGEB enter into MoU to Advance S&T in member states

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH signed memorandum of understanding with the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), desiring to enhance mutual collaboration as well as cultural, scientific and operational interaction that may lead to significant improvements of the activities of both institutions. Both institutions have agreed to establish a general framework for cooperation in science, education and technology, to facilitate and strengthen collaboration in the fields of common interest such as emerging technologies, advanced genomics, biotechnology and life sciences. COMSTECH and ICGEB will cooperate to develop joint fellowship schemes, grants schemes, and encourage the exchange of scientific and technical information, visits, and participation by students and scientists of their member states in scientific conferences and seminars organized in the fields of common interest.

Any project, programme and activity developed by both parties shall be of high scientific standard and beneficial to the advancement of science and technology and be relevant for establishment of contacts and networks between scientific organizations, institutions, scientists, researchers, and experts from the respective member states.

ICGEB is an intergovernmental organization to provide the international community with a centre of excellence for research, training and technology transfer in the field of genetic engineering and biotechnology, supporting its member states in the progress towards the achievement of the 2030 sustainable development agenda.

COMSTECH is the ministerial standing committee on scientific and technological cooperation of OIC. The president of Pakistan is the Chairman of COMSTECH. The Core mandate of COMSTECH is to strengthen cooperation among OIC member states in science and technology, and enhance their capabilities, implement OIC resolutions and draw up programmes to increase the capability of the OIC member states in science and technology.



ISLAMABAD: Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan planted a saplings along with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. - DNA

CDA to launch high quality bus service for Islamabad citizens

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting was held on Tuesday under the supervision of Chairman CDA Amir Ali Ahmed in which all the board members participated. The project summary will be sent to the Federal cabinet for final approval to provide modern and quality travel facilities to the citizens of Islamabad, the CDA administration is considering a project in the federal capital called "Islamabad Bus Service" which will be launched after final approval of the Federal Cabinet. Initially 30 buses will be added to the project, the number of which will be increased soon. The service will start from "Soawn Interchange to Faisal Masjid", "Bhara Kahu to Faiz Ahmed Faiz Metro Bus Station" and "Tarnol Railway Station to N-5 Metro Bus Station", there will be 64 stops (stations) on the routes, modern and strict security arrangements will be made at every bus stop (station) with tuck shop and public toilets. It should be noted that all the buses will have air conditioning and each bus will have a seating capacity of 70 people, while the buses will also include priority seats for women and special persons. From Monday to Friday 6:30AM to 9PM, while on Saturday and Sunday from 8AM to 10PM, the times of which will soon be changed according to the public needs. - DNA

Afghanistan could be the largest export market: Zafar Bakhtawari

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the trade with Afghanistan is of utmost importance for the economy of both the countries. The government and the private sector need to work together to remove obstacles in this regard. He expressed these views while talking to business leader and the Chairman of National Business Group FPCCI Mian Zahid Hussain, who came from Karachi at UBG Central Secretariat Islamabad today. Zafar Bakhtawari said that Afghanistan is our neighbor and brother country. The prosperity, peace and development of Pakistan is dependent on the peace development and prosperity of Afghanistan. Congratulating at the inauguration



of UBG Central Secretariat Islamabad, Mian Zahid Hussain said that the effective strategy is needed to increase Pakistan's exports and in this regard Afghanistan is an important region. Afghanistan could be the largest market for Pakistani exports

in the world. This could happen if the government and the private sector formulate policies through a joint strategy, he said, referring to the new setup of the United Business Group, would help to solve the problems of Pakistan's business community.

Ferdowsia nominated FPCCI women coordinator

Quarantine clause regarding chambers delegations should be abolished so that business deficit can be overcome soon, says Ferdowsia Fazal, Women Coordinator FPCCI North Zone

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Founder President Hazara Women's Chamber Ferdowsia Fazal has been nominated as Women Coordinator (North Zone) for representation of women in FPCCI. The FPCCI platform will play its full role in alleviating the problems of business women and providing relief. To be completed soon. Ferdowsia Fazal Women Coordinator FPCCI (North Zone).

According to details, President of The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo has appointed coordinators to represent women's chambers in

all offices of Pakistan. President Ferdowsia Fazal, founder of Hazara Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has been appointed as the coordinator for the North Zone.

Ferdowsia Fazal will represent the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women's Chambers and businesswomen in the FPCCI. Talking in this regard, Women Coordinator (North Zone) Ferdowsia Fazal thanked FPCCI President Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo, Senior Vice President Khawaja Shahzab Akram and said that this is the first time that FPCCI Women Coordinators have been appointed in i after the female vice president which will have a positive impact as well



as help to solve the problems of business women and women can easily solve their problems while using platform of The FPCCI. She demanded the government to provide special training to women members of all chambers across Pakistan for business on Amazon and pay special attention to rural areas. She said the quarantine clause regarding chambers delegations should be scrapped so that the business deficit caused by Corona could be met as soon as possible. Miss Ferdowsia Fazal also demanded from the government to take the officials of women chambers on board in the advisory committees for resolving the issues of business women so

that better suggestions could be given to end the problems.

She said that Pakistan's women's chambers and businesswomen are not given the status they deserve. Businesswomen are playing the same role as male businessmen and industrialists in the country's economic growth and ending unemployment.

She said that steps would also be taken to set up Women Entrepreneurs Block and Skill Development Institute for women and to encourage young educated women to start their own businesses instead of jobs. This will not only provide decent employment to women but also enable them to play an effective role in the national economy.

Briefs

Senate body took notice on over-Billing

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senate Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat took notice on over-billing, load shedding and others complaints received through Pakistan Citizen Portal.

The meeting was held on Tuesday under the Chairmanship of Senator Rana Maqbool Ahmad at the Parliament House.

A detailed briefing on the working and performance of the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) was received by the committee members. The Public Petition PP-3745 pertaining to PTDC, submitted by Malik Muhammad Khan, Chairman MK Pakistan, referred by Chairman Senate on 29th June, 2021 was also considered.

The meeting commenced with the welcoming words by the Chairman Committee and underlined that the committee will work above party lines with its primary role as a Parliamentary oversight, in order to assist the departments in service and delivery for the common public. While briefing on the redressal of Complaints and Enforcement Activities (Oil, LPG and CNG) the Chairman OGRA apprised the committee members that a formal website has been designed to register online complaints. He further informed the committee that complaints can also be registered through phone calls which are received by the registrar of the relevant province and forwarded to the Delegatory Officer (DO); the complaint is to be resolved within 90 days, which decision is binding for the affected. The committee was informed that 2763 Million complainants have been given relief. The committee was apprised by the chairman OGRA that total numbers of 1566 complaints have been received through Pakistan Citizen Portal out of which 1389 have been resolved and 25 have been forwarded to departments for action.

Thunder shower with heavy rainfalls forecast

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) forecast thunder shower with isolated heavy rainfalls in Islamabad, Kashmir, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the next 24 hours. According to PMD, hot and humid weather is likely to prevail over other parts of the country.

During past 24 hour rain/thundershower occurred in upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, upper Punjab, Islamabad and Kashmir while the weather remained hot and humid in other parts of the country.

Rainfall (mm) recorded at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Balakot 75, Takht Bai 20, Malam Jabba 05, Punjab: Islamabad (Golra 47, Bokra, Zero Point 20, Airport 16, Saidpur 02), Sialkot (City 44, Airport 10), Narowal 34, Rawalpindi (Chaklala 20, Shamsabad 05), Jhelum 05, Murree 04, Gujranwala 02, Kashmir: Muzaffarabad (City 07, Airport 03), Kotli 06, Garhi Dupatta 02 and Rawalakot 01. On Tuesday highest maximum temperature's (°C) recorded at Chillas 47, Dalbandin 45 and Nokkundi 44.

According to synoptic situation, strong monsoon currents are penetrating upper and central parts of the country. - APP

5 proclaimed offenders rounded up

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Police have arrested five Proclaimed Offenders (POs) from different areas of the city, a police spokesman said on Tuesday.

He informed that Bani Police arrested Naveed, a PO, wanted in a murder case. Rawat police netted Arshad, Amir, Ibrar Hussain and Muhammad Maskeen, four POs wanted in a case registered in Rawat Police Station. Divisional Superintendents of Police appreciated performance of police and directed the officers to continue raids to net the outlaws and POs.

PTCL, PAKSAT partner for delivery of satellite services

Under the partnership, PTCL will be able to provide its national and international customers with a seamless connectivity through Pakistan-owned satellites, which are connected with redundant satellite hubs and the largest fiber backbone across Pakistan

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL), national flagship carrier in the country and PAKSAT, the national satellite company have announced the signing of a strategic partnership to develop and deliver state-of-the-art integrated satellite services in addressing the ever-evolving national needs of private and public sector in Pakistan. Major General Amer Nadeem HI(M), Chairman SUPARCO, Sadaqat Liaquat, CEO PAKSAT Int'l Pvt Ltd, Hatem Bamatraf, President & Group CEO PTCL, Zarrar Hasham Khan, Chief Business Services Officer, PTCL, along with key industry leaders and officials from both companies attended the signing ceremony.

Under the partnership, PTCL will be able to provide its national and international customers with a seamless connectivity through Pakistan-owned satellites, which



are connected with redundant satellite hubs and the largest fiber backbone across Pakistan. Through this initiative PTCL will enable PAKSAT as its partner for national satellite bandwidth requirements, while, PAKSAT will support PTCL in deployment of the existing services of PAKSAT as well as their upcoming innovative services. This partnership will ensure installation of satellite

projects with a special focus on satellite gateway of Ka-Band and IoT space. Zarrar Hasham Khan, Chief Business Services Officer, PTCL, said, "This partnership will enable PTCL to serve its customers with seamless connectivity through Pakistan-owned satellite. This will help us play a pivotal role in driving digital transformation and technological revolution in

Pakistan. It will create synergies to connect widely separated geographical areas with modern communication facilities, thus meeting customer expectations." Sadaqat Liaquat, CEO PAKSAT said, "Together PTCL and PAKSAT will be able to bridge the digital divide in Pakistan by connecting businesses and communities in the underserved areas. With the new satellite MM1 coming online,

this will prove to be the key enabler of digital transformation in Pakistan. This technology will also help corporate sector and government institutions in the areas of IoT, telemetry and high-speed internet, where PTCL already has a vast experience." PTCL continues to develop such partnerships that enable innovation and transformation to realize the vision of a Digital Pakistan.

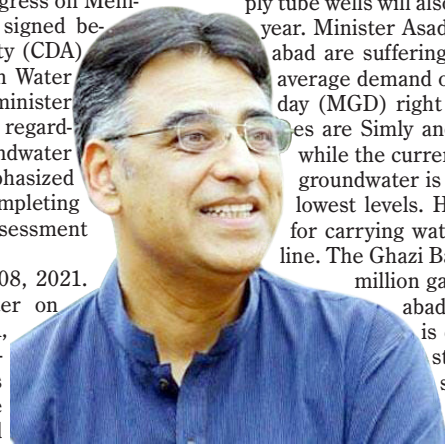
ICT citizens to get additional water supply: Asad Umar

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar on Tuesday said that feasibility study of the project for raising the water table in the city would be finalized by end of current year and this project would provide additional water supply to the citizens of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) before next summer. Chairing a meeting to review the progress on Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) here, the minister appreciated the efforts of PCRWR regarding rainwater harvesting or groundwater recharge in ICT. Moreover, he emphasized setting up the field activities and completing a comprehensive water resource assessment in the entire ICT by December 2021. The agreement was signed on July 08, 2021. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on CDA Ali Nawaz Awan, Chairman CDA, Chairman PCRWR, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, and senior officials of relevant departments attended the meeting. Chairman PCRWR briefed

the meeting on the water supply issues not only in Islamabad sectors but also in suburban areas of the entire Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) region. He informed that at the end of this year they will complete the feasibility study for identifying the flow of water and where it needs to be captured.

It will also show the locations where ponds can be made for capturing water from streams in order to raise the underground water level. Similarly, recharge wells and water supply tube wells will also be completed in the current financial year. Minister Asad Umar said that the citizens of Islamabad are suffering from a water shortage. The current average demand of Islamabad is 246 million gallons per day (MGD) right now. The major water supply sources are Simly and Khanpur Dams plus 194 tube wells while the current supply is 80 MGD. He said that the groundwater is falling rapidly and has dropped to the lowest levels. He further added that another project for carrying water from Ghazi Barotha is in the pipeline. The Ghazi Barotha project will initially provide 100 million gallons of water to the citizens of Islamabad. In the meantime, before this project is completed in 3 to 4 years, immediate steps are needed to reduce the water shortage in Islamabad, therefore, this short-term project for raising the water table has been planned.



Classes 9-11 reopening Jan 18, universities from Feb 1

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Education Minister Shafiqat Mahmood addressed a press conference on Friday and said the biggest impact on Pakistan's COVID-19 tally was closing schools. Analyzing the data, we have seen that from November 26 the drop in cases has not been significant, he said, adding that this calls for creating a balance between the health and education sector. Mahmood said that students have suffered a huge educational loss in 2020 but at the same time their health is the government's

utmost priority as well. These are the decisions he announced: January 18 - Classes 9, 10, 11 to start February 1 - Primary to class 8 will be back in school February 1 - Higher education institutions (universities and colleges) will reopen. The minister pointed out that when the government announced that it was closing schools during the second wave of the virus on November 26, the average deaths per day was five and over 500 cases were being reported a day. Experts told us that the infection rate in the country was highly influenced by schools, he said. The latest statistics show that

the positivity ratio has gone down to 6.10 from 7.4 which is still comparatively high, Mahmood said. The number of critical patients has increased to 2,300 and the average mortality rate has improved just a little too. The minister added that this year, no students will be promoted without examinations and therefore, the decision to reopen classes 9 to 12 was made. "We will review the situation again in a meeting next week and make further decisions." Education institutions in cities and districts where the infection rate is high should remain closed, he added.

National institutions shield against 5th gen. warfare

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's armed forces are a symbol of national dignity. Elements of the fifth generation war engaged in conspiracy against national institutions are failing as usual. The drama of the alleged abduction and torture of the Afghan ambassador's daughter failed miserably, he said. This was exposed by our intelligence agencies. The leadership of the opposition parties are working day and night to complete the external conspiracy against the national institutions to gain power. He added that the youth should use their energy in the defense of national institutions on social media. - DNA

Former CDA chairperson arrested

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Former CDA chairperson Farkhand Iqbal has been arrested for illegally allotting public land to Park Lane Estate, which is said to be owned by former president Asif Ali Zardari. He has been charged under Section 9 (a) (vii) and (xii) of the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999. Investigation officer Muhammad Qasim said that Iqbal "willfully and knowingly misused" his authority and gave "illegal favours/benefit" to Park Lane Estate. He reportedly granted approval for handing over possession of 118k-14m state land under the management of CDA to private firm Park Lane Estate Company. He even "deliberately ignored the report of the environmental wing wherein it was clearly stated that the land belongs to the state and is under the possession of CDA", the IO said, adding that the former chairperson also misused his authority to hide the documents of the sale. "Sufficient incriminating evidence is available on record which connects you accused [Iqbal] with the offence of misuse of authority," the officer said. According to the dirty money watchdog, Iqbal was arrested from Rawalpindi. It further said Iqbal, by way of neglecting the environmental wing's report, awarded the land to the company. An offshoot of the fake bank accounts case, the reference accuses Zardari of being involved "in extending loan and its misappropriation by M/s Parthenon Private Limited, M/s Park Lane Estate Private Limited and others". The reference alleges that Iqbal, former member of CDA board Abdul Aziz Qureshi, director general Gulam Sarwar Sandhu, former director Mehboob Ali Khan and Waqar Ali Khan caused a loss of Rs71 million to the national exchequer.

Govt notifies transfer, posting of ED officers

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Tuesday notified the transfer and posting of high ranking officers. According to a notification issued by the Establishment Division, Saad Akhtar, a BS-20 Officer of Police Service of Pakistan, presently posted as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in Establishment Division, is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of National Highways and Motorway Police (NH&MP), under Ministry of Communications, with immediate effect and until further orders.

This notification is being issued under Rotation Policy 2020 and as per its para 13, the officer cannot be posted in geographical limits of Government of the Punjab for a period of two (2) years, from the date of joining at a station outside the geographical limits of Government of the Punjab. Likewise, Gul Said Khan, a BS-19 Officer of Police Service of Pakistan, presently serving under Government of Balochistan is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with immediate effect and until further orders.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Rana Maqbool Ahmad, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House. - APP

Commercial activities rampant in residential areas

The illegal commercial activities are rampant in several residential areas, creating a lot of nuisance

SHUJAAT HAMZA

RAWALPINDI: The residents of several cantonment areas have been left to suffer due to illegal commercial activities in residential areas and it looks that the authorities concerned are least interested to take action in accordance with the law against the rules violators. Illegal commercial activities in several residential areas of Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) including Gawalmandi, Chor, Tench Bhatta and Chungi No 22 irk the residents as the encroachers have occupied streets and roads, creating problems for the motorists as well as pedestrians particularly for women and children. The illegal commercial activities are rampant in several residential areas, creating a lot of nuisance. The questions are also being raised as to why a number of roads

were declared commercial by ignoring the parking arrangements and traffic-related issues. Most of such unauthorized commercial units, factories and godowns in residential areas lack parking arrangements. Thus, vehicles are generally parked on the roads causing traffic snarls. Moreover, the majority of such units lack fire safety arrangements, posing threat to the residents. Also, there is no check on noise pollution being created by the industrial units. According to the residents, most of the streets of Tench Bhatta, Peoples Colony, Dhoke Syedan, Bakramandi, Chungi No 22, Chor, Gawalmandi and other areas have been converted into commercial centers as the traders have changed houses into workshops, godowns and offices. The residents also complained that influential persons with the connivance of the authorities con-

cerned are constructing illegal plazas and shops in such localities further deteriorating the agonizing situation. The residents, Altaf, Aslam and Dilwar while talking to APP said that encroachments in several residential areas particularly Tench Bhatta, Chungi No 22, Chor and Gawalmandi were on the rise as the authorities were unable to remove encroachment that were getting out of control. By violating the building bylaws, a number of commercial stores, restaurants and other units have been opened in residential area of Gawalmandi. A resident said, "The roads were declared commercial by ignoring the safety of the residents and traffic-related issues." Due to apathy and negligence of the authorities concerned, the residents are suffering and no action is taken on complaints against violations. Encroachments have

become a major problem not only for motorists, but also for the area residents, while the concerned are taking no action. Sohail, a resident of Tench Bhatta said that one could witness the traffic mess in Tench Bhatta road as the shopkeepers had occupied both sides of the road and left no space for movement of pedestrians besides causing the worst traffic jams. "Due to rising commercial activities at the areas, we are forced to suffer. The visitors to unauthorized commercial units park vehicles outside houses. The department concerned has created a big mess in various residential areas by ignoring such violations," he added. Waqar, a resident of Gawalmandi said that the vehicles were parked in front of the workshops along with the road further narrowing the passage and the repair work of faulty vehicles was carried out on

the road. He said that the residents were facing difficulties due to encroachments in various streets of the area. Naveed, another resident said, it was the responsibility of the Cantonment authorities to take action against encroachers and those involved in illegal commercial activities in residential areas. He said, "A large number of commercial establishments have come up in residential areas of Tench, Chor and Gawalmandi. Illegal activities should be stopped and building plans must be reviewed." Meanwhile, the RCB spokesman said, "We are not allowing any new commercial construction in residential areas. We are taking action in accordance with the law against the rules violators. Special operations are launched and heavy fines are imposed on the violators."

Jashan-e-Ghadir Conference held at PAC

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Markazi Imam Hussain Council in collaboration with the Punjab Arts Council Rawalpindi Tuesday organized a Jashan-e-Ghadir Conference to celebrate the 1432nd anniversary of the proclamation of Wilayat-e-Ali and the Holy Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The conference was presided over by Central Imam Hussain Council Chairman Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi said that two hadiths of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) about Hazrat Ali a.s are very important. Firstly, 'I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its door' and secondly, 'Ali is the master of what I am'. He said that in the light of these hadiths, all the saints consider Hazrat Ali a.s the first Imam of the universe. Allama Ayaz Zaheer Hashmi said that in order to understand the state of Madinah, it is necessary to shed light on the deeds and teachings of Hazrat Ali a.s. The conference was also addressed by Rahbar Trust Chairman Sardar Babar Ali Baloch, Pakistan Azadari Council Chairman Syed Fawad Ali Bukhari, Allama Muhammad Younas, Gulam Rasool Balti, Syed Zafar Ali, Naeem Akram Qureshi and Director Actors Arts Council Waqar Ahmed.

Fourth Polio campaign to start from Aug 2

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Amir Aqil Khan on Tuesday chaired a meeting regarding this year's fourth anti-polio campaign starting from Aug 2 and would continue till Aug 6. He directed the authorities concerned to focus the targets set for the forthcoming polio campaign and special steps should be taken to ensure that the anti-polio campaign is not affected in any way due to the ongoing anti-dengue and corona campaigns. He said that the purpose of the campaign would be to protect the children up to five years of age through anti-polio drops and to increase their immunity. Authorities concerned must ensure that no child under five years age should be left unattended as the child who could not be administered anti-polio drops, not only could become infected with the virus, but also pose a risk to others. Additional Deputy Commissioner (Headquarters) Abdullah Mahmood, Chief Executive Officer Health Dr. Faiza Kanwal, District Health Officer Dr. Ehsan Ghani, Area Coordinator, World Health Organization Dr. Hina, Focal person, Chaudhary Muhammad Hussain and officers of other departments concerned were present on the occasion. DC further said that while carrying out the anti-polio campaign as a national duty, all-out efforts should be made to make it a success. He said that every official should play its active role in making polio free Pakistan. He directed that special attention should be given to remote areas and traveling children. - APP

Court seeks arguments in acquittal pleas

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Tuesday sought arguments from defence lawyers in acquittal pleas of co-accused in reference against former Chairman CDA Farkhand Iqbal and others pertaining to illegal plot allotment. AC-II Judge Muhammad Azam Khan heard the acquittal cases in reference filed by National Accountability Bureau (NAB). The court was informed that the NAB had arrested Farkhand Iqbal in another inquiry and that's why he didn't appear. However, the representatives of co-accused Sher Azam Wazir and Waqar Ali Khan appeared before the court. The NAB prosecutor opposed the acquittal pleas and submitted its comments against it. The prosecutor said that there were sensitive allegations against the accused and they couldn't be acquitted.

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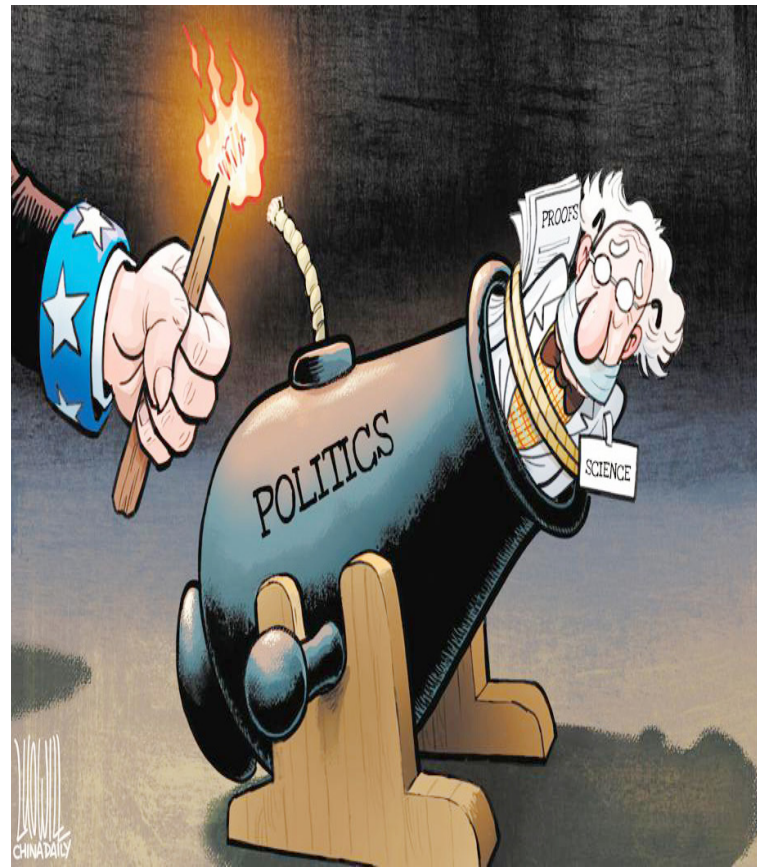
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Tokyo Olympics

THE 32nd edition of the Olympics which is taking place in Tokyo commenced earlier this week on Friday—after being delayed by a year due to Covid-19. There were only seven athletes representing Pakistan in the previous Rio Olympics in 2016, however this time around there are 10 individuals who have achieved the feat of qualifying for the quadrennial sporting event. The 10 athletes will be representing Pakistan in events like badminton, judo, weightlifting, shooting, swimming and more. It is rather unfortunate to see the national hockey team fail to qualify for the mega event for the second consecutive time due to its poor showing and low ranking—especially considering how the team used to be a major medal contender until the early 1990s. Nonetheless, it is an exciting moment to witness a group of promising and young athletes hoping to make the country proud, and we should all rally behind them.

Two athletes to look out for in particular are Arshad Naideem and Najma Parveen. Parveen is featuring in the event on wild card and will appear in the 200-metre race on August 2 at the Olympic Stadium. Meanwhile, Arshad Naideem has the world's sixth best javelin throw of the year—a personal best of 86.38 metres he achieved in April in Iran. The start to Pakistan's campaign in Tokyo has been less than stellar. On Saturday, shooter Gulfam Joseph failed to qualify in the 10M Air Pistol competition while badminton player Mahoor Shahzad lost her opening match. However, there is still a lot to look forward to; particularly considering how Talha Talib will become the first Pakistani weightlifter in 45 years to appear at the Olympics. Regardless of the results and taking into account how sports other than cricket don't receive sufficient patronage, we should celebrate this landmark moment in the careers of these athletes and give them the recognition they deserve.



Beached boat

THE sight of a beached ship on Karachi's Clifton beach must have come as a shock to the residents of the metropolis. For five days, this UAE-based vessel was stuck on the shore in Karachi, brought in through the high tides and as a result of a weak engine. The captain reports that he had asked for emergency berthing once one of the ships anchors broke on July 20. However, the Minister for Maritime Affairs claims otherwise. As of Sunday, he stated that no request for assistance had been received, and by maritime law, a rescue operation could not be launched as a result. The two stances are contradictory, but this in itself does not mean much.

There were two tugboats seen waiting for almost two days since Sunday to haul out the boat. What is clear is that there is confusion and people from the Karachi Port Trust and other authorities are simply not clear over who is responsible.

But even beyond the various red tape and who finally takes the necessary steps to resolve this needless impasse, there are logistical problems with trying to make sure that both the ship and marine life are not damaged when the rescue is being executed.

The owner of the vessel of course will not suffer much; a damage claim has reportedly already been filed with the insurance company. However Seaview Beach cannot really tolerate any more ecological damage.

This is why the government has to make sure that above all else, the ship is brought back into the sea without any spillages or other issues. New ships can be bought, unhappy crews replaced. But damage to the environment is not rolled back so easily. We must protect our beaches and marine life.

Pakistan-Saudi relations in changing dynamics

Shakeel Ahmad Ramay



Last decade witnessed rapid changes in Middle East especially with the emergence of new leadership. Although, there can be many contributing factors, but economic interests dominate all other factors. It is evident from the fact that many countries came up with their own visions of development and future course of actions

FOREIGN minister of Saudi Arabia is visiting Pakistan on 27 July, on the invitation of foreign minister of Pakistan. According to Foreign Minister of Pakistan, both countries will hold comprehensive dialogue including all fields of

mutual interest. This is not new in bilateral relations of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, both countries always consult each other and try to deepen their cooperation. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan always help each other to face the difficult situation and there is no need to mention the things, as it is common knowledge among masses. However, world is going through a greater reset and dynamics are changing quite frequently. Thus, it has become important for both countries to interact frequently and analyze their relation in changing dynamics. This visit should also be analyzed in the context of changing dynamics in Middle East.

Last decade witnessed rapid changes in Middle East especially with the emergence of new leadership. Although, there can be many contributing factors, but economic interests dominate all other factors. It is evident from the fact that many countries came up with their own visions of development and future course of actions. Countries are trying to reshape their economies and looking for new avenues of economic significance, which can help them to sustain and enhance their development status. Climate change has further pressurized the countries to look for new avenues and race of reshaping has been accelerated. As, we know major economies of Middle East are dependent on export of oil, which is major contributing factor to climate change.

There is pressure on world leaders to move away from oil and look for cleaner sources of energy. Paris Agreement has further made it compulsory for countries to move towards cleaner sources of energy. COVID-19 has further stressed the need to diversify. Saudi Arabia's economy shrank by 4.1 percent due to COVID-19, as the oil prices and export declined. Now the market is recovering but there are some irritants in the markets, due to different preferences of countries.

In this context, Saudi Arabia has devised Vision 2030 to diversify its economy. Presently the oil is major source of revenue, as 85 percent export of Saudi Arabia revolves around the oil and its products. In the efforts to diversify economy, Saudi Arabia is facing some competition and challenges, especially from the old allies. The first glimpse came from UAE, when UAE unilaterally announced to enhance its oil production. Saudi Arabia strongly opposed it and asked the UAE to reconsider its decision. This is not only area, where both countries

have difference. There are many areas, where both countries differ from each other.

On economic front, the recent efforts of Saudi Arabia for diversification have created distress in some Middle Eastern countries. First, Saudi Arabia has announced that it will be connectivity hub in coming years, according to the plans of Vision 2030. Saudi Arabia has announced that it will be investing almost US\$ 130 billion to restructure and expand the airports and related sectors. It has also planned to launch a new airline. This initiative has direct relevance for UAE and Qatar, as both are major hubs of connectivity in region.

Second, Saudi Arabia is also trying to attract major companies to Kingdom by using the methodology of "carrot and stick". On one hand KSA is offering good incentives for companies and private business. On other hand in early 2021 KSA announced that it will sever its relationship with companies which do not established their headquarters in Kingdom. Again, presently, many companies are based in UAE or Qatar and operate their business from there. Third, KSA has also revised its policy of concessions of tariff and movement of goods across the border. It has announced that goods containing Israeli inputs and those produced in free trade zones, will not receive any type of concession or preference. It is direct hit on UAE.

Fourth, the next competition would be in the field of renewable energy, climate friendly industries, technologies and securing food. Oil dependent countries are facing dual challenge. They have to quit fossil fuel production and meet the energy demand of country, simultaneously. Besides, they also have to shift their industry on climate friendly technology, as they do not have any base for such technologies. On food front, most of the regional countries are dependent on imported food. In the case of KSA, it imports more than 80 percent food. Climate change will further complicate the situation, as climate change is impacting food production.

There are also many areas in the geo-political field, where Saudi Arabia has conflicting views with other Middle Eastern countries. However, that is not focus of article and it is also advisable for Pakistan avoid it, until all parties request Pakistan to be part of it. Pakistan should focus on economic field and emerging opportunities from the region. Pakistan should closely work with all countries in

region but there should be special focus on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Pakistan can benefit from opportunities from both countries by adopting a wise and dynamic policy of engagement.

For example, as it is stated in Vision 2030 that KSA will be building new infrastructure. It will open doors for construction and companies. Adaptation of modern technology, especially in the field of cyber technology will also create many opportunities, which Pakistan can exploit.

Pakistan can also benefit from emerging job market in services sector. As, Saudi Arabia decided to become connectivity hub, it will bring new job opportunities in great number. Pakistan can also benefit by venturing in restaurants industry by tagging it to food and food commodities of Pakistan. KSA has high demand of quality and fresh and Halal food and food commodities. Pakistan can meet the demand of Saudi Arabia.

Howbeit, to exploit the potential of job market Pakistan will have to work on two areas. First, Pakistan will have to develop skill, especially among the youth. For that purpose, Pakistan will have to run specialized program by keeping in mind the new job market of Saudi Arabia. We need to say goodbye to old strategies and practices. Second, Pakistan will have to work on communication and PR skills of people. As, most of the jobs will be in the field of public engagement sectors. The improved communication and PR skills along with skills of related field, will create greater demand for Pakistani workers. It will result in better source of foreign exchange earnings.

In the conclusion, Pakistan must be conscious of changing dynamics of region, both in term of economic and geo-politics. Pakistan should conduct a detailed analysis of these changing dynamics and politics in the region. It will help Pakistan to devise a balanced and wise policy.

Howbeit, Pakistan should try to avoid picking sides in region. It will be harmful for Pakistan, and Pakistan should stick to policy of Prime Minister Imran Khan "Pakistan is ready to work for peace and development, but Pakistan will not pick sides in conflicts". This should be guiding principle. By sticking to this policy Pakistan should try to create common ground among all countries. It will be win-win scenario for all regional countries and Pakistan.

— The writer is a Political Economist

Media-Matchmaking: Ignored dimension of diplomacy

Dr M Ali Hamza



This practice is not new in building-up bilateral relations, but in times of high velocity information flow, the need has intensified. Last year on the sidelines of the SCO meeting in Moscow, China's and Russia's foreign ministers called for strengthening bilateral media cooperation

IN his tenure so far, Prime Minister of Pakistan has made around 29 foreign official trips to different countries for strengthening bilateral relations or to attend the conventions. These official trips include: 7 visits to Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 3 to China, 4 to UAE, 2 to Malaysia, 2 to Qatar, 2 to Iran, 2 to Switzerland comprising an attendance at 50th World Economic Forum, 2 to USA including a participation at 74th meeting of UNGA, 1 to Turkey, 1 visit to Kyrgyzstan to attend 2019 SCO Summit, and a visit to Sri Lanka, Bahrain and Uzbekistan. The outcome of such visits is normally a list of signed MOUs for mutual development or exchange programs. The end-up of such meet-ups is generally a set of promises for joint socio-economic or socio-political efforts. Besides MOUs, the recent two days visit of PM Imran Khan to Tashkent; Uzbekistan carries something exclusive. Exclusive is the statement of Prime Minister Imran Khan in a joint press conference with Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, that Pakistan and Uzbekistan will develop a film on the first Mughal emperor, Zaheerud din Babar. This is a unique announcement and this proclamation refers to a concept of media-matchmaking. Media-matchmaking or media partnership serves to amplify viewpoints of two allied countries domestically and globally. The aim of media-matchmaking is to join skills and resources of partnering countries and 'tell each other's stories well' or work together to promote each other's viewpoints, values, and interests. Strengthen the image of the partner domestically, and shape perceptions and public discourse around the world. Thus the partnering countries mirror each other's perspective. A guidebook on partnership published by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) mention in the partnership checklist that public relations activities and a clear external reporting system must be a vital part of partnership.

This practice is not new in building-up bilateral relations, but in times of high velocity information flow, the need has intensified. Last year on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting in Moscow, China's and Russia's foreign ministers called for strengthening bilateral media cooperation. Shortly after that, media representatives from both countries vowed to 'report major international events in a comprehensive, impartial and objective way, and stay firm in opposing and resisting false information intended to stigmatize other countries especially in times of Covid-19. Since 2015, China and Russia have held an annual Media Forum and in 2018 both countries' state-affiliated media agreed to increase publication of material approved by the partner's government. As part of the broadening strategic partnership between China and Russia, media from both countries have signed numerous cooperation agreements over the past years: People's Daily, Xinhua, Global Times and China Media Corporation have joined hands with RT, Russia Channel One, TASS and Sputnik on the Russian side. Both the countries realize that to become more powerful, they have to gain a stronger voice in international public opinion in order to challenge Western dominance over global values and governance. Another example is signing of a partnership and co-operation agreement between the UAE Al Ain News Corporation and the China Daily Group as well as a cooperation agreement with CCTV+, China's first global video news agency. The signing of such agreements is focused to enhance the exchange of experience between the UAE and China in the media field, which will contribute to serving the common vision and the consolidation of UAE-China relations.

Country to country media-matchmaking is not only about collaboration of news agencies. It's about mass communication through broadcasting, publishing online magazines, jointly making drama serials,

composing songs together, creating joint Vlogs, establishing blogs for mutual interests, and definitely producing feature films. Pakistan lags behind in the said. Though we observe some joint media ventures between Pakistan and China and the exchange of personnel is witnessed. But was it a part of an institutional framework of comprehensive cooperation and strategic partnership between the two countries, drafted by Pakistan. Just imagine the unfathomable impact of having a media-matchmaking of Pakistan with China, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Qatar, and for future with Russia, Iran, ASEAN countries especially Indonesia and Malaysia. It will not only help in establishing soft image of Pakistan within partnering countries and among their public but will also construct more awareness among our own people regarding friendly partners.

Such media-matchmaking can take many forms. For instance reporters of two countries draft stories for the partner country, pool international resources by exchanging or drafting content together, developing apps and platforms for mutual benefits, air a series of news reports and documentaries that further party-state's storylines, coverage of the constitutional, economic and social reforms by sticking to official description of the partnering country, and conduct joint training and exchanges between key personnel who are meant to align narratives and present current events and viewpoints by traditional and new media. It's the right time to craft an institutional level framework for media-matchmaking that should be implied to our new geo-economic and geo-political future bilateral relations. The framework should be inclusive of all available media resources, where Pakistan mirrors the perspective of partnering nation, and vice versa.

—The writer is a columnist and broadcast journalist. He can be reached at thealiamza@gmail.com

Briefs



Medal Count

Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Japan	10	3	5	18
2	United States	9	8	8	25
3	China	9	5	7	21
4	ROC	7	7	4	18
5	Great Britain	4	5	4	13

FM Qureshi holds presser with Saudi counterpart

FROM PAGE 01

structured and institutionalized way of looking at our bilateral relations," he said. He thanked the government of Saudi Arabia for always supporting the stance of Pakistan on Jammu and Kashmir. On Afghanistan, he said, both sides shared the same objectives of ensuring peace and stability. He said easing up of travel restrictions amid the coronavirus situation also came under discussion, where the Saudi side agreed to extend facilitation. He said Pakistani workforce could contribute positively towards the implementation of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 of development.

Qureshi mentioned that the two sides agreed to strengthen cultural linkages and co-operation on fighting against climate change. Prince Farhan, who arrived in Islamabad this morning, earlier led the delegation-level talks with Foreign Minister Qureshi that encompassed a diverse gamut of matters. The Saudi foreign minister said, "We hope to build on the momentum of strong bonds based on our brotherhood, as the two countries have always stood by each other in difficult times." He said over 1.7 million Pakistanis living in the Kingdom had been vaccinated as part of Saudi govt's initiative to provide vaccination facility to all and that too free of charge.

He termed the delegation-level talks as "very, very fruitful discussions" held on bilateral matters with all areas of broader spectrum came under discussion, with special focus on economic ties. The Saudi foreign minister said his government would encourage the businessmen from both sides to explore opportunities of investment in areas of technology.

He also assured extending facilitation to the Pakistani travelers, especially in areas of visa restrictions related to the COVID-19 vaccination. On climate change, he expressed the Saudi commitment to continue working with Pakistan as the country pursued the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan of achieving goals of preservation of the environment. Saudi FM Faisal bin Farhan appreciated the contributions of Pakistani community towards the development of Saudi Arabia.

"We are working to lighten the travel restrictions for passengers from Pakistan and also making sure that the Pakistani community in Saudi Arabia gets vaccinated," he said. He said Pakistan had done "exceptionally well" in overcoming the coronavirus. The Saudi FM said security was the key factor in ensuring economic prosperity and vowed to facilitate the efforts for peace, whether in Kashmir, Palestine or Afghanistan.

Speakers moot to solidify ties, says President...

FROM PAGE 01

just and legitimate stand regarding the issue of Jammu & Kashmir and assured that Azerbaijan will continue to extend its support at all international fora with regard to Jammu & Kashmir. The Speaker National Assembly extended an invitation to visit Pakistan and address the National Assembly of Pakistan. President indicated the desire to visit Pakistan after the improvement in pandemic situation. He positively reciprocated the proposal by the Speaker to intensify cooperation in education, health and climate change as well as ecological review and monitoring between the two countries.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan holding delegation-level talks in Islamabad. – DNA

Australia, Belgium light up men's tournament

"We haven't had a chance to test ourselves against much competition (in the run-up to the Olympics), except New Zealand"

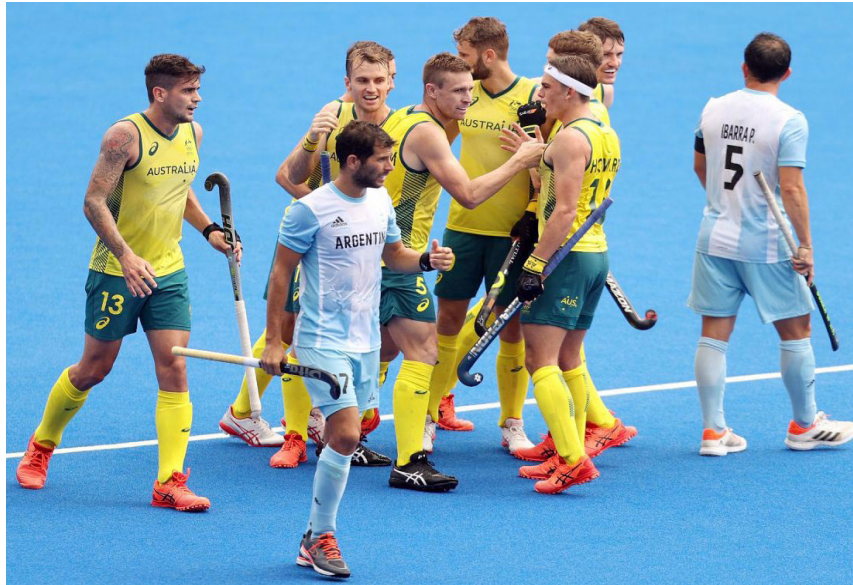
SPORTS DESK

TOKYO: Australia won their third straight match in the men's hockey tournament at the Tokyo Olympics on Tuesday after putting five goals past reigning Olympic champions Argentina, while Germany also scored five to overpower Britain. Belgium's Red Lions brushed aside South Africa, winning 9-4, while the Netherlands beat Canada 4-2, hosts Japan earned their first point of the tournament with a 2-2 draw against New Zealand and India defeated Spain 3-0.

Australia's 'Kookaburras' went behind against Argentina in the fourth minute as the match got underway in rainy conditions but had scored four goals by halftime and went on to win 5-2.

"It was a good grind that first five, 10 minutes," said Andrew Charter, Australia's goalkeeper. "We did concede one but at the same time, we had a couple of opportunities. This is international hockey - you're not going to go through a game without any opportunities against you."

Australia drew level with less than a minute to go until the end of the opening quarter when forward Blake Govers scored a penalty corner, confirming his reputation as a penalty corner specialist. That was followed by three more goals in the second quarter and one after the break, giving Australia - who beat Japan 5-3 and India 7-1 in their first two games - the maximum nine points from three matches. "These first three games are shaping



up really well," said goalie Charter. "We haven't had a chance to test ourselves against much competition (in the run-up to the Olympics), except New Zealand." Also in the men's competition, Belgium thrashed South Africa, with seven goals scored by the halftime break, booking

their third straight win of the tournament. The Netherlands stayed on course to book a place in the quarter-finals with their win over Canada, putting them in third position in their group behind Belgium and Germany. The Germans handed Britain their first defeat of the tournament, winning 5-1, including three goals by attacker Florian Fuchs. "This is a hiccup," said British captain Adam Dixon.

"We've got to pick ourselves up now because we've got two big games (ahead of us) against the Dutch and the Belgians."

Japan, playing in the men's hockey tournament for the first time since the 1968 Mexico Games, avoided a third straight defeat but coach Siegfried Aikman was disappointed not to have come away with the win over New Zealand.

"I'm a bit emotional at this moment because our team so did very well and we couldn't bring it home," Aikman said.

"We did almost everything well and it's a matter of experience. A few counter-attacks and we are in trouble and that happens through the tournament." India secured their second victory at the tournament with a goal from midfielder Simranjeet Singh and a double from defender Rupinder Pal Singh, though the game was closer than the scoreline suggests.

Shafqat discusses educational co-op with British Council team



LONDON: Shafqat Mahmood, Federal Minister for Education, Professional Training, National Heritage and Culture meeting with the British Council Team in the Pakistan High Commission in London. – DNA

DNA

LONDON: Mr. Shafqat Mahmood, Federal Minister for Education, Professional Training, National Heritage and Culture met with the British Council Team in London today and discussed ongoing work of the Council in Pakistan's education sector. The meeting was attended by Sindh Education Minister Mr Saeed Ghani, Khyber Pakhtunkh-

wa Education Minister Mr Shahram Khan Tarakai, Ms Wajaha Akram MNA, Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Education and other federal and provincial officials of Pakistan. Pakistan High Commissioner to the UK, Moazzam Ahmad Khan also accompanied the Federal Minister in the meeting. The two sides reviewed a host of areas of bilateral cooperation in Pakistan which British Council is currently working on. Main areas of discussion included teachers training, digital & blended learning during COVID-19 Pandemic, technical training for enhanced employability, sharing global experiences in education sector, seamless conduct of exams during the ongoing Pandemic, inclusiveness in education, quality assurance, bringing back out of school children and developing administrative and management skills in educational institutions of the

country.

While appreciating the good work of British Council in Pakistan, Minister Shafqat Mahmood underlined the need for collaboration in digital learning and sharing best practices in the field of education with each other. The Minister apprised the participants that the Government of Prime Minister Imran Khan had a special focus on technical and vocational education and for this purpose had allocated Rs.10 Billion for training of 170,000 youth under National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC). He shared that despite the Pandemic, Pakistan was successfully able to conduct exams throughout the country, and offered to share Pakistan's experiences with the UK. The British Council representative Mr Mark Herbert said that Pakistan remains their priority and they would continue to build lasting partnership with the country through social sector development.

Pakistan's hero Talha Talib gets reward

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Shinning weightlifter Talha Talib, who narrowly missed out on winning an Olympic medal for Pakistan starts to receive the rewards on his wonderful performance. The 21-year-old finished fifth in the 67kg category with an overall impressive lifting of 320 KG of weight received US \$ 1000 from the Chef De Mission and Director Army Sports Directorate Brig. Zaheer Akhtar at Olympic village Tokyo. Brig. Zaheer Akhtar appreciating the efforts of Talha Talib and other athletes those are participating in Tokyo Olympics, said that the doors of army sports are open for every talented sports persons and our support will continue. He said that Talha Talib's first appearance in Olympic shown his skills and abilities that he is upcoming star for Pakistan in the game of weightlifting. After a gap of 44 years, Pakistan was featured in the weightlifting competition at the Tokyo Olympics with Talha Talib representing the country at the global stage.



Cabinet re-invites Opposition for talks

FROM PAGE 01

opposition about the names of ECP members in the next few days. The names of the Prime Minister and Speaker of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir will be finalized. He was briefing to the media after the cabinet meeting held under the chair of Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday. The cabinet discussed the overall political and economic situation of the country besides the coronavirus situation.

Fawad Chaudhry said that it was quite strange that AJK Prime Minister Raja Farooq Haider was making allegations of rigging while sitting in the PM office. "If rigging was held under your office then come to the technology, the electronic voting machine (EVMs) system. Our 49 points on electoral reforms are not a sacred document and opposition must bring their points as well," he said. Fawad Chaudhry said that the cabinet has approved the country's first National Cyber Security Policy Ministry of IT Approves Cyber Security Policy after the Ministry of IT approved it. "Ministry of IT will work to prevent cyber hacking," he added. The federal cabinet also approved the National Advertising Policy and agreement for Dual Citizenship with Czech Republic. It also gave approval to the Pakistan Red Crescent Society to import five ambulances from Japan. The cabinet also approved decisions of the Energy Committee, decisions of Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on July 21, Spectrum Auction for Next Generation Mobile Services. Cabinet was apprised with two briefings on the coronavirus situation in the country.

UNODC, FIA join hands to combat...

FROM PAGE 01

Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and it reaffirms that combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling is of the highest importance for the Government of Pakistan, Government of Canada, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as a whole. This project is financially supported by the Government of Canada through IRCC.

This project is a coordinated response to trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants and aims to strengthen the capacity of the Federal Investigation for its fight against Trafficking in persons (TIP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM).

"The support from the government of Canada through this project which we are launching today, will strengthen the national policies regarding TIP and SOM including the national capacity to assess and measure this phenomenon in Pakistan. It will strengthen the capacity of FIA and police to combat TIP and SOM; raise awareness amongst the risk group, public and relevant Pakistani authorities, and NGOs. It will also build the capacity of the national authorities to protect and reintegrate victims of trafficking and vulnerable smuggled migrants, especially women and children", said, Dr. Jeremy Milsom, Representative, UNODC Pakistan in his opening remarks.

'US remarks on Pak judicial...

FROM PAGE 01

Legislative and Judicial branches of the state. There is no question of any coercion or pressure on Pakistan's judiciary. The baseless assertions made in the report are contradicted by innumerable decisions by Pakistani courts at all levels that meet the highest standards of judicial independence. While the statement acknowledges the progress made and reforms undertaken by Pakistan in improving its business and investment climate, despite extremely difficult circumstances due to the Pandemic, it speculates on alleged shortcomings in Pakistan's regulatory framework and bases its conclusions on unverifiable sources. Mutually beneficial cooperation in the areas of economy, trade and investment with the international community including the US is one of the key priorities of the Govt of Pakistan.

US Pentagon head calls for 'stable' China relations

The US diplomat also downplayed expectations for progress following the meeting, adding: "There's no way to know in the early stages of building this relationship whether we will get to all the places that we hoped for"

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin says he is committed to having a constructive relationship with China and working on common challenges, amid rising tensions between the world's two largest economies. Austin made the statement during a speech in Singapore on Tuesday, a day after Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Vice Foreign Minister Xie Feng held talks in China's northern city of Tianjin. The second face-to-face meeting

between US and Chinese diplomats since US President Joe Biden took office in January showed little in the way of progress, with no specific outcomes reached and both sides reiterating existing positions. In Singapore, Austin appeared to seek to offer an opening to begin to ease tensions. "We will not flinch when our interests are threatened. Yet we do not seek confrontation," said the Pentagon chief. "I am committed to pursuing a constructive, stable relationship with China, including stronger crisis communications with the People's Liberation Army," he said. The US has put countering China at the heart of its national security

policy for years and the Biden administration has called rivalry with Beijing "the biggest geopolitical test" of this century. On Monday, after meeting Sherman, top Chinese diplomats accused Washington of creating an "imaginary enemy" in Beijing to divert attention from domestic problems and suppress China's development. In an interview with The Associated Press news agency on Tuesday following the talks in Tianjin, Sherman said she had confronted the Chinese officials on what she called "the crimes against humanity" against Uighur Muslims in China's Xinjiang region, the

crackdown on democracy in Hong Kong and alleged use of economic size to pressure smaller countries, as well as "aggressive actions" around Taiwan and in the South and East China Seas. The US diplomat also downplayed expectations for progress following the meeting, adding: "There's no way to know in the early stages of building this relationship whether we will get to all the places that we hoped for." Meanwhile, on Tuesday, Reuters news agency reported that China's yet-to-be-announced new ambassador to the US, Qin Gang, was en route to Washington, DC. Qin, 55, is set to replace Cui Tiankai, who

at 68 has passed the retirement age for senior Chinese ambassadors, two sources familiar with the matter told the news agency. Cui ended his eight years in Washington last month, making him China's longest-serving ambassador to the US. Qin has no prior US-related experience, according to his biography on the foreign ministry website. The post of the US ambassador to China has been vacant since Republican Terry Branstad stepped down to help with Trump's re-election campaign in 2020. Biden has plans to appoint former Ambassador to NATO Nicholas Burns to China, the New York Times reported in May.

Briefs

Turkey rescues 388 asylum seekers

FOREIGN DESK

IZMIR: Between July 17 and July 22, Turkish Coast Guard units in the Aegean Izmir province rescued 388 asylum seekers illegally pushed back to Turkey's territorial waters by Greek forces, authorities said on Tuesday.

A total of 217 asylum seekers were rescued off the Seferhisar coast and two suspected traffickers arrested between July 18 and July 21, while 78 asylum seekers were found off the coast of Dikili between July 17 and July 20. On July 22, 26 asylum seekers were saved off the coast of Izmir's Foca district and another 67 foreign nationals stranded in a sailing boat off the Cesme district were also rescued.

Turkey has been a key transit point for asylum seekers aiming to cross into Europe to start new lives, especially those fleeing war and persecution.

Turkey and human rights groups have repeatedly condemned Greece's illegal practice of pushing back asylum seekers, saying it violates humanitarian values and international law by endangering the lives of vulnerable migrants, including women and children.

North, South Korea reopen comm lines

AGENCIES

SEOUL: North and South Korea have restored cross-border communication lines that were cut off by Pyongyang last June, local media reported on Tuesday. The move is the result of an agreement between South Korea's President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, according to South Korea's Yonhap News Agency.

The two leaders exchanged several personal letters since April and "shared an understanding to recover mutual trust and again push the countries' relationship forward," an official of the South's presidential office said.

North Korea severed communication with South Korea and also blew up an inter-Korean liaison office along the border in June 2020. At the time, Pyongyang was particularly enraged over Seoul's failure to stop propaganda leaflets from being sent over and blamed the "conniving hostile acts" for pushing "inter-Korean relations into a catastrophe."

The North's state-run Korean Central News Agency also confirmed the reopening of communication lines.

It said the decision reflects the Korean nation's desire for better relations and leaders of the two countries have "agreed to make a big stride in recovering mutual trust and promoting reconciliation."

A new project on education launched

DNA

TASHKENT: On 27 July 2021, a ceremony of signing an agreement on the implementation of a joint grant project of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Saxton Center for Economics "Sustainable development of the system of advanced training in the field of entrepreneurship." The project is aimed at further improving the quality of entrepreneurship training, advising the small businesses on improving the qualifications of their employees, as well as institutional development of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry by introducing new interactive services and conducting trainings for business entities.

During the meeting, the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry introduced the representatives of the Center for Saxton Economics to the activities of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan, the entrepreneurial ecosystem, as well as a collection of business plans developed for start-up entrepreneurs in an interactive form (obtaining information about a specific business plan through a unique QR code).

Azerbaijan, Turkey, Pakistan sign Baku Declaration

DNA

BAKU: The parliaments of Azerbaijan, Turkey and Pakistan have signed the Baku Declaration on cooperation. The document was signed following the trilateral meeting held by speakers of the three countries' parliaments on July 27.

Declaration to boost regional security

The Chairman of the Turkish Parliament Mustafa Shentop said that the Baku Declaration signed between Azerbaijan, Turkey and Pakistan, will contribute to ensure the regional security.

Addressing the trilateral meeting with his Azerbaijani and Pakistani counterparts in Baku, Shentop said that "the Baku Declaration, which will be signed following the meeting, will contribute to ensuring security in the region. This document will play an important role in terms of institutionalizing trilateral relations." "I think that holding of meetings in this format will contribute to the further development of relations among three fraternal countries," he added.

The Chairman stressed the importance of friendship, and brotherhood among Turkey, Pakistan and Azerbaijan, by stating that the first meeting of the speakers of the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Pakistan and Turkey will be held in Baku on the initiative of Islamabad. In his words, the international platform and mechanism would strengthen relations among three countries in the future.

Shentop reminded that during the second Karabakh war, both Turkey and Pakistan politically and morally supported Azerbaijan.



Addressing the meeting, Speaker of the Azerbaijani Parliament Sahiba Gafarova said that a trilateral platform of cooperation between the three countries' parliaments is being created.

Gafarova said that meetings will be held in this format, and the transformation of this format into an even more fruitful platform over time will strengthen ties between the

three countries. In turn, Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan Asad Qaiser highly appreciated the establishment of a trilateral format of cooperation between the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Pakistan and Turkey. "We must expand our cooperation in the cultural, economic, educational, and other fields," the speaker said. Qaiser stated that within this

platform, regular meetings will be held to discuss key issues. Furthermore, the speaker expressed Pakistan's satisfaction with Azerbaijan's victory during the 44-day Karabakh war.

"This victory became possible thanks to the efforts of President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, the unity of the Azerbaijani people," the chairman added.

Earlier today, President Ilham Aliyev received the delegations headed by Speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly, Asad Qaiser and by Chairman of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Mustafa Shentop.

The Turkish and Pakistani delegations arrived in Azerbaijan on July 26 and are also expected to visit the country's recently-liberated territories.

WASHINGTON: Amazon.com Inc is denying a media report saying the e-commerce giant is looking to accept Bitcoin payments by the end of the year.

The report from London's City AM newspaper, citing an unnamed "insider", sent the world's biggest cryptocurrency up as much as 14.5 percent before it trimmed gains to last trade 6 percent higher at \$37,684.04.

"Notwithstanding our interest in the space, the speculation that has ensued around our specific plans for cryptocurrencies is not true," said a spokesperson from Amazon on Monday.

"We remain focused on exploring what this could look like for customers shopping on Amazon."

The company on July 22 posted a job opening for a digital currency and blockchain product lead. Earlier on Monday, the job posting from the retail giant had stirred questions among analysts over whether the move could eventually lead to Amazon accepting Bitcoin as a method of payment.

Amazon denies accepting Bitcoin

WEB DESK

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Ensure access to justice for all

NEWS DESK

TASHKENT: Conditions necessary to ensure access to justice for all in a multi-ethnic society were discussed on 26 July this year during the round table on the Graz Recommendations.

The online discussion on the topic: "Graz Recommendations on Access to Justice and on National Minorities in Uzbekistan" was organized by the Legislative Chamber of the Parliament of the country, the National Center for Human Rights of the Republic of Uzbekistan, together with the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities (OSCE HCNM) and OSCE Project Coordinator in Uzbekistan.

The Graz Recommendations on Access to Justice and National Minorities are based on positive international experience. Their presentation in Tashkent provided an opportunity for representatives of the state authorities of Uzbekistan and the HCNM to discuss ensuring access to justice in a multi-ethnic society. Related issues include the principles of the rule of law, non-discrimination and equality, including gender equality, the right to a fair trial within a reasonable time by an independent body and the right to legal aid.

Fifth round of Pakistan-Belarus political consultations held in Minsk

DNA

MINSK: The 5th round of Pakistan - Belarus Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) was held today at Minsk. The Pakistan side was led by Dr. Muhammad Tariq, Additional Secretary (Europe) while Mr. Nikolai Borevich, Deputy Foreign Minister led the Belarus side. Ambassador of Pakistan, Sajjad Haider Khan and Ambassador of Belarus in Islamabad also attended the meeting.

Talks between the two sides were focused on the whole range of bilateral relations as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest. The Additional Secretary thanked the Belarus side for receiving him despite the COVID-19 pandemic. They expressed satisfaction at the steadily growing cooperation between the two sides in diverse areas, especially the recent interactions between the two



governments including the recent visit of Ms. Zubaida Jalal, Minister for Defence Production, to Minsk.

The two delegations discussed progress on implementing various agreements/MoUs signed between the two countries in diverse fields. Both sides agreed on the importance of high level exchanges as well as enhancing collaboration in economic &

trade, agriculture, industry, science & technology, information technology, education, culture, tourism and defence sectors. It was also agreed to expeditiously conclude the Agreements/MoUs currently under process. The Additional Secretary highlighted Pakistan's focus on ensuring economic security through leveraging its geo-economic location, building development part-

nerships, and promoting regional peace and security. The Additional Secretary also briefed Belarusian side on the government's efforts to tackle the pandemic without jeopardizing economic wellbeing of people.

Additional Secretary apprised the Belarusian side of Pakistan's positive efforts in facilitating Afghan peace process with the aim of promoting an inclusive and

broad-based political settlement with emphasis on Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process. The Additional Secretary highlighted the human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and stressed that Indian actions of 5 August 2019 had vitiated the atmosphere and the onus was on India to create an enabling environment for engagement and result-oriented talks. The Additional Secretary stressed the importance of solution of the Jammu and Kashmir issue in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions.

Pakistan and Belarus enjoy cordial relations based on commonality of views on issues of regional and global importance. The two countries have been closely collaborating at international fora, especially at the UN. Consultations ended with both sides agreeing to hold the next round on mutually convenient dates in Islamabad.

Uzbekistan to receive 3 mln doses of Moderna

TASHKENT: On 29 July, Uzbekistan will receive 3 million doses of Moderna coronavirus vaccine from the United States. This was reported by the Dunyo agency.

The vaccines will be allocated through the COVAX program of the World Health Organization and delivered to Uzbekistan on 29 July by a special flight from the US state of Alabama.

According to the Embassy of Uzbekistan, the United States has donated 3 million doses of vaccines against the coronavirus to Moderna. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Moderna's vaccine can prevent COVID-19 infection with over 94% efficacy.

Moderna offers a vaccine that can be stored at normal refrigerated temperatures to facilitate subsequent distribution across all regions of Uzbekistan. — DNA

Palestinian beaten before death in Israeli custody

FOREIGN DESK

OCCUPIED EAST JERUSALEM: The family of a Palestinian man who died in Israeli custody has alleged he was beaten by Israeli forces in the detention centre before his death, citing reports by other detainees and photos released after his death.

Abdo Yusuf al-Khatib al-Tamimi, 43, died at the notorious Moskabiya detention centre, also known as the Russian Compound, in West Jerusalem on July 23. Al-Tamimi, a married father of four from the Shuafat ref-

ugee camp in occupied East Jerusalem, had been arrested several days earlier on a minor traffic violation.

His pregnant wife Rana said detainees had told the family al-Tamimi had been beaten by Israeli forces before his death.

"Our family received calls from other prisoners in adjacent cells in the Moskabiya stating that they had heard al-Tamimi screaming and the sound of blows raining down on him before he subsequently went quiet," she told Al Jazeera.

"He went into prison a healthy man with no health issues."

China, Pak scientists discuss natural disasters under CPEC

DNA

BEIJING: China-Pakistan Joint Research Center on Earth Science (CPJRC), jointly initiated by Higher Education Commission, Pakistan Academy of Science, and Chinese Academy of Sciences held a leading conference in Chengdu, themed CPEC Earth Science Sustainable Development - Natural Disasters and Risks.

The conference focused on the scientific and technological challenges of CPEC, including the prevention and control of threats such as earthquake, mountain disasters, meteorological

disaster and marine distress, and desertification, and reviewed the relevant works and achievements in recent years.

More than 10 well-known experts in from both sides were specially invited to give academic reports.

Gao Liang, the Inspector of Science and Technology Department of Sichuan Province, delivered a speech thanking all the experts from Pakistan and China for their care and support for the scientific and technological innovation work in Sichuan province.

He noted that the center has played an active role in promoting international science

cooperation and international talents training, and has become an important platform for promoting earth science cooperation under BRI.

At the same time, he hoped that scientific and technological workers from both sides could build consensus through the event and formulate academic research plans in the field of natural disasters and risks faced by the development of CPEC.

Sichuan province as a connectivity hub of Pakistan and China, will continue to support the construction of the Center and make joint efforts to promote the high-quality construction of CPEC.

Cui Peng, Chief Scientist and

Director of CPJRC, said that through the conference CPJRC focus on the scientific and technological challenges of CPEC natural disasters and risk management, and conduct in-depth discussions on these issues.

"I hope that scientists can thoroughly discuss the problems to be solved in this field and design the blueprint of future cooperation based on the research in the past five years, so as to improve CPEC risk management to a new level."

Chen Gang, the Deputy director of Chengdu Science and Technology Bureau attended the conference and delivered a speech.

One dead, 16 hurt in blast at German chemical park

LEVERKUSEN: One person died and 16 people were injured Tuesday following an explosion at a chemical park in Leverkusen, Germany, the site operator said as residents were urged to stay indoors because of black smoke rising from the area.

The blast happened at around 09:40 am (0740 GMT) "for still unknown reasons", Chempark operator Currenta said.

At least two of the injured were in a serious condition, and four workers were missing, it added. The explosion prompted Germany's NINA warning app to send an "extreme danger" alert to residents, telling them to close their doors and windows and keep emergency numbers free as much as possible.

Currenta said the incident occurred at Chempark's landfill and waste incineration area in Leverkusen's Buerrig district. The area is separate from the main industrial park that houses numerous chemical companies including Bayer, Lanxess and Evonik Industries.

"We are deeply saddened by this tragic accident and the death of an employee," Currenta said in a statement, adding that "rescue efforts continue at full speed" to find the four missing employees.

The City of Leverkusen said on Facebook that the blast triggered a fire at a solvent storage tank that took several hours to put out, with firefighters from nearby Cologne called in to help with the efforts. — APP

Dr Hafeez Pasha warns of hard time ahead

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan former finance minister Dr. Hafeez Pasha has warned of difficult time ahead, as the country has witnessed a single month's record highest import figure of \$6.3 billion in June this year while the current account deficit remained \$1.3 billion in this period.

Addressing an economic session on 'Pakistan Economy-Challenges & Solution' organized by the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Association Front (PIAF), he predicted that the total annual import figure would touch the level of as high as \$70 billion which is impossible to manage with the export of just \$25 billion.

The ceremony was also addressed by FPCCI former president Mian Anjum Nisar, PIAF Chairman Mian Nauman Kabir and senior journalist Sikandar Lodhi.

Former finance minister pointed out that the next year current account deficit will surpass the figure of \$6.7 billion, as the country would have to



enhance payment in its debt servicing by at least 35 percent, which is alarming. He appreciated the record remittances of \$29.4 billion sent by the overseas Pakistanis, but alarmed that the remittances will decline next year as Pakistan spends around \$3.4 billion annually on foreign travels which have been saved this year, lifting the figure of remittances.

FPCCI former president and Busi-

nessmen Panel Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar, while addressing the seminar, asked the authorities to focus on further accelerating exports, besides keeping some check on unbridled imports of luxury items.

He observed that the economic managers will have to chalk out a long-term plan for import substitution and increasing exports so that Pakistan could become self-reliant.

He also emphasized the need for adoption of international best practices for priority sectors and consultations with international experts to achieve success. While addressing the meeting, PIAF Chairman Mian Nauman Kabir said that fiscal sustainability has become a major issue of the Pakistan economy, as its servicing debt accounts for more than one-third of its federal budget.

He stated that Pakistan's trade deficit keeps on widening despite a much-trumpeted increase in exports, which were, in fact, not sufficient to match the huge surge in imports. He said that government has spent interest payments on debt Rs3.06 trillion while spending only Rs600 billion on subsidies and Rs100 billion for COVID-19 vaccinations. Mian Nauman Kabir said that Pakistan's reliance on debt is a violation of the country's Debt Limitation Act. He said the low exports volume and rising trade deficit were chronic issues which should be resolved permanently.

Dr. Hafeez Pasha, during a question-answer session, told the trade and industry's representatives that another National Action Plan should be initiated that was launched against terrorism. The Pakistan Army remained successful to eradicate terrorism from the country but it is reemerging in the country now, as incidences of violence are rising in Balochistan while Lahore recent bomb blast is also horrifying.

Briefs

UK PM urges caution as virus cases fall

AGENCIES

LONDON: Prime Minister Boris Johnson called for caution Tuesday after Britain registered nearly a week of lower coronavirus case numbers, a decline that has surprised officials and experts.

Recorded infection rates across the UK have dropped for six consecutive days, with 24,950 new cases announced Monday compared to 46,558 last Tuesday – a fall of 46 percent.

The reversal after weeks of rising rates has coincided with the removal on July 19 of nearly all pandemic rules in England, including legal requirements for social distancing wearing a mask in public indoors.

It has confounded the government and scientists, who had previously warned cases would likely surge to 100,000 a day in the weeks ahead after the restrictions were eased. Despite the turnaround, which comes after the start of summer school holidays, ministers are warning the long-term situation remains uncertain. "I have noticed that obviously we have six days of some better figures but it's very, very important that we don't allow ourselves to run away with premature conclusions about this," Johnson said during a visit to a police station in southeast England.

"People have got to remain very cautious and that remains the approach of the government," he added.

Johnson ended 10 days in self-isolation late Monday after being in close contact with Health Secretary Sajid Javid, who tested positive for Covid-19 earlier this month. The prime minister argued that Britain's successful vaccination campaign – which has fully vaccinated 70 percent of adults – allowed for the relaxation of legal curbs last week.

But the move attracted widespread criticism, with fears the National Health Service could again come under severe strain from rising caseloads, even if many fewer people are now dying of Covid. Experts have struggled to explain why infections appear to have declined so dramatically since early last week.

Iran hits record for new Covid cases

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iran recorded nearly 35,000 new Covid cases on Tuesday, the health ministry announced, amounting to the Islamic republic's highest daily infections number for a second consecutive day.

In the past 24 hours, Iran registered a record 34,951 positive cases, bringing the total number of infections since the start of the pandemic to 3,758,197.

The hardest-hit country in the Middle East also recorded 357 additional coronavirus-related deaths, taking total fatalities to 89,479.

"We're going uphill on the fifth coronavirus wave," health minister Saeed Namaki told state TV, expressing his hope that the situation "would calm down in the next seven or eight days".

The record caseload is Iran's third in a week. Daily infections had hit a record of 31,814 on Monday after another high of 27,444 the Tuesday before, continuing the rising trajectory seen since late June.

Tehran's virus taskforce chief Alireza Zali also warned of the "very rapid pace" of Covid-19 hospitalisations in the capital city.

The official said Tehran, with a population of over eight million, had crossed 9,700 daily infections on Monday and warned of numbers rising even further, state news agency IRNA reported.

More than half of Iran's 448 counties are currently "red" – the highest risk level on the country's colour-coded scale, the agency said.



BAKU: President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev received the Pakistani Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker Asad Qaisar at the Presidential Palace. – DNA

Tunisia's president intensifies crackdown as Opp calls for talks

NEWS DESK

TUNIS: Tunisia's president has lengthened the country's curfew and banned public gatherings of more than three people, as the opposition calls for talks to end the north African nation's political crisis. After a weekend of protests over the government's mishandling of the coronavirus pandemic, President Kais Saied suspended parliament and sacked the prime minister on Monday. The country's largest opposition party, the moderate Islamists Nahda, has accused him of staging a coup in the Arab world's only democracy and called for dialogue. On Tuesday, Saied made it clear that the measures were temporary and denied allegations that the moves breached the constitution. "I am baffled by those who speak of a coup... I studied and taught the law and I know what a coup means – violating legitimacy," he said in a meeting with civil society representatives, a video of which was

EU calls for resumption of parliamentary activity

BRUSSELS: The European Union on Tuesday called for the restoration of democratic institutions, including parliamentary activity and the respect of human rights in Tunisia. Tunisian President Kais Saied on July 25 ousted the government of Prime Minister Hichem Mechichi, froze parliament and assumed the executive authority. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell issued a statement on behalf of the bloc, asserting that the EU is closely monitoring recent developments in Tunisia. Borrell stressed the importance of "respecting the democratic roots of the country, for the rule of law, the Constitution, and the legislative framework," and "listening to the will and aspirations of the Tunisian people." "We, therefore, call for the restoration of institutional stability as soon as possible, and in particular for the resumption of parliamentary activity, the respect for fundamental rights and the abstention from all forms of violence," he said. "It is a priority to preserve the country's democracy and stability." – Agencies

posted on his Facebook page. A former law professor and political outsider with no party affiliation, Saied's election in 2019 was seen as a rebuke to mainstream

politicians that were perceived by many Tunisians as corrupt and self-interested. Saied has described his actions as overdue and necessary to save a state hijacked

by vested interests. Tunisians have seen their living standards plummet since the 2011 revolution, which sparked uprisings across the Arab world. Multiple fractious coalition governments have struggled to manage the economy. With inflation soaring and unemployment high, the country has also been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic and the government's response has been widely criticised as chaotic and inadequate. Hospitals have been overwhelmed by the spread of the Delta variant and some have lacked oxygen supplies. Despite allegations of a coup, Saied has argued that his actions comply with the 2014 constitution drafted after the revolution. He said the charter gave him the right to take measures he considered appropriate in cases of "imminent" danger to the state. He also pointed to what he described as corruption within the political class, which he said had crippled the government and the provision of services to the Tunisian people.



RAWALPINDI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Nadeem Raza presenting souvenir to Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin, at the Joint Headquarters. – DNA

Pakistan response towards terrorism – A case study

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: India Study Centre (ISC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a book launch event titled, "Pakistan's Response towards Terrorism – A Case Study of Musharraf Regime" authored by Dr. Shabana Fayyaz on Tuesday. Various distinguished national and international experts attended the book launch in person and virtually. In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director General ISSI, congratulated Dr. Shabana by giving her due credit for producing a worthy literature and said that her book is a good addition to the literature. While giving the reference of the book DG ISSI said that con-

cept of traditional security has not transmitted into citizen security and there should be equal focus on state as well as on human security. However, there is emerging consensus in Pakistan on human security and Islamabad Security Dialogue is the tangible testimony of that, he added. Earlier, in his introductory remarks, Dr. Saif Malik, Director, India Study Centre, ISSI, maintained that the book is a valuable contribution in the existing body of knowledge on the subject matter. To him the most fascinating aspects of the book are the couple of fundamental questions raised by the author which could pave the way for further research especially rotating around the notion of the security doctrine.

Continued on Page 02

Pakistan greatly values ties with South Africa: COAS



RAWALPINDI: General Rudzani Maphwanya, Chief of South African National Defence Forces called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ. – DNA

ZUBAIR AHMED
RAWALPINDI: General Rudzani Maphwanya, Chief of South African National Defence Forces called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ,

on Tuesday. According to an Inter Services Public Relations press release, matters of mutual interests, regional security situation and defence, training & security cooperation between both the countries were discussed

during the meeting. COAS said that Pakistan attaches great value to its relations with South Africa. Pakistan views South Africa as a key country in African continent and we appreciate South Africa's role towards regional peace, security and develop-

ment of African region. The visiting dignitary also appreciated Pakistan's role in regional peace and stability especially the Afghan Peace Process. Both the dignitaries pledged to play their role for further improvement in bilateral cooperation at all levels.

State Bank of Pakistan maintains policy rate at 7%

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan has decided to maintain the policy rate at 7% for the next two months, the central bank's governor, Dr Reza Baqir, announced on Tuesday. "At its meeting on 27th July 2021, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided to maintain the policy rate at 7%," the SBP said, in a statement issued after the committee's meeting. In reaching its decision, the MPC considered key trends

and prospects in the real, external, and fiscal sectors, and the resulting outlook for monetary conditions and inflation.

Baqir, addressing a press conference along with SBP officials, said that this is the fifth consecutive time that the central bank has decided to maintain the policy rate. He said that the policy rate is lower than the inflation rate. "Economic experts term this a negative interest rate," he said. "The reason for keeping the real interest rate negative is a focus on growth," the SBP governor said.

Covid-19 claims 39 more lives

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan confirmed 3,262 new COVID-19 cases over the last 24 hours, the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) said on Tuesday. The NCOC said that the country's number of overall confirmed cases has risen to 1,011,708, including 928,722 recoveries. The disease killed 39 people over the last 24 hours, increasing the overall death toll to 23,087, the NCOC said, adding that 2,722 are in critical condition.

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