



Islamabad POST

Saturday, July 31, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

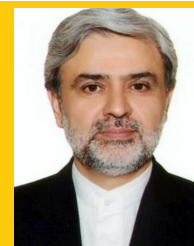
Price Rs. 20

Moroccan King's landmark steps to help least developed nations

Detailed News On Page-07

Pak-Iran ties need to be strengthened

Detailed News On Page-03



Zverev beats Djokovic to reach Final

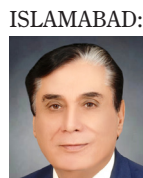
Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

66 mega cases concluded

DNA



ISLAMABAD: A high level meeting chaired by National Accountability Bureau Chairman Justice Javed Iqbal reviewed the progress in bringing 179 mega corruption cases to a logical conclusion. The progress made so far was reviewed to bring the pending references, especially the mega corruption cases, to a logical conclusion. It was informed in the meeting that out of 179 mega corruption cases, 66 mega corruption cases have been brought to a logical conclusion by the Hon'ble Accountability Courts as per law while 93 corruption cases are pending in the Hon'ble Accountability Courts. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman National Accountability Bureau, expressed satisfaction over the performance of NAB in mega corruption cases. The meeting was informed that out of 66 mega corruption cases have been brought to a logical conclusion.

Sindh govt imposes lockdown

NAZIR SIYAL



KARACHI: Sindh government on Friday has imposed lockdown in Karachi from July 1 to August 8 in the wake of preventing further spread of coronavirus infection. During the meeting of Corona Task Force headed by Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, it was decided to close shops, markets and inter-city transport while directives have also been issued to check the vaccination card of those roaming on roads and streets. The participants also decided to close government offices from next week and not to provide salaries to non-vaccinated employees after August 31. Medical stores will remain open across the city. The members also deliberated upon taking assistance of law enforcement agencies for the implementation of coronavirus standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday.
— Editor

Inside...

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UNODC to bring human traffickers to justice: Milsom
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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Nawaf Bin Saeed Al-Maliki calls on Prime Minister Imran Khan. — DNA

US receives first Afghan interpreters

Some 20,000 interpreters have requested asylum in the US in total

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Some 200 Afghans, including interpreters and their families, arrived in the United States on Friday as part of a special visa program for those who worked with the US army during its 20-year fight against the Taliban. The Biden administration has vowed to resettle thousands of Afghans who fear reprisals from the militant group over their cooperation with the Americans. "These arrivals are just the first of many as we work quickly to relocate SIV-eligible Afghans out of harm's way — to the United States, to US facilities abroad, or to third countries — so that they can wait in safety while they finish their visa applications," US President Joe Biden said in a statement. As many as 50,000 or more people ultimately could be evacuated in "Operation Allies Refuge." Some 20,000

Scores flee as troops, Taliban fight in Herat

AGENCIES

HERAT: Taliban fighters clashed with government forces on the outskirts of Herat Friday forcing scores of families to flee, residents said, as the insurgents tightened a noose around the western Afghan city. The Taliban have seized several districts on the outskirts of the city — as well as two border crossings in Herat province adjoining Iran and Turkmenistan — as they continue a sweep across the country. Violence has surged since early May, when US-led foreign forces began a final withdrawal which is now almost complete. An AFP correspondent in Herat said the Taliban and government forces were fighting on the road leading to the city airport, while residents said clashes were also going on in the nearby districts of Injil and Guzara. "People there are terrified," said local Abdul Rab Ansari, who fled to the city from Guzara. "The fighting is heavy but they have not captured the district of Guzara so far," said Mohammad Allahyar, who also sought shelter in the city.

interpreters have requested asylum in the US in total. Friday's arrivals form part of the first group of 2,500 who will seek a new life

outside Afghanistan, according to Russ Travers, Biden's deputy homeland

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BAKU: Asad Qaisar Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan and Sahibah Gafarova Speaker Azerbaijan Assembly posing for a picture after signing the MoU between the assemblies of Pakistan and Azerbaijan. — DNA

Saudi envoy meets PM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malki, called on Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday. The Saudi Ambassador presented a formal invitation to the Prime Minister, extended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, for participation in a Summit focusing on the "Middle East Green Initiative" to be hosted by the Kingdom in October 2021. The Prime Minister graciously accepted the invitation. It may be recalled that the initiatives of the Saudi Crown Prince, announced earlier this year, align closely with the Prime Minister's climate change initiatives — "Clean and Green Pakistan" and "10 Billion Tree Tsunami". Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are also collaborating closely to develop synergies in their climate-change related strategies. The invitation extended to the Prime Minister is an acknowledgement of Pakistan's leading role in combating climate change.

AJK polls; Pak rejects Indian claims

SAIFULLAH

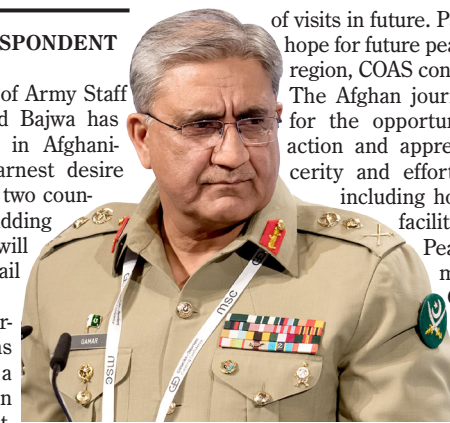
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan summoned the Indian charge d'affaires on Friday to categorically reject the Indian Ministry of External Affairs' "false, untenable and self-serving comments" on the recently-held elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The FO, in a statement, said the Indian charge d'affaires was summoned to convey Pakistan's complete rejection of India's sham protest and to reiterate Pakistan's clear and consistent position on the Kashmir dispute. According to the Foreign Office statement: "India cannot hide the fact that it is in illegal occupation of parts of Jammu and Kashmir."

Spoilers won't be allowed to hurt peace

The Army Chief made these remarks in a meeting with 15 member Afghan media delegation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa has said that the peace in Afghanistan is Pakistan's earnest desire because peace of the two countries is interlinked, adding that the spoilers will not be allowed to derail peace process. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release, a fifteen member Afghan media delegation visited GHQ and met General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS). Speaking at the occasion, Chief of Army Staff said media can act as a bridge to create conducive environment for promoting cultural / social and people to people engagement between the two countries. He further said that it is the responsibility of media and people to identify and defeat the spoilers of peace. Referring to Pakistan's comprehensive border management regime, COAS said security of borders is in the best interest of the two countries. Alluding to the benefits of regional connectivity for the two countries, COAS highlighted the importance of restoration of peace in Afghanistan for sustainable development of the region. Appreciating Pak Afghan Youth Forum's initiative for organising the journalists' visit, COAS hoped for more frequent exchange



of visits in future. Pak-Afghan youth is the hope for future peace and progress of the region, COAS concluded.

The Afghan journalists thanked COAS for the opportunity for candid interaction and appreciated Pakistan's sincerity and efforts for Afghan people including hosting of refugees and facilitative role in Afghan Peace Process, the statement concluded.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Imran Khan had told a delegation of Afghan journalists that Pakistan has no favourites in Afghanistan and it would support any government that was chosen by the Afghans themselves. "We do not have any favourites in Afghanistan. Our policy is that whoever the people of Afghanistan choose, Pakistan will have the best relationship with them," the Prime Minister said in response to a question of an Afghan journalist, at the PM House late on Wednesday.

A delegation of Afghan journalists was in Pakistan to participate in the Pak-Afghan Media Conclave in Islamabad, and held a session with Prime Minister Imran Khan and asked him questions related to Pakistan's stance on the current Afghan situation. The Prime Minister told them that Pakistan is no longer pursuing its '90s policy of "strategic depth" in Afghanistan as his government strongly believes that "Afghanistan can never be controlled from outside".

Pak-Jordan defense ties discussed

Ambassador Ibrahim Al Madani commended the professionalism of PAF



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Jordan Ibrahim Al Madani calls on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff. — DNA

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kingdom of Jordan H.E. Ibrahim Al Madani called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force in his office on Friday. During the meeting, both the dignitaries discussed matters of professional and mutual interest. Ambassador Ibrahim Al Madani commended the professionalism of PAF and acknowledged its rising indigenous capacity in aviation industry. The Air Chief said that Pakistan and Jordan had longstanding religious, cultural and historical bonds

which were manifested through strong ties between Royal Jordanian Air Force and Pakistan Air Force. The Air Chief also emphasised upon the significance of further deepening the relations between the both Air Forces. It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan and Jordan enjoy close military relations. Last month, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Nadeem Raza visited Jordan and discussed the scope of military engagement with Jordan as he met with his Jordanian counterpart. According to a press statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations

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European lawmakers urge EU action in ILoK

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: Sixteen European parliamentarians on Friday wrote a letter to the European Commission on the "humanitarian situation" in Indian-occupied Kashmir, urging the European Union to raise its voice on the issue and take action.

Addressed to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Vice President Josep Borrell, the letter said: "As a champion of universal human rights, fundamental freedoms and the rule-based international order, the EU must raise its voice against the violations of human rights affecting the people of Jammu and Kashmir."

"We believe that the EU should use all its leverage and tools to cooperate with our Indian and Pakistani partners to honour the pledge made to the Kashmiris by the international community and create an environment conducive to the implementation of the United Nations resolutions."

The lawmakers expressed the resolve to continue their engagements with Pakistani and Indian lawmakers as well as Kashmiri

"The lawmakers called on von der Leyen and Borrell to convey the 'grave concern' over the violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in ILoK to the Indian government"

leaders "to impress upon them the urgent need to foster a climate of peace and dialogue in the region". The letter noted that it was "extremely important" for Kashmiris to be heard and granted the opportunity to decide their own future.

The lawmakers called on von der Leyen and Borrell to carry out the following actions on the EU's behalf: Convey the "grave concern" over the violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in ILoK to the Indian government.

Take urgent action to address the "alarming" human rights situation in the region. Contribute to peace and stability in the region by enhancing dialogue between India, Pakistan and Kashmiri representatives through making use of "our special relation-

ships with both India and Pakistan".

"We hope in your strong support for this cause," the letter read.

It pointed out that the "miseries of the people of Jammu and Kashmir" had been amply documented in the International Human Rights Watch World Report 2021 and reports by the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2018 and 2019.

The lawmakers noted that the region was already under a lockdown since India revoked its special status on August 5, 2019, and there were restrictions on the rights to movement, information, healthcare, education and free speech.

"Journalists and human rights defenders have been increasingly targeted for raising their voice in support of the Kashmiri peo-

ple and [denouncing] their situation. Arbitrary detentions continue, public assembly is still prohibited [...] and hundreds, including minors and several elected legislators of Jammu and Kashmir, remain under preventive detention," the letter underlined.

It added that a number of laws introduced by the Indian government over the years to prevent terrorism and separatism had instead often been misused against Kashmiris. The letter emphasised that apart from being a humanitarian crisis, the Kashmir dispute also posed a "major threat to peace, stability, and security in the region, being a flashpoint between two nuclear-armed countries and we are worried that any miscalculation can lead to unwarranted consequences".

The parliamentarians noted that the region's security situation was "delicate" and deteriorating due to the continuous Kashmiri protests against the revocation of ILoK's special autonomy and the Indian Citizenship Amendment Bill. They said the frequency of the protests was creating unrest and strife in the valley which in turn were adding to "volatility and tension" between the Pakistani and Indian militaries.

Rs 1.71/ltr increase in petrol price proposed

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has proposed a modest price rise while decreasing diesel costs. The authority proposed an increase of Rs1.71/litre in petrol prices and a decrease of Rs2.27/litre in diesel rates in a report given to the Petroleum Division. It also proposed raising the price of kerosene by 35 paise per litre and light-diesel oil by 24 paise per litre. The final decision on petroleum product prices will be made following discussion with Prime Minister Imran Khan. The increased petroleum prices will go into effect on August 1.

Briefs

India refuses fundamental right of Kashmiris

DNA

FAISALABAD: Provincial Minister for Colonies & Culture Mian Khayal Ahmad Kastro has said that the United Nations (UN) has accepted the fundamental right of Kashmiris, but India has refused to implement the UN resolutions about giving Kashmiris the right to self-determination.

In a statement issued on Friday, he said that it was very disturbing situation that the Indian forces were killing generations after generations of Kashmiris to turn the Muslim-majority into minority in the IIOJK (Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir). He said that people of Pakistan firmly stand with their Kashmiri brethren and support their fair struggle. He said the people of Kashmir were demanding their right to self-determination, but India was suppressing their internationally-acknowledged movement.

He also expressed concerns over the lukewarm attitude of the international human rights organisations, which had failed to take cognizance of the situation. He said that Pakistani nation fully supported their Kashmiri brethren, who were ready to sacrifice their lives for getting rid of the Indian yoke.

District admin holds Khuli Kachehri

PESHAWAR: The district administration Peshawar held a Khuli Kachehri in Tehkal locality here Friday. A large number of people participated and highlighted their problems.

Besides, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Relief, Mohammad Imran Khan, Tehsildar Mohammad Jameel and officers of the subservient departments, the gathering was largely attended by the public representatives and local notables.

On this occasion, the residents complained of excessive power load shedding and called for cut in its duration to mitigate the hardships of the people. They also complained of low pressure of Sui gas. The residents also complained of the dilapidated conditions of roads and demanded for its immediate repair and action against encroachment mafia in graveyards. Speaking on the occasion, the Additional Deputy Commissioner said that the purpose of the Khuli Kachehri was to bridge the gap between the government and the general public by resolving the problems at the people's door steps. He directed the officers for resolution of the problems of the people and requested the people to inform him about the proceedings and feedback on their applications. — APP

KP IGP suspends police official

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Inspector General of Police (IGP) Moazzam Jah Ansari Friday took serious notice of a video getting viral on social media about beating of a fruit seller by a police official in Fajirabad area of Peshawar.

He issued suspension order of the police official identified as Younas Khan, said a statement issued here.

In the video, the police official was also forcing the poor vendor to embark in the police mobile van for taking him to the police station. A number of netizens condemned the tragic incident and sought justice for the poor man.

The IGP also issued directives to the chief capital city police to probe the matter thoroughly and submit report to the authorities concerned on priority.

"No one is above the law and in this case dispensation of justice would be ensured at all costs," Moazzam Jah said. He expressed sympathies with the affected fruit seller and said violence on citizens especially from policemen could not be tolerated.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation comprising presidents of Chambers of Commerce called on Prime Minister Imran Khan. — DNA

Economy grows due to govt's effective COVID strategy: Alvi

NEWS REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi on Friday said that the government's effective COVID-19 strategy including the policy of smart lockdowns played a major role in country's economic survival and realization of [around 4%] Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth despite various challenges. "Improvement in all micro and macro-economic indicators endorsed the numbers of GDP growth, which were disputed by some political forces", he added. The President was addressing inaugural session of a three-day 2nd International Conference of Pakistan Society of Internal Medicine (PSIM) with a theme of "Evidence Based Medicine". Dilating upon the government's successful strategy to deal with the challenge of COVID-19, President Alvi said that Prime Minister Imran Khan by opposing complete lock-down adopted the policy of compassion to protect the poor and low income groups from the economic effects of the pandemic. He said that the National Command and Control Center (NCOC) adopted an evidence based policy

of smart lockdowns with the help of National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA). The President said that despite criticism from various segments of the society, the mosques in Pakistan remained open with the implementation of COVID Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). He said that with the blessings of Allah Almighty and the measures taken by the present government, the situation of coronavirus in Pakistan was far better than other countries in-

cluding India, where people were lying under tents along the roads with oxygen cylinders. The President appreciated the efforts and achievements of PSIM in the field of medical education, awareness and research in a short period of two years including their initiative of opening up free medical facilities namely "Aapka Clinic" for the poor and deserving in Lahore, Hyderabad and Karachi. He, however, urged PSIM as well as medical professionals to focus on introducing

telemedicine facilities to enable the poor, who could not afford to reach a doctor or clinic in case of any health problem, to take medical advice on phone.

About increase in the incidence of hepatitis in Pakistan at around 8.7%, the President said there was a need to follow the model of Egypt which had reversed the situation of hepatitis from 14% to almost zero. The President said that biotechnology parks should be established in the country on the basis of market requirements.

Parliamentary Secretary for Health Dr. Nausheen Hamid in her remarks on the occasion mentioned the present government's health card scheme under its universal health coverage initiative and said the government was committed to provide health facilities to masses. She said the presence of President Dr. Arif Alvi in the conference depicted the government's commitment towards health sector.

Dr. Nausheen Hamid lauded the courageous and front-line role of doctors

and other medical professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

She appreciated the services of PSIM in medical field and assured all out cooperation of the Ministry of National Health Services. Chairman PSIM Prof. Aftab Mohsin, President PSIM Dr. Javed Akhtar and Secretary General PSIM Dr. Sonia Iqtadar also addressed the session and besides highlighting various activities and achievements of PSIM also spoke on different issues relating to medical field.



FPCCI appeals to reconsider decisions on lockdown in Sindh

KARACHI: President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo on Friday appealed to the government of Sindh to reconsider lockdown decision as it would result in major losses to the industry.

In a statement president FPCCI emphasized that Pakistan's economic hub Karachi should not be completely locked down in the larger national interest and all industries should be allowed to operate seven days a week and continue their production unabated while restaurants should also be allowed to continue 24 hours takeaway and delivery services. In order to facilitate common man, all grocery stores in the province should be allowed to operate seven days a week till 8 pm, Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo further appealed and recommended that the only solution out of the current situation, without causing any harm to businesses and employment opportunities, was to allow business and economic activities under strict compliance of SOPs and mandatory vaccination of the workforce. He said that if industries and businesses remain under restrictions, we would not be able to pay salaries. He added that FPCCI is ever-ready to fully support the Government of Sindh in order to create a thriving economic environment in the province. — Nazir Siyal

FCCI president expresses deep concern over ICT floods

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) has expressed deep concern over the loss of life and property due to heavy rains in Islamabad and up-country areas. In a statement issued here today, he said that it was shocking that even in the federal capital flooding had devastated the normal life which was considered as an ideally planned city of Pakistan. He said that it should be an eye opener for the concerned departments of Faisalabad as this metropolis has already braved to heavy spells of rain. "During these rains most of

the low lying areas and roads remained under knee deep water for many days", he said and added that the traffic in the posh areas also remained disturbed despite the fact that these roads have green belts capable of accommodating huge quantities of rain water. He feared that if more rains hit the industrial city, the normal life will come to a standstill; hence all departments must pool their energies and desilt the sludge carrier and sewer lines to avert any major mishap. He said that the green belts and grassy grounds could be deepened to accommodate maximum water to avoid urban flooding. Quoting instances, he said that main Susan Road remained inundated for hours creating traffic mess in this



posh locality of the city. He said that Susan Road has a specious green belt in between the two roads.

"The level of these green belts has been jacked up and it is now unable to accommodate rain water", he said and added that despite of previous experiences, no department has taken bold and cost-effective solutions of deepening the green belts which are also available along

the service road of our main road artery of canal road. He said that the shopkeepers are utilizing these green belts for commercial purposes and in this connection they have raised the plinth level of available open spaces for their own convenience totally ignoring its basic objectives.

He hoped that the Deputy Commissioner will direct the concerned departments to conduct a comprehensive survey and undertake the desilting of sludge carriers in addition to deepening the all available green belts and open spaces. He said that it will not only save precious roads in addition to facilitating the masses to travel safely on these roads even during heavy rain spells.

Terrorist's interview with CNN generates backlash

The analysts termed CNN's interview of Noor Wali Mehsud an attempt to legitimize the terrorist organization and place it parallel to the Afghan Taliban, despite the fact that the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was a US-designated terrorist organization, already neutralized by Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The interview of the leader of a designated terrorist organization with an American news channel has generated a lot of heat, with questions being asked about the timing of its airing and whether it was aimed at stirring instability in Pakistan, as the US forces withdraw from Afghanistan.

The analysts termed CNN's interview of Noor Wali Mehsud an attempt to legitimize the terrorist organization and place it parallel to the Afghan Taliban, despite the fact that the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was a US-designated terrorist organization, already neutralized by Pakistan, while the United States and other countries were holding negotiations with the Afghan Taliban. The TTP, which had targeted innocent Pakistanis including women and children through several heinous attacks against both civilians and armed forces, seems to be changing its stance to protect its illicit activities under the cover of Islamization.

Command Eleven – an open source intelligence think tank, specializing

in counter-terrorism, insurgency and extremism - pointed out that the TTP was a defunct terror group that was fighting to regroup under the ISPP (Islamic State Province of Pakistan) banner, as their strength and relevance in Afghanistan had been decimated.

"Does CNN give airtime to all UN-designated global terrorists or made an exception in the case of Afghanistan-based most wanted terrorist leader of the TTP responsible for deadly attacks against Pakistan, including the massacre of our children?" questioned Sana Jamal, an Islamabad based journalist. The people on Twitter described the TTP as a terrorist organization and said any effort by the media to resuscitate it by portraying it as a legitimate, reformed, and human rights focused organization would have devastating consequences for

the region. The 27th report of the United Nations Analytical and Monitoring Team highlighted that the TTP had gained strength after a number of militant groups united under its umbrella, which had "resulted in a sharp increase in attacks in the region", including "more than 100 cross-border attacks (into Pakistan)".

The TTP surfaced in 2007 as an organization comprising a number of local militias along Pakistan's northwestern belt bordering Afghanistan and demanded the imposition of a strict form of Islamic law across the country.

The group carried out dozens of large-scale suicide attacks, bombings and other attacks targeting Pakistani civilians and security forces till 2014, when the Pakistani military launched a massive operation against its headquarters in North Waziristan. Many were killed and the remaining escaped across the border into eastern Afghanistan. After being dislodged, the TTP's ringleaders took refuge in Afghanistan and carried out attacks on Pa-

kistan, including the one on APS Peshawar.

However in recent months, since the TTP's reunification, a spike has been witnessed in targeted attacks against security forces and tribal elders in North Waziristan.

The Counter-Terrorism Department has successfully foiled several attacks and arrested a number of militants. Interrogation of several TTP members revealed that they were being funded by Indian and Afghan intelligence agencies.

This fact was also reported by an Indian author - Avinash Paliwal, who, in his book, admitted that the Indian consulates in Afghanistan, along the border with Pakistan, were actively supporting Baloch militant groups and the TTP through funneling of funds by India's intelligence agency RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) via Dubai.

According to a United Nations report, over 6,000 terrorists belonging to the TTP and ISKP (Islamic State Khorasan Province), including globally designated terrorist commanders Noor Wali and Khorassani, are

enjoying Safe havens in Afghanistan. The TTP, meanwhile, is trying to legitimate itself by aligning its narrative with the PTM (Pashtun Tahafuz Movement) as its demands now focus on the rights of Pashtuns and Baloch, in a bid to cover up its terrorist acts. Unfortunately, several innocent Pashtuns have fallen victim to their brutality in the areas it once operated.

The alignment of TTP and PTM comes as both join hands against the writ of the state in the erstwhile FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas), and are adopting anti-state and anti-army narratives of libelous activists to gain their sympathies.

Lt Gen (Retd) Shafaat Shah, former Corps Commander Lahore and Ambassador of Pakistan to Jordan, said the TTP was a banned organization by the US and here its terrorist leader was giving an interview on CNN. "(It) shows contacts, sponsorships by Afghan Intelligence, RAW & CIA (Central Intelligence Agency), otherwise CNN team would not have got access to him," the former ambassador said. — APP

Kashmiris to get freedom soon: Firdous

DNA

FAISALABAD: Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Firdous Rae has said that Kashmiri people will soon get their right to self-determination, as they have rendered unprecedented sacrifices for their freedom during last seven decades. In a statement issued here on Friday, she said that struggle of the Kashmiri people for their independence has entered into final stage as Prime Minister Imran Khan highlighted the Kashmir issue at all platforms in a most befitting manner. The Pakistani Prime Minister also exposed atrocities of Modi government and RSS in Kashmir valley due to which western media also started highlighting atrocities of Indian forces in IIOJK (Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir), she added.

She said that Pakistani nation could not remain silent on atrocities and brutalities of Indian forces in Kashmir valley, and it would continue political, diplomatic and moral support to Kashmiri people until they get their right to self-determination. Firdous Rae said that founder of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah had declared the Kashmir as a jugular vein of Pakistan. She paid tributes to the sacrifices of Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders.

Meeting held for anti-dengue campaign

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: The meeting of District Emergency Response Committee for anti dengue was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali in his office committee room. District Coordinator for Epidemics control Dr. Zulqarnain gave briefing on results of indoor and outdoor surveillance.

Deputy Commissioner urged the departments to speed up the surveillance during the current rainy season because in these days the dengue larvae could breath and it should be stopped necessarily.

He said that anti dengue teams should present in the field for chemical treatment of larvae and hotspots should be checked on regular basis. Earlier the Deputy Commissioner chaired a meeting of District Emergency Board for Muharram arrangements and has directed the departments for formulated comprehensive administrative and security strategy to maintain law and order in the district during Muharram and certificate should be provided after fulfill their responsibilities. The Deputy Commissioner directed to check the Muharram arrangements as per the checklist and ensure their implementation responsibly. He said that Muharram arrangements require utmost attention and no negligence would be tolerated in this regard.

UAF to revise courses for competing modern world

FAISALABAD: The University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqar Ahmad Khan said that courses of all disciplines will be revised, in order to bring reforms in the curriculum to compete with modern world.

He was addressing a meeting of Academic Council, on Friday.

He said that UAF will invite farming community at the faculty board meeting for listening to their issues, so that research on the real problems of the farming community could be conducted in order to uplift the agricultural sector. Prof Dr Iqar Ahmad said that the above initiatives will be taken on the directions of Federal Food Security Minister Syed Fakhar Imam.

He said that the UAF should emerge as one of leading institutions in the Prime Minister Clean and Green Pakistan campaign, and every employee and the student should plant at least five samplings in their surroundings to curb the gigantic climate changes, which were playing havoc with agriculture and development of the country. — APP

Briefs

Accused remand in couple case extends

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A judicial magistrate of Islamabad on Friday extended the judicial remand of accused including Usman Mirza in a case pertaining to torturing and blackmailing a couple.

The accused including Usman Mirza, Ata ur Rehman, Idras Qayum Butt, Bilal Marawat, Muhib Bangish, Rehan Hussain and Farhan were produced before the court of judicial magistrate Waqar Gondal amid foolproof security arrangements.

The defence lawyer pleaded that no one was being allowed to meet his client in jail and he prayed the court to instruct the jail officials to let the accused meet his family. The lawyers said that the accused were not being provided medicine and cloths in jail despite of court orders. The court questioned that whether the accused Idras Qayum Butt was also involved in any other case. The lawyer said it was a conflict case which was settled now.

The court instructed the police to submit the case challan and report under section 173 till next date of hearing. The court asked the police to also present the accused on August 13, and 27th before the court during the vacations. The hearing of the case was adjourned till September 10. The accused were arrested in a case for torturing and blackmailing a couple at a flat in sector E-11.

Govt notifies posting of ED officers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Friday notified the transfer and posting of various officers. According to a notification issued by the Establishment Division, Ms. Zafra Khalid (OMG/BS-18), awaiting posting in Establishment Division, is transferred and posted as Section Officer, States and Frontier Regions Division, with immediate effect and until further orders. Likewise, Mureed Hussain Jasra (OMG/BS-18), Section Officer, National Food Security and Research Division, is transferred and posted as Section Officer, Revenue Division, with immediate effect and until further orders.

While, Ms. Ayezza Sattar (OMG/BS-18), awaiting posting in Establishment Division, is transferred and posted as Section Officer, Science and Technology Division, with immediate effect and until further orders.

IIUI extends admission date till August 16

DNA

ISLAMABAD: International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) has extended the last date to apply for admission in more than 100 programs of its 9 faculties till August 16th, 2021.

The university administration made this decision keeping in view the interest and requests of applicants to extend the date.

The university has offered admissions in BS, MS and PhD programs of 9 faculties including Social Sciences, Basic and Applied Sciences, Management Sciences, International institute for Islamic Economics, Arabic, Usuluddin, Languages and Literature, Engineering and Technology and Shariah and Law. The applicants can apply by visiting the IIUI website or this link <http://admission.iiu.edu.pk>. Male applicants can also call on 051-9019567 and female applicants can call on 051-9019327 for guidance and details.

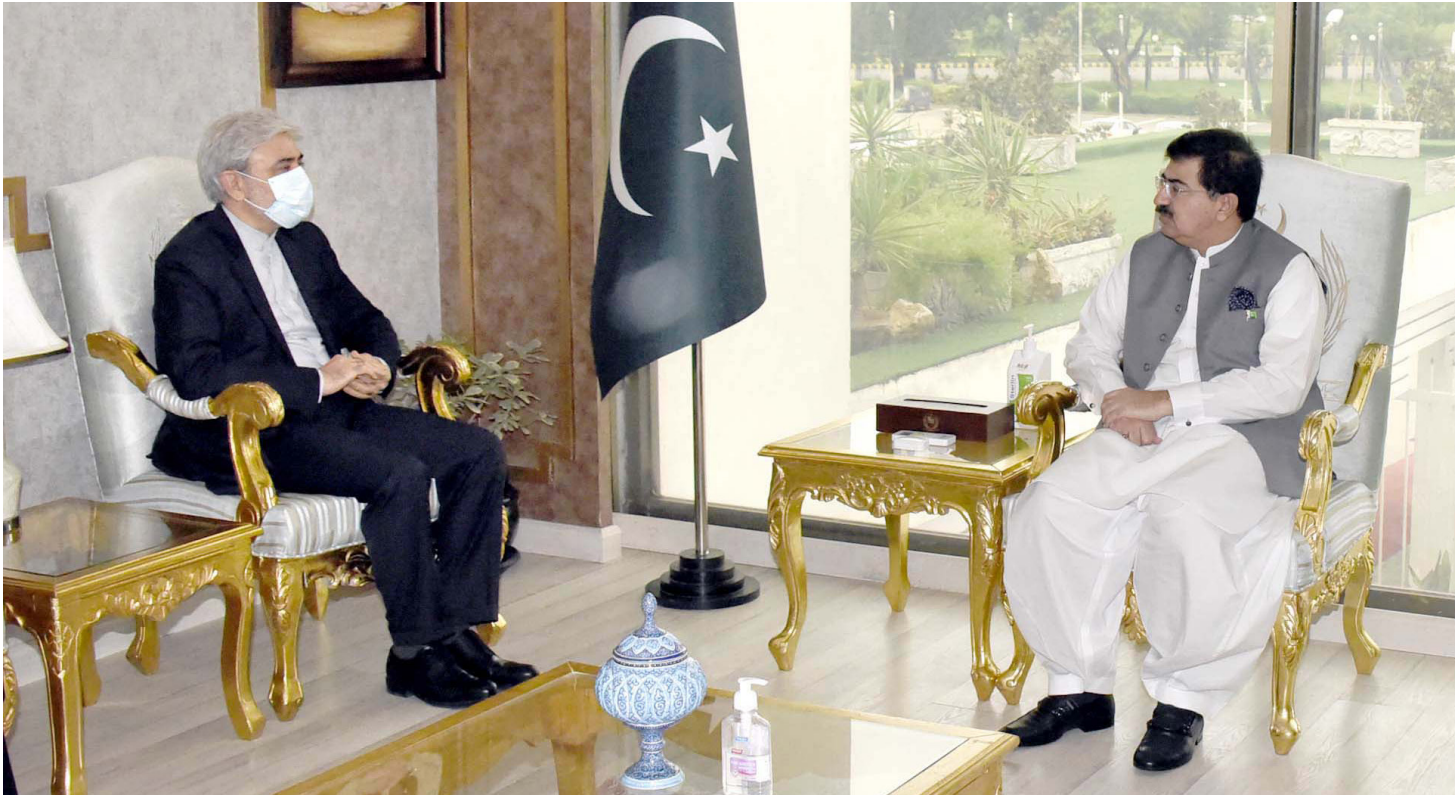
Sanjrani lauds Tehran for restoring power to Makran div

Referring to the forthcoming visit of the Chairman Senate to Iran, the Ambassador briefed the Chairman Senate on different aspects of the visit

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has said that Pakistan highly values its bilateral relations with Iran based on shared social and cultural linkages. Iranian Envoy Syed Muhammad Ali Hosseini called on Chairman Senate here at Parliament House on Friday. Senator Kauda Babar was also present during the meeting.

Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani noted that Pakistan and Iran strive for the development and prosperity of the region. "Pakistan and Iran are tied with a strong bond of religious, cultural, and neighbourly relations which provide an impetus for enhancing bilateral relations", he added. The Chairman Senate observed that international cooperation between the two countries is meritorious. Both the countries have similar perceptions and views on important regional and international issues, the chairman further added. The people and the government of Pakistan highly value its brotherly relations with Iran, he



maintained. The Chairman underscored that the fraternal ties between Pakistan and Iran should be further cemented and taken to new heights. While endorsing the views of Chairman Senate, the Iranian Ambassador said that bilateral cooperation

between the two countries needs to be further strengthened. The meeting also discussed discontinuity of electricity in Makran Division, especially in Gwadar. The Senate Chairman thanked the Government of Iran for restoring power

supply to Gwadar and Makran division. He said that the region's people were facing difficulties due to power outages, and the people now took a sigh of relief and have been relieved by power restoration. Senator Kauda Babar thanked the Chairman

Senate and the Ambassador of Iran for their cooperation in this regard. "Chairman Senate's keen and personal interest on the matter helped in resolving the issue," Senator Kauda Babar highlighted. Referring to the forthcoming visit of the Chairman

Senate to Iran, the Ambassador briefed the Chairman Senate on different aspects of the visit. "Tehran is a friendly country, and this upcoming visit to Iran would help in further enhancing bilateral cooperation", Sanjrani remarked.

Ehsaas Tahafuz for upscaling of tertiary care hospitals

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Dr. Sania Nishtar Friday said the Ehsaas Tahafuz programme would be up scaled soon to 14 tertiary care hospitals nationwide. The programme, administered by the Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division (PASSD), is being expanded to 14 tertiary care hospitals across Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Islamabad.

Tahafuz, under the umbrella of Ehsaas, is a patient centric, shock-oriented programme that caters to one-time catastrophic health costs for those who lack the ability to bear the heavy expenditures.

Dr. Sania Nishtar made an unannounced visit to Tahafuz Desk in Holy Family Hospital (HFH), Rawalpindi on Friday to stock take the progress of Ehsaas Tahafuz operations. During the visit, she met with patients and their attendants, technical team of medical experts, hospital administrators and programme verifiers.

Dr. Sania also visited Emergency, Ophthalmology and ICU wards and took feedback from patients and their attendants about the medical support extended through Tahafuz. "Patient feedback and first-hand insights will help in the Ehsaas Tahafuz scale-up, later this year", Dr. Sania said. – **Shaheen Hanif**

Experts urge judicious use of water resources in Pakistan

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Participants of a webinar urged judicious use of water resources through water-smart agriculture and climate adaptation in Pakistan. They were speaking at a webinar titled 'the climate threat: opportunities and challenges in Pakistan's agriculture' organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) in collaboration with the Project on Prosperity and Development of the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) here on Thursday.

Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam, who was the main speaker at the

event, shared that Pakistan was the 8th most-affected country due to climate change. He added that Pakistan was susceptible to flooding as well as droughts. Therefore, he called for adaptation to climate change and smart management of water in Pakistan. He listed the government's efforts at increasing the country's water storage capacity and promoting climate resilient and water-smart agriculture. Speaking on the occasion, Senior Associate (Non-Resident) at the CSIS Project on Prosperity and Development, Jennifer Mack, called for climate-smart approaches to agriculture in Pakistan. She was of the view that investment in agriculture could also help in alleviating poverty in Pakistan because a

large population of Pakistan was still rural. "Agriculture remains the key to the country's economic potential and lifting its people out of poverty and food insecurity," she said. She put the availability of fresh water at the centre of economic growth of Pakistan. Therefore, she called for prioritizing water management in Pakistan's policymaking. CEO of the Mountain and Glacier Protection Organization (MGPO), Aisha Khan, highlighted Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change and the resultant decrease in availability of water for agricultural production and other needs. She urged the development of a new agro-climatic zoning map for Pakistan because the last one developed in the 1980s had become outdated. Ms

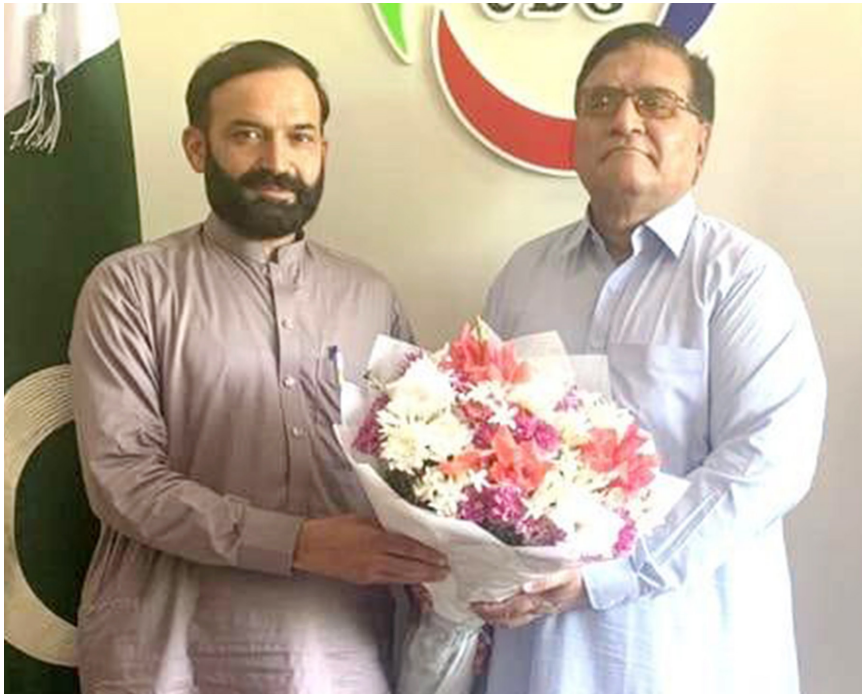
Khan also called for greater connectivity between the research on climate change and agricultural production and the farmers in Pakistan. She said that Pakistan was still cultivating water-intensive crops despite being a water-scarce country. Head of Agriculture and Coordination of the Islamabad-based Global Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC), Mr. Muhammad Arif Goheer, stated that Pakistan's agriculture had increased considerably and agricultural production had increased ten times since the country's independence. He regretted, however, that the dream of food security still remained unattained because of gaps in agricultural priorities, rapidly increasing population, and climate change.

Work on Mardan industrial estate a path for development and prosperity

Mardan is the best location for Industrial Zone: Nawaz Mandori

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General, United Business Group of Pakistan, has said that work on Mardan Industrial Estate should be expedite to advance the industrial revolution in the province, so that the terrorism affected province can move fast on the path of peace, development and prosperity. He expressed these views during a meeting with FPCCI Vice President Muhammad Nawaz Mandori, today at UBG Central Secretariat Islamabad. Zafar Bakhtawari said that in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Mardan has prominent position with regard to agriculture. The special focus should be on agro based



industry. He further added that there are vast water resources in the region that can be utilized for cheap hydropower generation. Low price electricity is vital to make the product competitive in the international market. Muhammad Nawaz Mandori, Leader of Mardan Chamber of Small Traders and small Industry and Vice President, FPCCI, said that being located on Motorway, Mardan is very suitable for the establishment of an industrial zone. In addition export of its industrial products to Afghanistan and neighbouring countries will help to earn more foreign exchange. He further said that our group leader Ehsan Bacha is serving the small traders of the area with utmost sincerity.

CDA speeds up cleaning of drains

ISLAMABAD: The CDA administration is speeding up the cleaning of drains in the Federal Capital to avoid obstruction in drainage in view of the monsoon rains. On Friday, the Member Engineer (E) along with the concerned officers including Director Environment, Director Road and Marketing, Director Sanitation, Director MPO, Director City and Sewerage reached the spot and inspected the drains in different areas of the Federal Capital. On this occasion, the CDA management, keeping in view the flood situation in the monsoon, issued instructions to all the concerned departments and said that in view of the rains in the monsoon, the staff should be kept on 24-hour high alert and staff attendance should be maintained, orders were also issued to the concerned departments. In addition, CDA staff are stationed at various points in the city round the clock. – **DNA**

ICT Police for ceremonies to remember martyrs

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police will organize graceful ceremonies from August 1 to pay tribute to its heroes who wrote history with their blood in the line of duty and protected the lives of others. A meeting held at Central Police Office decided to hold ceremonies from August 1 and commemorate August 4 as the Day of Martyrs. The meeting presided over by the IGP Islamabad Qazi Jamul ur Rehman was attended among others by DIGs, SSPs, Zonal SP and SDPOs.

On the main avenues of Islamabad, pictures of police martyrs special and portraits having details about their sacrifices and courageous acts would be placed. Posters and banners would also be displayed while lighting of candles and prayers would be held at 'Martyrs Chowk' in Melody Market by Islamabad Chambers of Commerce and Industry, civil societies and people from various walks of life. Special prayers would be held at Mosques for martyred personnel while Quran Khawani would be held at police stations. A special ceremony would be held on August 4 at Police Line Headquarters in connection with Police Martyrs Day.

AIOU announces postgrad results

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced results of postgraduate programmes offered in autumn 2020 semester.

The result includes eight PhD, sixteen MPhil, four MS, thirteen MSc, MPA (Executive), MBA Executive (New Scheme), 1.5/ 2 year MBA (New Scheme) and three MA programmes. According to the university, the results of MSc Mass Communication and MA Urdu are also included in this announcement. Results are available online on the university (www.aiou.edu.pk). Results cards are also being dispatched to the students. Moreover, results of matriculation, intermediate, BA, Associate Degree, B Ed and Diploma programs have, already, been announced. Furthermore, matriculation and intermediate results for overseas Pakistanis have, also, been announced. Moreover, admissions for the programmes offered in the first phase of autumn 2021 semester are in progress.

The deadline for the submission of admission application for matriculation, intermediate and I Com programs is September 6, while deadline for merit based programs is August 23 including PhD, M Phil, MBA/MPA programmes. It is pertinent to mention here that key academic, administrative and financial operations of the university have been digitalized.

Plastic bags ban violators to face stringent action

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) on Friday warned the citizens flouting plastic bags ban to face stringent actions including heavy fines and closure of shops in case of repeated violations. In a survey conducted by the Pak-EPA, it has been found that due to a number of reasons, the use of plastic bags has once revived particularly becoming vogue at common places inside the Capital, said a news release issued here.

The main reasons for this increased violation were slackness shown by the Pak-EPA to ensure shift in the use of polyethylene to alternatives for businesses and the steady increase in COVID-19 pandemic, it added. However, a limited number of EPA teams were involved in other activities including enforcement of environmental laws and its compliance. – **APP**

Life of the Moon

WE'LL build our house on the moon," said Sunny excitedly. Stories about the moon fascinated him. He would watch that golden globe stare down at him for hours. "Oh! My piece of gold, Out there it must be cold, How I wish you I could hold, And put you up as sold. Then you could be mine forever" He would hum this poem and make up stories about the moon, but his favorite one was about the old lady on the moon. "When I stay on the moon I won't need any lights. I'll just open my window and watch

the stars going twinkle, twinkle. My carpet will be of clouds and I'll touch the rain." He thought of the small wafer pistol that he had and wondered what it would be like if he had all the rain to play with. "Rain, rain don't go away, with me you must stay, Together both of us will play "I'll cut off small pieces of the moon and make jewelry for mummy. I shall be able to give gifts of gold to my friends on their birthdays. Birds will chirp and teach me their language. There will be toys with wings

and they shall fly from here to there. I'll learn to fly from one place to the other. Oh! What fun it will be." His thoughts would be about the castle on the moon

SHORT STORY

Zeenat Iqbal Hussain

and he would see himself a little prince there, with a lot of people around him to attend to him. "Get me some candy floss." Away his attendant would go and fetch a piece of cloud for him.

The alarm clock brought him back to his world. "I'll tell my story to Dimpy I'm sure he'll enjoy it." Dimpy was sitting with a team of hockey players who were all ready to start a game. He was so excited about his idea that he wanted to tell Dimpy about it there and then. So, he started off blah, blah, chatter, chatter. Dimpy heard him from-beginning to the end and then told him, "Listen Sunny I hope you won't get upset after what I tell you. Sometimes it gets very cold up there. It's even colder than living on a snow-

peaked mountain. Darkness surrounds you and you cannot see anything. There is nothing to be seen for miles and miles around." Sunny smiled, a little convinced. On went Dimpy, "You are thrown from one place to another. You can't smell and you can't talk and most of all there would be no TV to watch, no comics to read, no candy to eat, no friends to talk to, no stickers to stick around and no songs to sing and there will L be no Dimpy there." gave up his castle in the air and went away merrily happy where he was.

Briefs

Illegal mosques construction continues

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A number of mosques have been built on the state land by occupants on the name of religion. A mosque Jamia Masjid Allah Wali has been constructed alongside the road at G-7/2 leading to Satara Market (G-7 Markaz) from Sector G-8. If one wants to abide by Islamic teachings, he should raise funds and go for building a mosque but violating state rules and regulations is not in accordance with Islam's lessons given to its followers.

Similarly, a mosque, Jamia Masjid Hazrat Usman Ghani (R) has been built alongside a nullah in Sector I-9/3. Mostly such mosques are built alongside nullahs as mosques administrations are mostly found involved in encroaching the state land on the name of Islam. They construct the building of the mosque at some place which is close to a nullah as in this way, they may easily encroach the state land.

Talking to media on Friday, one religious scholar Muhammad Usman said that Islam doesn't allow its followers to construct mosques without taking permission from the authorities concerned, adding if someone is doing this, he is just following his personal views but not the will of Allah Almighty. If one wants to build a mosque, he should first go to fund raising and then all the related steps should be dealt with.

When the imam of Jamia Masjid Hazrat Usman was approached for taking his input on the issue, he said he is not supposed to talk to media person as his portfolio doesn't allow him to do so.

Citizen urged to drain rain water

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: In-charge anti-dengue campaign Dr. Sajjad Ahmed has urged the citizen to drain the stagnant water in outdoor and household setting to stop mosquitoes from breeding after rain and submerged water. He said the prevailing weather was suitable for dengue larvae breeding. He told APP, that the present spell of rains has increased the threat of dengue larvae, which needs to be tackled on urgent basis as the Met Office has forecast more rain in the week. He said that the health authority had devised an effective micro plan to control dengue's spread keeping in view the 2019 year's epidemic.

Dr. Sajjad informed that surveillance was being carried out in areas where dengue patients were reported last year. He shared that only two dengue positive cases have been reported in the district so far and advised the residents to adopt precautionary measures and inform the department immediately if dengue larvae were found in their houses as the government alone cannot control the spread of dengue larvae.

PNCA completes registration of film course

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) has completed the registration process of the second online course of film production. An official of PNCA Film Section, Asmara told APP that a total of 18 students was short-listed for the online classes which would start from August 2. She said that the students from all provinces have registered themselves for the second course while most of the applicants were with film background. She said that national and international faculty would train and educate students in this program. She said that Council was making efforts to create an environment for the youngster to groom their artistic skills in various arts forms. She said the curriculum was a mixture of intellectual understanding, skill-based learning and on-the-ground experience of working in a professional environment. — APP

Business community urged to boost exports to Morocco

Pakistan's Ambassador to Morocco emphasized the importance of Morocco and North African markets for Pakistan for improving trade and exports

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani business community should focus on Morocco for boosting exports to North African (NF) countries as African region offers great potential to Pakistan for promoting trade and economic relations. This was observed by Hamid Asghar Khan, Pakistan's Ambassador to Morocco while interacting with entrepreneurs during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI).

Hamid Asghar Khan said that Pakistani business community should increase its presence in Morocco to capture better market share in the North African region. He said that businessmen of Morocco were also interested in JVs in Pakistan, especially in agriculture, fertilizer and other sectors. He emphasized the importance of Morocco and North African markets for Pakistan for improving trade and exports. He said that ICCI and other trade bodies in Pakistan can play an important role in connecting the members



of the business community with Moroccan counterparts for strong business linkages that would help in boosting trade relations and assured that his embassy would extend all possible cooperation in

realizing these goals. Speaking at the occasion, Fatma Azim, Senior Vice President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that Pakistan have the potential to export

many products to Morocco and other North African countries including rice, pharmaceuticals, textile products, surgical instruments, fruits, rickshaws, motorbikes and emphasized that

Pakistan and Morocco should focus on direct flights and set up strong air links to strengthen trade relations and people-to-people contacts. She said that the Embassy of Pakistan in Morocco should conduct market study reports and share them with chambers of commerce & industry in Pakistan so that our exporters could exploit all the available business opportunities in Moroccan market. She said that both governments should facilitate frequent exchange of trade delegations and organize single country exhibitions to explore all untapped areas of trade promotion. She emphasized that linkages between the businesswomen of both countries should be strengthened to boost bilateral trade in women related items. Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Mian Shaukat Masud former President ICCI, Aslam Khokhar, Muhammad Shakir and Hafiz Bilal Munir, Executive Members ICCI also shared useful ideas for improving bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Morocco.

COMSTECH Webinar on "Ovarian Cancer"

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH webinar on "In search of improving outcomes across the continuum of ovarian cancer" delivered online by Dr. Ikram Burney, Senior Consultant in Medical Oncology at the Sultan Qaboos University Hospital, Muscat, Oman, and a Visiting Faculty at the Panjwani Center for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research, International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences, Karachi University, Pakistan on Friday evening.

Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH welcomed and introduced the speaker. He said, one thing you really find is two different streams of health care, one in which basic scientists working on understanding diseases at a molecular level with no understanding of clinical outcome and on the other side you will find lots of clinicians with so much of rich experience of treating people with little understanding of ideology at molecular level. This is exactly what is important and where Dr. Ikram Burney impress me a lot. He is a clinician par excellence and a researcher of a very high quality and caliber. — DNA

Islamabad HC upholds PIC order against PHAF

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court has dismissed a writ petition filed against by the Pakistan Housing Authority Foundation (PHAF) and has upheld an earlier decision of the Pakistan Information Commission (PIC).

According to details, in pursuance of an appeal filed by a citizen Abdullah Rashed Waraich, the PIC issued a detail verdict on June 12, 2021 and directed the Director General, Pakistan Housing Authority Foundation to disclose information

about the recruitment made for the post of Assistant Directors (E/M)/(Civil) as requested by the citizen. The public body was directed to comply with the order of the commission within 7 working days.

However, the PHAF challenged the order of PIC in Islamabad High Court and took a stand that the petitioner PHAF has already submitted all relevant record/information before the PIC and the citizen in respect of post of Assistant Director (E/M) against which the citizen applied. The petitioner stated, being custodian of record of appli-



cants, who applied against the various posts, cannot be compelled or directed to provide all other record not relevant to the post of Assistant Director (E/M). Judge Babar Sattar in an order dated July 12, 2021 dismissed the learned counsel for the petitioner has failed

to point out any infirmity in the order of the Pakistan Information Commission, the petition is therefore, dismissed in limine. Justice Louis Brandeis is often quoted as having said that "sunlight is the best disinfectant", in the context of transparency and disclosure being an elixir to many societal and governmental malpractices. In this context, it is not for the petitioner to determine what information is and what is not relevant for a citizen seeking information that is otherwise liable to be disclosed under provision of the Act, Order of IHC states.

COVID-19 cases rise sharply: Health Authority

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: In an alarming development, the rate of positive corona cases has increased by 12 per cent while the number of patients infected with Corona in the fourth wave had reached 29,000. This was stated by Divisional Surveillance Officer and Spokesperson Health Department Rawalpindi Dr. Waqar Ahmed here on Friday. Dr. Waqar said that the number of Corona cases had increased sharply in July this year, adding around 20 cases were being reported daily in the district during the first two weeks of this month.

"Since the third week of this month, the number of cases has increased between 70 and

100, while 165 cases of the corona were reported in the district on July 29" he informed. He said that in view of the increasing cases of corona, more stringent implementation of SOPs would be required and the process of vaccination against corona would have to be intensified. The divisional Surveillance Officer updated that the Covid situation was far better in other districts of the division like Jhelum, Chakwal and Attock, and the rate of positive cases was less than 1%. Dr. Waqar informed that a community vaccination campaign was underway in five districts of Punjab including Rwp during which 70% of the population of aged 18 years and above would be vaccinated against coronavirus till August 10.

Ph.D. scholar to defend her dissertation on August 05

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ph. D. Public Defense of Ph.D. Scholar, Ms. Kanwal Nawaz, Registration No. 16402, Department of Business Administration, Iqra University, Islamabad Campus, Sector H-9, titled "Behavioral Factors and Asset Pricing in Pakistani Stock Market" is scheduled on Thursday, 5th August 2021 at 02:00pm. Ms. Kanwal Nawaz has completed her Ph. D. dissertation under supervision of Dr. Kashi ur Rehman.

BOI to hold 'E-Kachehry' for Investors

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Board of Investment (BOI) has decided to hold E-Kachehry for Investors to address their queries and concerns regarding the different issues including Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), Foreign Investment, establishing company branch/liaison office and other areas on August 21. Secretary Board of Investment, Fareena Mazhar will hold E-Kachehry on August 2 to ensure maximum participation, BOI will entertain queries via a dedicated telephone line and zoom session, said a press release issued by BOI here on Friday.

BOI welcomes participation of investors to address queries and concerns regarding Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), Foreign Investment, Special Economic Zones (SEZ), Work Visas, establishing company branch/liaison office and other areas relevant to BOI's mandate.

BOI Regional offices across Pakistan will also virtually participate in the E-Kachehry. The outreach initiative aims to establish linkage between BOI officers and investors that will affect timely resolution of issues raised at the forum.

The exercise also embodies the government's resolve to promote a conducive business environment for facilitation of local and foreign investors.

3 arrested for running illegal fuel agencies

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Police under an ongoing operation against illegal Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and Petrol agencies on Friday, conducted raids and arrested three accused. According to a Police spokesman, Ratta Amral, Saddar Baroni and Rawat police netted Nasrullah Khan, Muhammad Naveed and Muhammad Idrees for operating illegal LPG and Petrol agencies. Police confiscated LPG cylinders, refilling gadgets and petrol from their possession and registered separate cases against accused, he added. He said that police would continue their operation against the rules violators and the illegal petrol and LPG agencies would be sealed. Divisional Superintendents of Police warned the violators to stop the illegal business otherwise strict action in accordance with the law would be taken.

5 gamblers arrested, stake money recovered

RAWALPINDI: Pirwadhai police on Friday have arrested five gamblers and recovered Rs 17,900 cash stake money, three mobile phones and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, the Pirwadhai police acting on a tip-off conducted a raid and rounded up five gamblers namely Nazir Hussain, Sohail Salman, Arslan Pervaiz, Muhammad Ismail and Amir Butt allegedly involved in betting while playing cards. Police recovered Rs 17,900 cash stake money, three mobile phones and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against all the accused while further investigation is underway. Superintendent Police (SP) Rawal division appreciated the police team and directed them to continue crackdown against lawbreakers. — APP

MSF – A soulagement for the most vulnerable

KHALID BIN MAJEED

SERVICE to humanity is the biggest faith that towers above all in the world, while those ministering to the suffering humanity in different parts of the world like the silent soldiers of the divine providence far away from their families and the media limelight are the salt of mother earth, who beautify this world with their trailblazing noble deeds and actions. No matter whichever organization and country they belong to, these silent soldiers, full of human kindness spirits, could be seen helping the people – affected by wars, conflicts, disasters and epidemics – with unquestionable commitment, devotion, dedication, impartiality and neutrality. There are ways and means to better serve the suffering humanity, which turns them into joyous and the happiest persons on the earth. To that goal, around the world, hundreds of thousands of female and male humanitarian workers from all ranks of the society are working to achieve exactly that. The International Medical Humanitarian Association Médecins Sans Frontières also known as Doctors Without Borders – a worldwide movement of more than 67,000 people working in over 70 countries – is one such organizations that is providing free service to humanity in Pakistan like elsewhere in the world. Founded on 22 December 1971 its qualified health professionals, logistic and administrative staff are guided by medical ethics and the principles of impartiality, independence and neutrality.

MSF enjoys the support of 6.5 million individual donors and private foundations worldwide, reaching over 90% of their funds from private sources. MSF teams all over the world conduct independent evaluations

to determine medical needs of the people in affected regions before initiating any project. To respond to global emergency situations, MSF keeps pre-packaged kits – from surgical kits to inflatable hospitals to cholera equipment – to ensure a rapid and effective response within hours.

In Pakistan, MSF works in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, providing medical assistance to the people deprived from basic healthcare. MSF is currently working in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Sindh. MSF in Balochistan treats patients with cutaneous leishmaniasis, provides mother and child healthcare services, ambulatory therapeutic feeding centre and emergency response to COVID-19 and measles.

The priority for MSF in Pakistan focuses on the continuation of the regular life-saving activities despite enormous challenges posed by the on-going COVID-19 pandemic. In order to reduce the risk of transmission, the organization adapted its structures and patient passageways and installed screening and isolation areas in the facilities.

One of MSF programme is in Kuchlak, catering to the needs of the local and Afghan refugees. Besides running a mother and child health centre and offering outpatient treatment for women and children, the MSF programme include nutritional support for children under the age of five. Basic emergency obstetric care is provided through the birthing unit, which is open 24-hours, while referring complicated emergency obstetric cases to Quetta. The other services provided include health education and psychosocial counselling. The Ministry of Health's Expanded Programme of Immunization is integrated into the services being offered

at the Kuchlak health centre.

In 2020, there were 21,618 outpatient consultations, 4,958 assisted births, 3,492 antenatal consultations, and 5,196 individual and group counselling sessions, while 21,563 children were vaccinated against measles and other childhood diseases.

Quetta: MSF provides medical services to patients with cutaneous leishmaniasis [a skin infection caused by phlebotomies and fly] at three treatment centres located in Kuchlak, Benazir Bhutto Hospital in old Marriabad town, and Bolan Medical Complex in Quetta city.

These clinics provide specialized diagnosis and treatment for parasitic skin infection, which is a major public health issue in some parts of the country. MSF is the biggest provider of treatment for this neglected tropical disease in Balochistan. In 2020, 4,988 patients were screened and 3,363 patients started on treatment for the infection. In Chaman District Headquarter Hospital, MSF supports medical services for women and children, including reproductive, neonatal and pediatric healthcare. The MSF medical staff offer free, quality medical care to local residents, Afghan refugees and patients.

Since 2007, MSF has been supporting a 24-hour delivery room including surgical management of the complicated deliveries, a pediatric inpatient ward, a newborn unit, and an emergency room for trauma cases. Malnourished children under the age of five are enrolled in a feeding programme (inpatient and ambulatory therapeutic feeding). Through health education sessions, MSF teams sensitize the community on preventing medical condition, seeking timely healthcare, especially

during pregnancy.

Blood transfusions, water and sanitation for the health structures, and a basic laboratory are also part of MSF's services in the hospital. It also supervises the women's outpatient department, which is managed by the Department of Health staff in close collaboration with the MSF team. As in other areas, also in Dera Murad Jamali, MSF supports the department of health through its medical activities. MSF teams support inpatient therapeutic feeding for malnourished children with complications, running a general pediatric ward, and a neonatal unit to cater for the needs of the population with limited access to basic healthcare facilities. MSF furthermore provides basic emergency obstetric care through a 24/7 birthing unit, whereas complicated emergency obstetric cases are referred to Larkana, Sindh.

In the eastern districts of Jaffarabad and Naseerabad MSF teams are supporting the nutrition programmes for children under five through mobile clinics, which help combat the increasing malnutrition rates in the region. In 2020 MSF admitted over 8,700 severely malnourished children to the therapeutic feeding programme, and gave antenatal consultations to over 9,500 patients, MSF has assisted over 2,700 births and admitted 936 neonates and children to the facility in Dera Murad Jamali.

Not all heroes wear capes, luckily there are still people who offer their capacities to something bigger than themselves. They will be there when an extreme situation arises, ensures medical assistance when adversity hits, and voluntarily face the challenges to make this world a better place to live.

Inequitable power share

TURBAT saw citizens take to the streets on Wednesday, protesting the constant power outages. With districts such as Kech, Gwadar and Panjgur facing 16-18 hours of loadshedding, it is clear that residents have genuine grievances that brought them out on the roads. Add this to the temperatures these days in the region—around 50 degrees Celsius—and the problem becomes all the more urgent.

The issue here is compounded by the unfair treatment; the public is vaguely familiar with the fact that different parts of the country face varying amounts of scheduled power outages. This can be down to a number of reasons such as transmission lines, number of generating units in the area and overall share. But at the same time, this does not explain why parts of the capital and other provincial metropolises such as Lahore do not even face an hour of loadshedding per day, where these regions barely get any power to begin with. The differences are simply too stark.

It is hoped that the provincial and federal governments do not treat the demonstrators with a heavy hand, as has become a norm, when it comes to protestors without any influence. Instead, there must be an attempt to peacefully address concerns and allow them to feel that their demands have been heard, alongside the ability to be able to voice their protest through this demonstration.

All areas of the country must be provided at least something close to an equal share in the national power supply. Development of regions that are not granted an equitable resource base suffers in the long run; and the disparity continues to get worse over time. This is why the government must focus more on areas with developmental lags and shortage in resources. A federation is only as strong as its weakest parts, and it is time we make our country more equitable, cutting across lines usually associated with regions, ethnicities, class and gender.

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Prioritising climate change

HEAVY rains once again appear to be wreaking havoc up and down the country, from the destruction of agricultural lands, roads and bridges in Gilgit-Baltistan to the unfortunate loss of lives from flash floods in many areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad. With the Met Dept predicting more rainfall across the country this monsoon season, disaster management agencies have issued landslide and flood warnings from Gilgit-Baltistan to Rawalpindi. On Wednesday, E-11 residents woke up to the worst flooding ever witnessed in the capital's relatively posh new sector, leading to the inundation of scores of houses and commercial buildings, along with destruction of vehicles washed away by the gushing water – made all the more ferocious due to the diminishing of stormwater drains.

Most regrettably, a woman and her son drowned when the basement of their house was flooded and rescue workers could not reach on time. Though authorities managed to clear most clogged roads in the twin cities and alerted residents living alongside major rivers and streams, what cannot be condoned is the complete lack of oversight on part of civic authorities which fail to check illegal construction over stormwater drains. Had the CDA not hid behind jurisdiction issues and done its job properly from the outset, instead of looking the other way and letting E-11 become a free-for-all for builders and societies, perhaps this tragedy could have been averted. The impact of climate change is being felt with increasing force all over the world, and states are responding with a variety of measures to protect their citizens and economies. However, climate scientists and environmentalists fear the situation will only get worse and spring up more surprises, such as the recent flash floods in Germany, as long as countries fail to unite on a shared goal of curbing carbon emissions. In March this year, with the assistance of the UN and Green Climate Fund, Pakistan began the two-year process of creating a National Adaptation Plan for building resilience to climate change. It aims to reduce vulnerabilities to climate impacts by creating comprehensive short- and long-term plans, including the integration of adaptation measures into national policy. This is likely not the first nor the last such donor-funded initiative. What such plans need to succeed are a responsive government and citizenry that prioritise climate change and environment over indifference and greed.

Afghan imbroglio, regional integration and Pakistan

Prof Shabir Ahmad Khan



Uzbekistan's initiative for Termiz-Kabul-Peshawar Railway line will be a milestone for developing Termiz-Peshawar Corridor. This Termiz-Kabul-Peshawar corridor in turn will serve as a backbone for Central and South Asian connectivity

AFGHANISTAN holds the key to enhanced regional connectivity and economic integration. Stability in Afghanistan will expedite economic rise of the entire region while instability ensures a double jeopardy i.e. threatening regional security and risking regional economic rise.

Smooth implementation of almost all Regional Integration Arrangements (RIAs) and connectivity plans of ECO, SCO, BRI, CAREC and CPEC, directly depends on the stability of Afghanistan. The three Central Asian Republics bordering Afghanistan have concrete plans in co-ordination with Pakistan to develop Pipelines, Railways and Electricity transportation and other communications links via Afghanistan. These plans will restore Afghanistan to its historical role as a transit hub between

Central and South Asia and beyond.

Stability in Afghanistan will materialize the Pakistan-Afghanistan-Central Asia Corridor supplementing CPEC for generating immense socio-economic development for the entire region. The Tashkent International Conference entitled "Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities" on July 15 2021 has been an excellent effort for regional integration on the part of the dynamic leadership of Uzbekistan. The President of Uzbekistan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Foreign Policy chief of European Union and the President of Afghanistan addressed the inaugural session attended by Foreign Ministers, experts and heads of economic, political, research and educational institutions of more than 25 countries.

Getting together hundreds of participants for exchange of views and contact details laid the foundation for enhanced regional and inter-regional connectivity through people to people contacts. Uzbekistan's initiative for Termiz-Kabul-Peshawar Railway line will be a milestone for developing Termiz-Peshawar Corridor. This Termiz-Kabul-Peshawar corridor in turn will serve as a backbone for Central and South Asian connectivity. Indeed it has been the Major Powers' desire to have control over Afghanistan in order to have control over Central and South Asian integration process. This desire has generated Major Powers' conflicting interference in Afghanistan historically; at least for the last four decades.

In this regard control over Afghanistan was denied to Soviets by USA and other rivals while in post 9/11 same has been denied to USA. However the global and regional geo-political configuration has changed a lot in terms of regional countries' political and economic consolidation. The present scenario of Afghanistan and ongoing peace process demand immediate international as well as regional attention as the situation is worsening day by day. The Britain have been relocating Afghans who have served and assisted British during the last two decades fearing instability, Australia has hinted on the closure of its mission in Kabul due to uncertainty while America continues its phase wise withdrawal. The present and future of Afghanistan has been analyzed from three dimensions. (i) Local/ Afghan National (ii) Regional and (iii) Global.

Local Afghan Scenario:

Afghanistan has been at war with itself due to internal ethnic, tribal, sectarian, ideological and regional divisions. The internal divisions have always exposed Afghanistan to external conflicting geo-politics. Decades of wars have devastated the state structure, institutions resulting in lack of rule of law. Currently the two main groups or forces in Afghanistan the incumbent Kabul Regime and Afghan Taliban are in conflict and negotiations simultaneously. The incumbent government desires to maintain the status quo and prolong their rule.

The Afghan Taliban striving to topple the government and takeover Kabul. If the two groups could not reach a consensus on power sharing the current instability in Afghanistan may engulf the entire region and resultantly stalled regional connectivity. In addition, different Afghan groups will find support from different corners of the regions on ethnic and political basis giving birth to regional suspicions and lack of regional cooperation. If Afghan Taliban mainstreamed through a negotiated settlement it will have positive impact on lasting peace in Afghanistan. However, if Taliban takeovers Kabul through fighting, it will have impact on the future Behaviour of Afghan Taliban also. Therefore, it is imperative that both the groups pressurized by International and regional powers/states to work towards the success of peace process by making compromises.

Regional Dimension:

There is a realization in the region that without peace in Afghanistan the economic rise of the region and regional integration plans will remain a dream. The neighbours of Afghanistan seem decided to encourage various Afghan groups towards sustainable peace to expedite the process of regional connectivity for a win-win situation. One has to acknowledge that the regional politics have been absorbed by politics at the global level due to the major power direct intervention in regional security complex. It has put limitations on the regional states to effectively intervene in the peace process and play a decisive role. USA is party to the deal, its financial aid and assistance can work either way i.e. to encourage and push the incumbent government to continue resistance while can also link aid to culminate the peace process into a logical conclusion through compromises. Currently it seems that Kabul Regime has been encouraged to continue resistance. Similarly the regional support of Islamabad, Beijing, Tashkent, Tehran and Moscow can pressurize Taliban to make compromises and reach a consensus on power sharing.

Global Dimension:

There seems divergent and competing interests of major powers in Afghanistan which need to be harmonized for a win-win situation. USA has declared China and Russia as strategic competitors. USA desires and plan to counter China's rise by impeding BRI and 5 aggravating situation in Xinjiang. It makes the regional situation complicated and lack of cooperation on Afghanistan. However USA cannot blame any other country for its unnecessary prolonged war in Afghanistan. It has spent trillions of dollars but cannot blame others for this misadventure. For USA there are dozens of ways to engage the region positively by contributing to regional integration through its New Silk Road plan.

This will have dividends for USA companies by investing in various regional integration arrangements. USA has to realize that by physically stationing in Afghanistan, it

could not stabilize the country, how it can do it by having military bases in the region outside Afghanistan? Further the Moscow Format, Istanbul Process, the Quadrilateral Cooperation Group, SCO Contact Group on Afghanistan need to support and coordinate their efforts with Doha Peace Process to make long lasting peace a reality.

Pakistan's Role:

Historically Pakistan did recognize whichever government came to Kabul. Pakistan has been advocating a negotiated political settlement and inclusive setup in Afghanistan since long. Pakistan has welcomed every effort for peace and stability in Afghanistan and played its positive role in each endeavor ranging from Quadrilateral Cooperation Group, Moscow Format, Kabul Process I and II, SCO Contact Group, International Contact Group on Afghanistan, Six Party talks, Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan and last but not the least in the Doha process. Pakistan played role in bringing various parties to the table under the Doha process. However it must be realized that Pakistan has limitations, Pakistan cannot negotiate for Afghans and it is up to the Afghans to reach a consensus on power sharing and chose the future setup for their country. It must also be realized that bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan is a 6 shared responsibility and beyond the capacity of a single state or two. Pakistan has been in contact with all the regional states on the issue of Afghanistan. Pakistan realizes that the immediate neighbors of Afghanistan are the real stakeholders in the peace of Afghanistan and aims to contribute to the socio-economic development of Afghanistan by making it a transit hub between Central Asia, Pakistan and beyond by developing transport and communication links. Conclusion:

The future of regional connectivity and socio-economic rise is closely linked to the peace and stability of Afghanistan while the future stability of Afghanistan is closely linked to the ongoing peace process. The Central and South Asian integration via Afghanistan will enable the regional countries to capitalize on and maximally benefit from their comparative advantages. This integration will also generate immense revenue for Afghanistan to reduce its dependence on foreign aid. The extra-regional powers have interests in Afghanistan but the neighbours of Afghanistan have stakes involved. There must be a coordinated approach at the regional as well as global level to make grounds for Afghan national reconciliation towards unity and peace. Pakistan's path to regional integration passes through Afghanistan and therefore Pakistan fully supports the ongoing peace process towards a logical conclusion. The failure of peace process will be tantamount to the failure of the entire region.

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The myth of the ‘moderate’ Taliban

Ishtiaq Ahmad



The recent round of Doha peace talks between the Taliban and Afghan government representatives also concluded without a ceasefire agreement. Instead, the Taliban have set the ouster of President Ashraf Ghani as a condition for further talks

WITH the last of the US troops about to depart Afghanistan, the Taliban are reported to have captured almost half of the Afghan countryside. They are yet to take over any of the 34 provinces, including Kandahar, where the militant movement began in 1994, but they have established control over major border crossings with Iran, Pakistan and the three Central Asian states of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

For now, the Afghan security forces, by enforcing night curfews in 31 provincial capitals and gaining support from anti-Taliban local militias, have been able to contain the Taliban advance. However, there is no indication that the militants will agree to the ceasefire call by all the foreign missions in Kabul.

The recent round of Doha peace talks between the Taliban and Afghan government representatives also concluded without a ceasefire agreement. Instead, the Taliban have set the ouster of President Ashraf Ghani as a condition for further talks. The government has responded by saying he will stay as president until the next elections.

It is clear that the Taliban are impatient to fill the security vacuum created by the US troop withdrawal by capturing some Afghan provinces before the approaching winter brings a natural lull in the warfare.

That is why they have continued to wage war even while talking peace. But Kabul is still far from the Taliban's reach.

However, the prospect of the Taliban returning to power in Kabul has revived the all-too-familiar "good Taliban versus bad Taliban" debate. This debate is reminiscent of the time the Taliban rose to power in the 1990s and were viewed as a force for good. However, when a similar Taliban movement started to haunt Afghanistan's neighbors post-9/11, it was treated as a force for evil. During the course of the "War on Terror," some officials and experts sought to make a distinction between "good" Taliban (the Afghan Taliban, which used its tribal areas to attack Afghanistan) and "bad" Taliban (such as Tehrike-Taliban Pakistan, which used the same re-

gion to carry out terrorist attacks beyond Afghanistan's borders).

Now, however, the Taliban apologists have replaced the "good" with the "moderate" Taliban to show that they have learned their bitter lesson from the previous misrule and long warfare and are now willing to respect women's right to work and education, as well as the sovereignty of neighboring states.

The Taliban have indeed opted for diplomacy. They concluded the Doha pact with the US, which has facilitated the American withdrawal from Afghanistan after 20 years. The Taliban have also publicly declared they will not monopolize the Afghan government like before. To assuage regional security concerns, their leaders have also held talks in Iran and Russia.

But such assurances are only declaratory in nature. We cannot be certain about the Taliban's real intentions. Moreover, they have not yet clarified if they are ready to share power under the current Afghan constitution or settle for anything less than the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, a violent video of their en masse shooting of rival commandos even after they had surrendered has surfaced on social media.

The Taliban's intended claims will only be fully tested if or when they return to power. However, last time around, all hell broke loose under the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan. In fact, the impending disaster in the war-torn nation was quite visible in the run-up to the Taliban's conquest of Kabul in 1996.

Having reported the rise of the Afghan Taliban in the mid-1990s, the current media narrative focusing on their moderate outlook or peaceful intent looks similar to what we were being told then: That, after years of mujahedeen infighting, an Afghan movement has finally emerged to ensure lasting peace by enforcing disarmament and the rule of law.

My recollection of time spent with Taliban leaders in Kandahar suggests that this politico-religious militia was quite clear from the start about what it wanted for Afghanistan and its neighborhood: The establishment of an Islamic emirate, to be replicated in Pakistan and

other neighboring Muslim states.

They were able to capture Kabul by forging unholy alliances and using brute force. Once firmly established in government, the Taliban stopped deferring to external powers. Then-leader Mullah Omar even refused to accept Saudi Arabia's plea not to host Osama bin Laden. What happened to the Afghan minorities and women under the Taliban's rule is a story that we all know very well.

As for the Taliban's worldview at that time, a discussion with Taliban leaders (who would later occupy important government posts) revealed two underlying senses: A sense of pride, for having defeated the communist Soviet superpower; and a sense of betrayal by the US, the sole capitalist superpower that they intended to defeat. When asked why they collaborated with America, the Taliban leaders would offer Machiavellian reasoning: "We partnered with the lesser evil to destroy the bigger evil. Now we will go after the lesser evil."

Yes, the Taliban have managed to fight the US-led forces over the past two decades, but without defeating this "lesser evil." In fact, they have provided America with its much-desired, face-saving exit, allowing Washington to wash its hands of an unwinnable war. What happens in Afghanistan — an aggravated civil war or civil society, particularly women at work, thrown to the wolves once again — is of no consequence to the US. The legitimization of the Taliban movement could, in fact, serve the larger US geopolitical interest of containing China in southwest Asia and troubling its southwestern Xinjiang province.

In such circumstances, the region will face the same dilemma as it did before: It cannot expect to be at peace if Afghanistan is at war or under draconian rule. Let it also be clear: The "moderate Taliban" is a myth, as the militant movement is ideologically rooted in religious bigotry. So, out of power, the Taliban may pretend to have changed. However, once in power without any checks, they are likely to go berserk like before.

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—Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs



Medal Count

Pos.	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	China	19	10	11	40
2	Japan	17	4	7	28
3	USA	14	16	11	41
4	Russia	10	14	10	34
5	Australia	2	1	11	22

Japan, CZ win golds in judo

WEB DESK

TOKYO: Japan's Akira Sone and Lukas Krpalek of the Czech Republic won the judo women's +78kg and men's +100kg division titles respectively at the Tokyo Olympic Games on Friday.

In women's +78kg final, Sone defeated Idalys Ortiz of Cuba by an ippon to give the host nation ninth gold in judo. The bronze medals went to French Romane Dicko and Iryna Kindzerska of Azerbaijan, who beat Chinese judoka Xu Shiyuan in the bronze medal contest.

In Men's +100kg final, Krpalek toppled Guram Tushishvili of Georgia to win gold. Tamerlan Bashaev of the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) and Teddy Riner of France bagged bronze medals in the category.

Russia's Batsarashkina wins 2nd gold

SPORTS DESK

TOKYO: Russian shooter Vitalina Batsarashkina defeated Kim Min-jung of South Korea in a shoot-off to win the women's 25m pistol gold at the Asaka Shooting Range here on Friday.

Both had 38 hits in the final, but Kim made only one shot in the decisive shootoff set whereas Batsarashkina hit four for the gold. "I'm excited and very happy to have won a gold medal. I'm looking forward to going back home pretty soon. Since mid-June I haven't been at home, so I'm looking forward to getting home at last," the 2018 world silver medalist said.

This is the third medal and second gold for the 24-year-old Batsarashkina, who triumphed in 10m air pistol and bagged a silver in the mixed team event earlier this week. She thus became the first female shooter to claim more than two medals at the same Olympic Games. China's Xiao Jiarui survived the shootoff round twice to take a bronze. At the age of 19 years and 56 days, she became the youngest Olympic medalist in women's 25m pistol.

"I was extremely nervous [during the shootoff], but I wanted to win," the Olympic debutant recalled afterwards. "It feels good. I have showed what I was capable of out there," Xiao said, adding that she had no regrets in the match. Defending champion Anna Korakaki of Greece finished sixth.

Uzbekistan plans to receive 17.9 mln doses

DNA

TASHKENT: Uzbekistan plans to receive 17.9 million doses of vaccines against coronavirus. This was announced during the visit of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev during his visit to the Jurabek Laboratories enterprise.

According to Gazeta.uz, Uzbekistan will purchase 12 million doses of ZF-UZ-VAC-2001 vaccine, 3 million doses of Moderna, 1.7 million doses of Sputnik V. Uzbekistan also intends to receive 1.2 million doses of Pfizer / Bio N Tech vaccine. The publication notes that the cost of the vaccines supplied to Uzbekistan is US\$44.76 million. In particular, US\$39.1 million was spent on the purchase of the ZF-UZ-VAC-2001 vaccine, Sputnik V - US\$3.68 million and AstraZeneca (Covishield) - US\$1.98 mln.



ISLAMABAD: Col Asif Zaman DG Pakistan Sports Board in group photo with players of Nishtar Hockey Club during a match. Nishtar Hockey Club won this match by 7 goals to 3 against Pakistan Air Force Team Chaklala Base. – DNA

Azerbaijan holds 'Week of Diplomacy' closing ceremony

Bayramov spoke about the great significance of the historic victory of the glorious Azerbaijani troops headed by, President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and also stressed the importance of dedicating the "Week of Diplomacy" to the country's victory



DNA

BAKU: The closing ceremony of the "Week of Diplomacy" organized jointly by the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry and ADA University Hafiz Pashayev took part in the event.

During the event, the memory of the martyrs who gave their lives for the Motherland was honored by a minute of silence.



The "One Day of Azerbaijani Volunteers" footage was shown during the ceremony, which was held with the participation of representatives of 15 volunteer organizations and movements operating in Azerbaijan. Footage on the meetings and work carried out within the "Week of Diplomacy" was also demonstrated.

While speaking at the event, Bayramov spoke about the great significance of the historic victory of the glorious Azerbaijani troops headed by Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and also stressed the importance of dedicating the "Week of Diplomacy" to the country's victory.

Touching upon the contribution of Azerbaijani youth within the volunteer movement to the development of the country and society, the minister added that volunteering not only is a movement, but also a tradition and way of life of the Azerbaijani people. Then about 40 participants of the "Week of Diplomacy"

received certificates. Rector of ADA University Hafiz Pashayev congratulated all the participants and shared valuable recommendations with the youth. Pashayev also stressed that regardless of the profile of education, every representative of Azerbaijani youth must study well and know the history of the country.

Israeli forces injure over 40 Palestinians in Beita

NABLUS: At least 40 Palestinian protesters were injured by Israeli occupation forces on Friday in Beita village in Nablus in the occupied West Bank. The Palestinian Red Crescent said at least 40 Palestinians were injured by rubber-coated metal bullets and live ammunition fired at them by the Israeli forces in Beita. Others also sustained injuries due to falling from high places after being chased and assaulted by the forces and others suffocated with teargas. Last night, 10 Palestinians were injured by rubber-coated metal bullets shot by Israeli forces in Beit and dozens others suffocated with teargas fired at them by the occupation forces. Beita village becomes a site of weekly protests against the Israeli occupation and settlement expansion. – DNA



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Sohaail Mahmood received German SRAP Dr. Jasper Wieck and reviewed Pak-German relations and regional situation, Pakistan's facilitative role in Afghan peace process and reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support for a negotiated political settlement and peaceful & stable Afghanistan. – DNA

Djokovic's Golden Slam bid ends with Olympics loss to Zverev

TOKYO: Novak Djokovic's search for a historic 'Golden Slam' came to an end on Friday as he lost to Alexander Zverev at Tokyo 2020. The world No. 1 lost 1-6 6-3 6-1 to the German in the semifinals of the Summer Games. He was bidding to become the first men's player to win a 'Golden Slam' – consisting of four grand slams and an Olympic gold medal in the same calendar year. Steffi Graf is the only tennis player to complete the feat when she did it in 1988. The Serbian has already won the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon this year. He would have needed the gold medal at the Olympics and the US Open title to complete the set. Victory at the last grand slam of the year would still take the 34-year-old to 21 major titles, surpassing Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal who each have 20 majors to their name. After the match, Zverev explained what he and Djokovic said as the pair embraced at the net. "I told him that he's the greatest of all time, and he will be," Zverev told reporters. – DNA



Murad Saeed to unveil Azadi Cup trophy today

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Under the umbrella of Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA), the first RISJA Inter-Media Independence Cup will get underway from Sunday (Tomorrow) at the National Ground Islamabad. Eight leading Media Group teams including Parliamentarian, Geo, Dunya, Samaa, Express, Bol, Hum, Dawn, ARY and hosts RISJA teams will compete in the event. Federal Minister for Communication and Postal Services Murad Saeed will inaugurate the event Saturday evening at

the National Ground. Rs half a million will be awarded to the winner of the event while Rs quarter million will be given to the runners up. The are also cash prizes for the Bowler of the Tournament, Batsmen of the Tournament and Man of the Match for each match. Ten teams have been divided into two Groups. The Trophy unveiling ceremony will also take place Saturday. Zain Qureshi (MNA) will lead the Parliamentarian team. The star-studded Parliamentarian team will be included by all leading MNAs who were part of the team that won the international tournament held in England in 2018.

US receives first Afghan interpreters

FROM PAGE 01

security adviser. The evacuees underwent "rigorous background checks" and COVID-19 tests, he said, adding those who have not yet been vaccinated against coronavirus will be offered jabs. The Afghans will complete the final stages of their resettlement process at the Fort Lee military base in Virginia. They will spend the next seven days at the base before leaving to join relatives or host families.

Pak-Jordan defense ties discussed

FROM PAGE 01

(ISPR) Directorate, the CJCS was on official visit to Jordan. He called on Major General Yousef Ahmed Al-Hnait, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF) and other top officials. During the meeting, both sides deliberated upon various areas of interest including security, defence cooperation and prevailing regional environment. The dignitaries dilated upon measures to enhance the level and scope of military engagements between both countries and reaffirmed to continue to forge deeper ties. Chairman JCSC said that Pakistan is keen to expand its existing bilateral military to military cooperation with Jordan.

UN warned of 'dire' Covid situation in Myanmar

DNA

NEW YORK: The United Kingdom has warned the United Nations Security Council that half of coup-racked Myanmar's population of 54 million could become infected with COVID-19 within the next two weeks. Myanmar has been in chaos since the military deposed an elected government led by Aung San Suu Kyi on February 1, triggering widespread protests and fighting between the army and newly-formed civilian militias. The United States, the UK and others have imposed sanctions on the generals for the coup and the repression of pro-democracy protests in which hundreds have been killed. The military's sprawling businesses have also been targeted. "The coup has resulted in a near-total collapse of the healthcare system, and healthcare workers are being attacked and arrested," Britain's UN Ambassador Barbara Woodward told an informal Security Council discussion on Myanmar. "The virus is spreading through the population, very fast indeed. By some estimates, in the next two weeks, half of the population of Myanmar could be infected with COVID," she said. The UK urged the Council to ensure resolution 2565, which demands ceasefires in conflict zones to allow the safe delivery of coronavirus vaccines, is respected in Myanmar.

China shuts nuclear reactor for maintenance

AGENCIES

BEIJING: A Chinese nuclear plant has shut down one of its reactors for maintenance after minor damage to fuel rods. The plant operator said in a statement it had shut Unit 1 at the Taishan nuclear plant in Guangdong province after "lengthy" talks with technicians. It comes a month after the Chinese government acknowledged damage to fuel rods there, but said it was a "common" problem with no need for concern. Taishan is the first site in the world to have this kind of reactor. The type of reactor - known as EPR - is also set to be built in other countries, including Finland, France and the UK. China General Nuclear Power Group (CGN) said in a statement on Friday that the reactor was "completely under control". Engineers would find the cause of the damage and replace the fuel rods, the statement read. In June US media reported the US government was assessing a reported leak at the site.

Soccer-US and Canada set up semi-final date

FOREIGN DESK

TOKYO: The United States and Canada set up a mouth-watering semi-final in the women's Olympic soccer tournament with both teams having prevailed in penalty shootouts on Friday. After the U.S. and the Netherlands were locked at 2-2 following 90 minutes and extra time, Dutch striker Vivianne Miedema and defender Aniek Nouwen had their spot kicks saved by goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher as the Americans won 4-2. Australia beat Britain 4-3 after extra time in their quarter-final and next face Sweden, who maintained their perfect record in the tournament with a 3-1 win over hosts Japan. Goals from Magdalena Eriksson, Stina Blackstenius and Kosovare Asllani ensured Sweden's bid to improve on their Rio 2016 silver medal remained intact. Megan Rapinoe made it four out of four from the spot for the U.S. as the four-time gold medalists set up a clash with their North American neighbours Canada in Monday's first semi-final. The result brings a sense of relief

for the U.S. who saw their Rio 2016 campaign cut short in a shootout by Sweden at the same stage, leaving them without a medal at a major tournament for the first time. They bounced back with a fourth World Cup triumph in 2019 and are now firm favourites for the Olympic gold in Tokyo, having knocked out the free-scoring Dutch. Netherlands' Arsenal forward Miedema has been

the player of the tournament so far and netted twice to become the first female player to score 10 goals at a single Olympic Games. The Netherlands had the perfect opportunity to seal victory in the 81st minute when Kelley O'Hara gave away a penalty but Lieke Martens' shot was saved by Naeher. "This team always believes we will find a way to win," Naeher said. "The way this team came together,



kept fighting, playing for each other, pushing and pushing and pushing for 120 minutes. "That was a true team effort and team win." Canada needed goalkeeping heroics of their own to reach the semi-finals for the third consecutive Games as Stephanie Labbe stopped two Brazilian spot kicks en route to a 4-3 shootout win. After Canada captain Christine Sinclair's penalty was saved by Barbara, Labbe rescued her side with two spectacular stops to keep out Brazil's final two spot kicks from Andressa and Rafaelle. Labbe, who made four crucial saves in a goalless 120 minutes at Miyagi Stadium, did well to stay on the field after falling hard at the end of the second half of extra time. The Rosengard goalkeeper's impressive display ensured Brazil were denied another crack at the gold medal, having claimed silver in 2004 and 2008. Britain suffered heartbreak in extra time as a Sam Kerr double guided Australia to victory at the Ibaraki Kashima Stadium after her first goal in the 89th minute had brought the scores level at 2-2 to force the extra period.

Briefs

Philippines restores key military pact with US

DNA

MANILA: President Rodrigo Duterte has restored a pact governing the presence of US troops in the Philippines, the two countries' defence secretaries announced on Friday, retracting a decision that had caused increasing concern among policymakers in Washington and Manila.

The Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) provides rules for the rotation of thousands of US troops in and out of the Philippines for war drills and exercises. It has assumed additional importance as the United States and its allies contend with an increasingly assertive China, particularly in the disputed South China Sea.

"Let me thank President Duterte for his decision to fully restore the visiting forces agreement," US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said on Friday in a joint press briefing with his Philippine counterpart, Delfin Lorenza.

Duterte's decision provides the US "some degree of certainty going forward", he said, noting the US role in "counterinsurgency efforts" in the southern island of Mindanao. "We can plan further in advance and with that long-range planning, we can actually do more comprehensive exercises."

Azerbaijani, US military officials mull cooperation

DNA

BAKU: Chief of the International Military Cooperation Department of Azerbaijani Defense Ministry Huseyn Mahmudov met with the delegation led by the Commander of the US Oklahoma Army National Guard, Michael Thompson on July 29, the ministry's press service has reported.

During the meeting, the sides stressed the importance of the development of mutual relations between the Azerbaijan Army and the US Oklahoma Army National Guard.

Furthermore, in line with the State Partnership Program approved between the two countries, the new vectors of bilateral cooperation and as well as joint projects between the Azerbaijan Army and the US Oklahoma Army National Guard were discussed. Later on, the delegation visited one of the military units and paid tribute to the memorial stand dedicated to the servicemen who lost their lives during the 44-day War. Major General M. Thompson signed the Book of Distinguished Visitors and Guests.

Mishap knocks ISS out of position

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: Flight controllers have regained control of the International Space Station (ISS) after it was knocked off course by a newly arrived Russian research module.

Thursday's mishap saw the jet thrusters of the multi-purpose Nauka module inadvertently fire about three hours after it had latched on to the orbiting outpost, briefly throwing it out of control, officials with the United States space agency NASA said.

It took place as mission controllers in Moscow were performing some post-docking "reconfiguration" procedures, according to NASA. The module's jets inexplicably restarted, causing the entire ISS to pitch out of its normal flight position some 400km (250 miles) above the Earth. In response, the mission's flight director declared a "spacecraft emergency", NASA officials said.

But the seven crew members on board - two Russian cosmonauts, three NASA astronauts, a Japanese astronaut and a European Space Agency astronaut from France - were never in any immediate danger, according to NASA.

Moroccan King's landmark steps to help the least developed countries

Morocco's solidarity cooperation with LDCs is structured by bilateral or triangular conventions in various fields, such as agriculture, fishing, health, drinking water and energy, which are translated into practical cooperation and sharing of Moroccan expertise through technical assistance

DNA

RABAT: His Majesty King Mohammed VI has, since His Enthronement, made the Kingdom's active solidarity in favor of the least developed countries (LDCs), a central axis of his African policy. This commitment has found a new concrete translation in the context of the health crisis. The initiative of the Sovereign to deliver aid in medicines and equipment, protection and prevention products to some twenty African countries has greatly benefited the fraternal countries of the Continent which are part of the LDCs.

Morocco's solidarity cooperation with LDCs is structured by bilateral or triangular conventions in various fields, such as agriculture, fishing, health, drinking water and energy, which are translated into practical cooperation and sharing of Moroccan expertise through technical assistance.

This cooperation is also supported by several concrete initiatives, including

in particular the cancellation of the debt of the least developed African countries, access to the Moroccan market for products from certain African LDCs without customs duties, the granting of scholarships, the implementation of infrastructure projects, particularly in the education, health and water sectors, and the establishment of a migration policy that has made it possible to regularize the situation of around 50,000 nationals of fraternal African countries, since 2014.

This solidarity-based cooperation is also being deployed through Morocco's regional and international initiatives in the area of climate change, as an example the operationalization of the three Climate Commissions, launched by His Majesty the King on the occasion of the African Action Summit, organized by Morocco in 2016, on the sidelines of COP-22 and the "Triple A" Initiative for the Adaptation of African Agriculture.

The "Triple S" Initiative to



promote Sustainability, Stability and Security in Africa and the Universal Access to Sustainable Energy Initiative and the Climate Hub for African Youth, launched on the occasion of the 2019 Climate Action Summit. It is with this plural, united and dynamic vision that Morocco works tirelessly

to use its experience and know-how for the promotion of cooperation with the LDCs. The Kingdom will continue its action through a commitment to remain in line with the strategy of cooperation and partnership with the LDCs, in particular within the framework of the new Doha process,

which promises solidarity and concrete action for the achievement of sustainable development for all Least Developed Countries. This trend reflects the development efforts of LDCs. Indeed, 6 countries have left the category of LDCs and sixteen other countries currently meet

the criteria to follow suit.

"We have reason to worry about the sustainability of this undeniable progress", since the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the socio-economic situation and worsened the vulnerabilities of the least developed countries, with particular acuity. However, this context of health crisis can also be transformed into an opportunity to give new impetus to cooperation in favor of LDCs. It is indeed an opportunity to provide innovative, concrete and realistic solutions, the structural and exogenous constraints encountered by LDCs. The pooling of efforts and daring innovations to promote the sustainable development of LDCs, which is the key to a dignified and united response has to be implemented.

The international community is called upon to design a package of measures, targeted and specific, around 4 priorities, including the urgency of guaranteeing LDCs affordable and equitable access to vaccines, so that the post-Covid econom-

ic recovery is no more difficult than 'it isn't already. Among these priorities, we can cite the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which should be at the center of international cooperation, stressing the need to help LDCs strengthen their health systems and promote sustainable and inclusive development.

It is necessary to establish agile, predictable financing mechanisms adapted to the specific needs of LDCs, because the economic recovery depends on it, especially since the pandemic has worsened the specter of over-indebtedness in many countries.

It is essential to ensure the countries exiting the list of LDCs a safe and smooth transition, since reclassification unfortunately does not provide insurance against vulnerabilities - especially exogenous ones - which can hurt the economies of LDCs.

It is therefore essential to provide innovative and united solutions to enable these countries to make their transition lasting.

Egyptian court sentences 24 MB members to death

FOREIGN DESK

CAIRO: An Egyptian court has sentenced 24 Muslim Brotherhood members to death for the killing of police officers in two separate cases, a judicial source said. The state-owned Al-Ahram newspaper said the Damamhour Criminal Court ordered the death penalty on Thursday for 16 defendants affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, including Mohamed Sweidan, a regional leader of the organisation, for their involvement in the bombing of a police bus in Rashid city in Beheira governorate in 2015.

The report added that the blast killed three police officers and wounded 39 others. The same court also handed down the death penalty to eight Muslim Brotherhood members, who were

accused of killing a police officer in December 2014 in Ad Dilinjat city in Beheira. The case was dropped for three of the defendants due to their deaths.

Eight of the 24 accused were tried in absentia. Al-Ahram did not clarify whether the verdicts are final or can be appealed. However, the Shehab Organization for Human Rights, based outside Egypt, said the verdicts are final as they were issued by an emergency court.

Capital punishment for civilian convicts in Egypt, the Arab world's most populous country, is carried out by hanging.

There are no exact figures for death penalties issued in Egypt this year except for 10 handed down in April and those upheld against 12 Muslim Brotherhood leaders over the Rabaa sit-in dispersal case in 2013.

Saeid appoints new interior minister

AGENCIES

TUNIS: Tunisian President Kais Saied has appointed a former national security adviser to the presidency to run the interior ministry and pledged to protect rights and freedoms.

The presidency announced Ridha Garsalaoui's nomination on Thursday just as Saied, who has spoken of "imminent dangers" to the North African country, came under increasing international and domestic pressure to form a new government.

The new appointee is also a top-ranking former police official, local media reported. On Sunday, the president invoked a national emergency to seize control of government, dismissing the prime minister and freezing the parliament.

"The state is not a puppet moved by strings, there are lobbies and corrupt individuals who have been pulling the strings from behind the curtains," Saied said. "The conditions at this historical moment forced me to take such exceptional measures."

"I tell you and the whole world that I am keen to implement the constitutional text and keen more than them on rights and freedoms."

"No one has been arrested. No one has been deprived of his rights but the law is fully applied."

Azerbaijan registers 668 new Covid cases

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan registered 668 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, Operational Headquarters under Cabinet of Ministers reported on July 30. Some 178 patients have recovered and 3 patient has died in the reported period.

So far, 343,216 COVID-19 cases have been registered in the country. Some 332,752 patients have recovered, 5,022 people have died. Currently, 5,442 people are under treatment in special hospitals.

Over the past day, 9,881 tests were conducted in Azerbaijan to reveal coronavirus cases.

In general, 4,023,954 tests have been conducted in Azerbaijan so far.

So far, some 4,885,572 COVID-19 vaccines have been provided to Azerbaijani citizens. The first dose of the vaccine was given to 2,827,855 citizens, and the second one to 2,057,717 citizens. In addition, in the past 24 hours, some 87,286 citizens have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

Amb. Janjua holds virtual Khuli Katchery

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan to the European Union, Belgium, and Luxembourg, Zaheer A. Janjua, held the 7th monthly Khuli Katchery in a virtual format with Pakistani Diaspora in Belgium and Luxembourg on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Janjua highlighted that a group of 5 Belgian climbers are undertaking a mountaineering expedition in Pakistan, with the facilitation of the Embassy.

He conveyed his felicitation to the Belgian climbers on successful ascent of K2 and Broad Peak, the world's 2nd and 12th highest peaks, respectively.

The Ambassador announced that due to relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions by the local authorities, the Independence Day ceremony on 14th August will be held physically at the Chancery.

He said that the ceremony can be attended by all Pakistanis living in Belgium and Luxembourg by registration. Referring to the recent devastating floods in Belgium and Luxembourg which caused severe damage to the lives and livelihoods of the people, Ambassador Janjua offered his condolences to the victims.

He encouraged the Pakistani community members to assist the flood-affected people in their time of hardship.

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New law "On Courts" enters into force in Uzbekistan

DNA

TASHKENT: The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan signed the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Courts", according to which the judicial system in the Republic of Uzbekistan consists of:

- The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
- The Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
- Military Court;
- Courts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, regional and Tashkent city courts;
- Administrative Court of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, administrative courts of regions and the city of Tashkent;
- Interdistrict, district, city courts for civil cases;
- District, city courts for criminal cases;
- Interdistrict, district, city economic courts;
- Interdistrict administrative courts.

Specialization of judges by categories of cases can be carried out in Uzbekistan.



The creation of emergency courts is not allowed. According to article 4 of the Law, the main tasks of the court are to protect the rights and freedoms of citizens, state and public interests, rights and legally protected interests of legal entities and individual entrepreneurs guaranteed by the Constitution and other laws, international treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as international acts on human rights. The activities of the court are aimed at ensuring the rule of law, social justice, civil peace and harmony.

Article 63 of the Law establishes that the independence of judges is ensured:

- the procedure for electing, appointing them to office, suspending and terminat-

ing the powers of a judge established by law;

- the inviolability of a judge;
- Strict procedure for administering justice;
- secret consultation of judges when making decisions and prohibition to demand its disclosure;
- liability established by law for contempt of a judge, interference with the administration of justice and violation of the immunity of a judge;
- Provision of material and social security to the judge at the expense of the state, corresponding to his high status. The adoption of legislative acts limiting the independence of a judge is not allowed. The judge, members of his family and their property are under the special protection of the state. According to article 64 of the Law, the personality of a judge is inviolable. The inviolability of a judge extends to his home, office, vehicle and means of communication used by him, his correspondence, things and documents belonging to him.

Turkey battling forest fires raging through south

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkey is battling wildfires that have broken out in 41 different areas recently, with 31 of them successfully brought under control so far.

The forest fires have erupted over the last few days in the southern provinces of Mersin, Osmaniye, Adana, Antalya, Kahramanmaraş.

The blazes also burst out in the southwestern province of Mugla and central provinces of Kirikkale and Kayseri.

The county's efforts to bring 10 ongoing fires under control are continuing as 1,832 personnel, three planes, 29 helicopters, and 458 water tenders are joining the mission.

Turkey's Mediterranean coastal city of Antalya is one of the areas where fires blaze out. An 82-year-old man, who was left alone at home, died while evacuation efforts were underway in the Kepezbeeleni village of Akseki district.

Agriculture and Forestry Minister Bekir Pakdemirli said on Thursday that there are 10 people stranded in the Oymapinar

Azerbaijan to send aid teams to Turkey

BAKU: Azerbaijan will send aid teams to Turkey to extinguish forest fires and prevent them from escalating, Presidential Aide Hikmat Hajiyev told Azertag on July 30. "In this regard, President Ilham Aliyev gave necessary instructions and tasks to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Emergency Situations. Relevant government agencies have contacted their counterparts from Turkey, and aid teams will leave for the brotherly country as soon as possible," Hajiyev said.

Personnel of 500 people of the Azerbaijan's Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES), as well as helicopters, the necessary equipment and accessories for extinguishing the ongoing wildfires, will be sent to fraternal Turkey in the shortest possible time, Prime Minister Ali Asadov said in a phone conversation with Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay today.

Earlier today, Aliyev said that the Azerbaijani government and people are in solidarity with the fraternal Turkish people amidst the deadly fires. At least three people have died in wildfires in Turkey's southeastern regions. The wildfires broke out on 28 July near the Mediterranean coastal resort town of Manavgat, in Antalya province.

As of 29 July 2021, a total of 13 provinces, including Adana, Osmaniye, Mersin and Kayseri were affected by simultaneous wildfires. Eighteen villages in Antalya and 16 villages in Adana and Mersin have been evacuated. - DNA

Dam in the province while some neighborhoods were evacuated.

"Ambulances and AFAD (the Disaster

and Emergency Management Authority) teams are on the way for our citizens in Oymapinar Dam. The road is open, they

will try to evacuate them," he said, adding that they do not face a life-threatening situation. Later, Manavgat District Governor Mustafa Yigit said 10 people stranded in the dam were rescued.

Forest fires first erupted on Wednesday in Antalya's Manavgat district and spread over a large area. "Three of our citizens lost their lives and 122 others were affected from fires while treatment of 58 citizens continues," AFAD said on Manavgat fires. With the latest announcement, the number of people who died during fires in Antalya has risen to four.

Along with Antalya, Adana, and Mersin, firefighters are working selflessly to bring fires under control in other provinces.

In Mersin, people living in areas near fires were evacuated on Wednesday. Firefighters are battling fires in the two districts of the province.

They are also working in the Kozan district of Adana province where a fire broke out in a forested land in the Kizilarselisi area. Authorities said that the powerful wind fanned fires to rage through the region and it hampers efforts to put out the blazes.

Briefs

Two PAF
officers
promoted to
rank of AM

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan has promoted 02 PAF officers to the rank of Air Marshal. The promoted Air Officers include Air Marshal Zulfikar Ahmad Qureshi and Air Marshal Muhammad Mughees Afzal.

Air Marshal Zulfikar Ahmad Qureshi was commissioned in GD (P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in June, 1988. During his career, he has commanded a fighter squadron and a flying wing. He has served as Commandant College of Flying Training, PAF Academy Asghar Khan, Rislapur. He has also rendered his services as Commandant Air War College Institute, Faisal. Presently, he is serving as Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (Training) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a recipient of Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military).

Air Marshal Muhammad Mughees Afzal was commissioned in GD (P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in December, 1988. During his career, he has commanded a fighter squadron, a flying wing and an operational air base. In his staff appointments, he has served as Director General Security at Air Headquarters, Islamabad and Air Officer Commanding, Western Air Command. Presently, he holds the appointment of Air Officer Commanding, Southern Air Command. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

WB approves
\$100 mln
for literacy
in Sindh

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved \$100 million in financing to support Pakistan's efforts to increase literacy and student retention rates in the Sindh province. The amount has been approved for the Sindh Early Learning Enhancement through Classroom Transformation (SELECT) project that is aimed at helping the provincial government enhance investments in basic education in disadvantaged and remote communities, said WB press statement received here on Friday. The project would focus on strengthening reading and comprehension skills of primary-level students, skills which are foundational to early learning. The project would also institute an adaptive education system to better manage school disruptions and mitigate future school dropouts. This will be achieved using innovations in technology and communications to help students return to and stay in school when they expect to fully reopen in August this year.

Google
grants \$7.5m
to Pak, other
countries

ISLAMABAD: With Pakistan and other Southeast Asian countries currently grappling with a surge in COVID-19 cases, Google Friday announced a total commitment of USD\$7.5 million in new grant funding and other support to help alleviate the current pandemic crisis.

As part of this new commitment, Google.org, Google's philanthropic arm, is providing a USD\$1.5 million grant to UNICEF to support urgent COVID-19 response needs across five countries including Pakistan, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines. With this grant, UNICEF will deploy female vaccinators in Covid Vaccination Centers to increase the number of women being vaccinated and boost vaccine communication in Pakistan. UNICEF will also continue to support governments and communities to control the spread of the virus and reduce the number of deaths including by, including by enhancing preparedness for possible future waves of COVID-19. — DNA

UNODC to bring human
traffickers to justice: Milsom

World Day against Trafficking in Persons observed

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Under the EU funded Global Action to Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT – Asia and the Middle East), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), commemorated World Day against Trafficking in Persons (TIP) in collaboration with the Federal Investigation Agency during a seminar held on Friday. “Victim's Voices Lead the Way” is this year's World Day against TIP theme. It's a theme that puts victims of human trafficking at the centre and highlights the importance of listening to and learning from survivors of human trafficking and the crucial role they play in establishing effective measures to prevent this crime, identify and rescue victims and support them on their road to rehabilitation. During the commemoration seminar, key messages from survivors of trafficking and other relevant stakeholders were highlighted. The event also presented the National Action Plan to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling (2021-2025) adopted by the Government which provides a comprehensive coordination framework for all stakeholders tasked with addressing Trafficking in Persons. During his welcome remarks, Dr. Jeremy Milsom, Representative UNODC



Country Office Pakistan said that, “The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is committed to advancing action to bring traffickers to justice while protecting and supporting their victims. The rights of victims must come first – be they the victims of traffickers, smugglers, or of modern forms of slavery or exploitation”. He further said that: “Almost every country has national human trafficking laws, yet people continue to be trafficked – most of them, women, and girls. We welcome the progress made by Pakistan, in particular the Federal Investigation

Agency, in tackling human trafficking, through implementing the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2018 and its rules, and the National Action Plan to combat human trafficking and migrants smuggling (2021-2025)”. The Director General FIA, Sanaullah Abbasi, during his speech said that: “FIA and UNODC have been partners for more than a decade to curb human trafficking and migrants smuggling. Through this partnership we have achieved many goals including the enactment of laws on TIP and Smuggling of Migrants in 2018. The partnership will

further help FIA to build its capacity to fight the menace of human trafficking”. The seminar was attended by the senior representatives of FIA, UNODC, the European Union, Provincial Social Welfare and Labour departments, provincial police, representatives from federal ministries including the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development and ICMPD. The Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants – Asia and the Middle East (GLO.ACT-Asia and the Middle East) is a four-year (2018-2022), Euro 12 mil-

lion joint initiative by the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) being implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in up to five countries: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Afghanistan), Islamic Republic of Iran (I.R. of Iran), Republic of Iraq (Iraq), Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Pakistan). GLO.ACT-Bangladesh is a parallel initiative also financed by the EU and implemented with IOM. The project builds on a global community of practice set in motion in GLO.ACT 2015-2019 and assists gov-

ernmental authorities and civil society organizations in targeted, innovative, and demand-driven interventions: sustaining effective strategy and policy development, legislative review and harmonization, capability development, and regional and trans-regional cooperation. The project also provides direct assistance to victims of human trafficking and vulnerable migrants through the strengthening of identification, referral, and protection mechanisms. The project is fully committed to mainstreaming Human Rights and Gender Equality considerations across all of its activities.

APNS
praises KP
govt decision

DNA

KARACHI: The APNS expresses its thanks to the Government of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa for acceding to APNS demand and withdrawing the notification of delisting some publications from the provincial media list. Mr Sarmad Ali President and Ms Nazafreen Saigol Lakhani Secretary General of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society have stated that the Information Department of the provincial government had contemplated to delist 67 newspapers from the provincial media list on some technical or procedural grounds. The APNS approached Mr Arshad Khan Secretary Information and Mr Imdadullah Khan DG Public Relations to review the arbitrary decision as during the Covid pandemic the publications facing acute crisis and hardships cannot be excoected to comply with the procedural and codal requirements. The APNS har requested the KP Government to consult the APNS and review this decision.

The APNS office bearers thanked the Government of KP for conceding to the APNS request. In particular they appreciated Secretary Information and DG Public Relations of the KP government for their support and cooperation in resolving the issue in the interest of the print media in the province. They also appreciated Syed Haroon Shah, Chairman APNS KP committee, for his successful efforts in helping the newspaper industry in the province.

Met
department
predicts
heavy rain

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) on Friday forecast more rain and wind thunderstorms in upper and central parts of the country and issued warnings for landslides, flash floods, and urban flooding. The meteorological department informed that monsoon currents are continuously penetrating the upper parts of the country and are likely to continue until Tuesday. Under the influence of this weather system, upper and central parts of the country including Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan, and Azad Jammu Kashmir are expected to receive rain and wind thunderstorms with isolated heavy falls from Saturday to Tuesday. PMD stated that heavy falls may cause urban flooding in Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Lahore, Faisalabad, and Sargodha between Saturday to Tuesday. “All concerned authorities are particularly advised to remain ALERT during the forecast period,” the PMD added.

COVID-19
claims 86
more lives

DNA

ISLAMABAD, JUL 30 (DNA) – The national tally of total active COVID-19 cases was recorded as 62,723 on Friday with 4,537 more people tested positive for the deadly virus and 1,489 people recovered from the disease during the last 24 hours. Eighty-six (86) corona patients have died during past 24 hours, 82 of whom were under treatment in the hospitals and four of them perished in their respective quarantines or homes, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCO). Most of the deaths occurred in Sindh followed by Punjab. Out of the total 86 deaths occurred, 50 of them died were under treatment on ventilators. There were 3,117 Covid infected patients under treatment in critical condition with 33 of them admitted during past 24 hours in various Covid dedicated healthcare facilities of the country. The National Covid positivity ratio during past 24 hours was recorded 7.23 percent.

Noor Mukadam's
last message to
family revealed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Noor Mukadam had contacted her family the day she was rubbed out in a house located in Islamabad's upscale Sector F-7/4 last week. “Don't look for me or contact police,” the sources quoted the deceased as telling her family in her last message. The family sources said Zahir Jaffer tortured her multiple times, due to which she was under a lot of stress. She had been suffering from stress for the past two years due to the

suspect's ill-treatment of her, they added. They revealed Zahir Jaffer had also issues with Noor Mukadam's religious leaning. On July 20, a woman in her twenties, reportedly daughter of a former ambassador, had been put to death allegedly by her own friend in the vicinity of Kohsar police station. Kohsar police had confirmed the incident and said they have detained the alleged friend Zahir Jaffer, behind the murder of the former ambassador's daughter Noor Mukadam.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan Adam Tugio participating in a seminar on Madrasah Reforms organized by the International Islamic University. Rector IIUI Dr. Masoom Yasin is also seen in the picture. — DNA

Saudi Arabia: No
quarantine for
vaccinated tourists

RIYADH: Visitors to Saudi Arabia who have been fully vaccinated can enter the Kingdom without the need for an institutional quarantine period, provided that a vaccination certificate is presented, the country's tourism ministry announced. Tourists from various countries will be allowed entry as long as they meet the criteria starting from August 1, the ministry said. A statement issued on Thursday said those who were fully immunized are those who have received two doses of the approved vaccines in the Kingdom, namely Pfizer, AstraZeneca or Moderna. Visitors to the Kingdom are also required to register their data related to their vaccination doses on the new dedicated electronic portal, while their data is also recorded through the “Tawakkalna” application, and must be shown to enter public places. As for those wishing to obtain tourist visas, they can apply through the “Spirit of Saudi” website, visitsaudi.com. “We welcome tourists again, and we are very happy to receive the Kingdom's guests again after a pause due to the repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic,” Minister of Tourism Ahmed Al-Khatib said. — DNA

Pakistan, Hungary discuss
bilateral cooperation

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The 5th round of Pakistan-Hungary Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) was held in Budapest today. The Pakistan side was led by Dr. Muhammad Tariq, Additional Secretary (Europe); while Laszlo Varadi, Deputy Secretary for State Cooperation with South led the Hungarian side. Mr. Muhemmed Aejaz, Ambassador of Pakistan to Hungary, also attended the meeting. The exchange of views covered the entire spectrum of

bilateral relations, including matters relating to political, economic and trade, culture, defence and people-to-people contacts. The two sides also reviewed recent developments in bilateral relations and explored the way forward to enhance cooperation in diverse fields. A review of regional and international issues of mutual interest such as the situation in Afghanistan and IIOJK was part of the parleys. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the current pace of cooperation after the Hungary-Pakistan Trade and Economic Window

(HPTIEW) launched in March 2021, and the first Hungary-Pakistan Business Forum inaugurated by the two Foreign Ministers, as well as the subsequent visit of Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto to Pakistan in April 2021. Both sides expressed the desire to further strengthen cooperation in economic and trade, investment, industry, agriculture, water resource management, information technology, energy, industry, healthcare and pharmaceutical, sports, culture, education and parliamentary exchanges. Dr. Tariq em-

phasized the importance of regular high-level exchanges in boosting linkages in areas of mutual interest. The Additional Secretary also highlighted the steps taken by the Government of Pakistan to attract international tourism and bring foreign investment into Pakistan. The Additional Secretary briefed the Hungarian side on Pakistan's positive role in facilitating the peace efforts with the aim of promoting an inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political settlement in Afghanistan through an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led process.

Pakistan wants restoration of peace in Afghanistan

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said on Friday that Pakistani leadership had a very clear policy about Afghanistan as it wanted restoration of peace and stability in the war-torn country. While addressing a function organised by Pak Afghan Youth Forum here, he categorically said that Islamabad was not supporting or strengthening any faction in Afghanistan. He said Pakistan was trying to create an environment in which all warring factions of Afghanistan should sit together and form a consensus government in Kabul. This, he said was the only option to form a stable government in Afghanistan

and promote a peaceful society. He said at present there was no group in Afghanistan which could rule the entire country. If a faction occupied Kabul the other would create hurdles, so in such conditions the goal of peace and stability could not be achieved. Pakistan was making all possible efforts for restoration of peace in Afghanistan which was indeed a difficult task, he remarked. The minister said that the super powers leave the region after their actions and Pakistan and Afghanistan were facing the consequences. “We have been striving for strong and stable future Afghanistan as we believe that a strong economic future of the entire region depended on a stable and strong Afghanistan and our efforts are directed towards that directions”, he said. The minister said that



future of Pakistan's economy revolved around a strong and stable Afghanistan as it wanted to build strong communication links with Central Asia and for that purpose Prime Minister Imran Khan recently visited Uzbekistan. He said

that Pakistan has signed a rail track agreement with Uzbekistan which would run between Peshawar to Tashkent via Mazar Sharif. He said that Pakistan also wanted to promote trade with Central Asia through trucks.

Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said that linking Karachi and Gwadar ports with Central Asia depends on peace and stability in Afghanistan, as communication linkages could not be built without peace in Afghanistan. He said that youth from Afghanistan met Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa and got their viewpoint on Afghanistan. He said that the report on meeting of the Prime Minister with Afghan youth and media persons was telecast with Pashto and Dari subtitles. He expressed the hope that majority of Afghan population would get information about Pakistan's Afghan policy. The minister said that the Prime Minister during his meeting with Afghan delegation talked about future of Pakistan and

Afghanistan. He said Islamabad was a beautiful city, but there were many misperceptions about it, which could be resolved through such visits and exchanges. He said that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting was also making arrangements for Pakistani journalists' visit to Kabul where they would meet top Afghan leadership. He said that the government believed that media was the only means to convey our viewpoint to the masses. He appreciated Pak Afghan Youth Forum for uniting the youth of both countries at one forum and arranging the media conclave. He said that Pakistani Ambassador to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmed Khan and External Publicity Wing of Information Ministry also deserved appreciation for organising media conclave.