



# Islamabad POST

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### Germany shuns calls for German troops to return to Afghanistan

Detailed News On Page-01

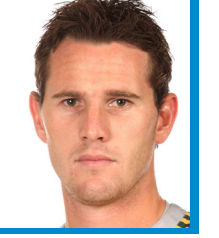
### Probe into Dasu incident completed

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### Tait appointed as new Afghan bowling coach

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## Briefs

### Japanese envoy grieved over blast

**STAFF REPORT**  
ISLAMABAD: MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, on Monday expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the bomb blast which occurred in Quetta on August 8th, leaving 20 policemen dead and numbers of people injured. "Any act of terrorism cannot be justified for whatever reason or purpose. Our thoughts and prayers are with the government, the people of Pakistan, and the families of those who have lost their dear ones in the tragic incident. Please accept my deepest condolences and sympathies to the families of victims and I pray for the early recovery of those injured in the blast" said the Ambassador in his condolence message. While appreciating the efforts of Pakistani security forces in maintaining peace and stability, the Ambassador reiterated that Japan is committed to continuing to support the Government of Pakistan and its valiant security forces to combat terrorism.

### PML-N slams hike in prices of medicines

**SHAHEEN HANIF**  
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) spokesperson Mariyum Aurangzeb on Monday has criticized Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan and said that he has failed to provide relief to the nation. In a statement, the PML-N leader said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government has not provided cheap medical facilities to the people. Imran Khan is not worried about the problems of the nation as he intends to take votes from machine, she added. Mariyum Aurangzeb further demanded to withdraw the decision of raising the price of medicine. In July, the inflation rate dropped to 8.4%, despite double-digit increases in costs of basic kitchen goods, gasoline, and electricity, as well as the possibility of a surge in imported inflation owing to the rupee's almost Rs10 drop in value versus the US dollar in only two months.

## Afghan leaders must quit the blame game

Qureshi says India had violated its obligation as the UNSC president by not allowing Pakistan's request to brief the forum on the situation



ISLAMABAD: FM Shah Mahmood Qureshi addressing a news conference while Special Secretary Raza Bashir Tarar and Spokesperson Zahid Ch look on. – DNA

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi Monday said that Pakistan had played its role in Afghan peace and reconciliation process and now, it was up to the Afghan leadership to further move the Intra-Afghan dialog process. Qureshi regretted that allegations were being leveled against Pakistan for the failure of Afghan peace process. Addressing a press conference here, the foreign minister said the Afghan leadership would be responsible for the success or failure of the dialog process.

### 'Extended troika' meets on Wednesday

**STAFF REPORT**  
ISLAMABAD: Senior officials from Pakistan, the United States, Russia and China will meet in Doha on August 11 as part of efforts to prevent Afghanistan from slipping into another civil war. The meeting of the so-called "extended Troika" comes against the backdrop of the Afghan Taliban making rapid inroads in the war-ravaged country since the arrival of the US and Nato forces' withdrawal and the lack of any headway in the intra-Afghan talks. The special representatives of these four key players last met in April in Doha, Qatar, and previously also held unannounced sessions in what appeared to be an effort to develop regional consensus on the Afghan endgame. Although the US has serious differences with China and Russia on many issues, Washington is now keen to take Beijing and Moscow onboard on the current Afghan situation.

Continued on Page 06

## PM inaugurates world's largest Miyawaki forest

The forest has been developed on over 100 kanals and will feature around 165,000 plants



**ABID RAZA**  
LAHORE: Prime Minister Imran Khan said Monday Pakistan had done more than its available resources to stop global warming, as he reiterated the need to plant trees for a better environment in the country. PM Imran Khan's comments came as he inaugurated the "world's largest Miyawaki urban forest, Saggian", which extends over a 100-Kanal area and includes 160,000 plantations, the PM's Office said. "The Miyawaki absorbs carbon and is a good way to curb pollution," the premier said during the inauguration ceremony as he congratulated Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar for his efforts towards the project. "This is the biggest Miyawaki forest and we dedicate this to [Akira Miyawaki] who had died last month," he said. Miyawaki was a leading plant ecologist and botanist

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ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Nong Rong called on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr. – DNA

## Pakistan, China vow to further boost cooperation

The President underlined that Pakistan is committed to the timely completion of the CPEC project

**STAFF REPORT**  
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have reaffirmed their resolve to further boost bilateral cooperation in various fields for the mutual benefit of the two countries. This was discussed at a meeting between President Dr Arif Alvi and Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong in Islamabad on Monday. Both sides emphasized the need for making collective efforts to promote peace, prosperity and development in the region. The meeting also underlined the need to enhance cooperation in the field of Information Technology. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that Pakistan and China enjoy excellent relations and the "All-weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership" between the two countries would further take the bilateral relationship to new heights. He said that both time-tested friends have always stood by each other through thick and thin. The President reiterated Pakistan's commitment to "One-China Policy" and firm support to China on core issues of its national interest, such as Taiwan, Tibet, Hong Kong and the South China Sea. He appreciated China's support for Pakistan's core national issues like Jammu and Kashmir dispute, Nuclear Suppliers Group and Financial Action Task Force. He also thanked the Chinese government for providing support to Pakistan in containing the COVID-19 pandemic. The President underlined that Pakistan is committed to the timely completion of the CPEC project that has huge potential to contribute to the socio-economic development of Pakistan. He said that certain hostile players are not happy over the project and are trying to sabotage it but they would not succeed as both the iron brothers are strongly committed to implement the project. Offering condolences to the Government of China and the bereaved families who lost their dear ones in Dasu, the President underscored that the security of Chinese nationals, Continued on Page 06

### Muharram crescent sighted

**DNA**  
QUETTA: The Muharram crescent has been sighted and Yum-e-Ashur will be observed on Thursday, August 19, the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee announced on Monday. The first of Muharram, which is also the first day of Hijri year 1443 according to the Islamic calendar, will be observed on Tuesday, August 10. The announcement was made following a meeting for the moon sighting, chaired by Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman Maulana Muhammad Abdul Khair Azad in Quetta. The provincial and district moon sighting committees also held their meetings simultaneously today at their respective headquarters. Muharram is the month of mourning for the seventh-century martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

## Iraqi FM due in Islamabad tomorrow

During the visit, the two FM's will hold in-depth talks



**SAIFULLAH**  
ISLAMABAD: At the invitation of Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Iraq Dr. Fuad Hussein is undertaking a bilateral visit to Pakistan on 11-12 August 2021. During the visit, the two Foreign Ministers will hold in-depth exchange of views on all aspects of bilateral relations. They will also review close cooperation in multilateral organizations, in particular the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The Foreign Ministers will also consult on issues concerning the Muslim Ummah as well as on key regional and international issues. The Iraqi Foreign Minister will also call on the Pakistani leadership and have meetings with other dignitaries. Pakistan and Iraq have close fraternal ties, founded on strong affinities of faith and culture. Pakistan accords high importance to these Continued on Page 06

### EVMs best source of transparency: Fawad

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said on Monday that Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) were the best tools of ensuring transparency and fairness in elections process. In an interview, the minister said that all the work on technology has been completed and if there was consensus between the government and the opposition, then the next elections could be held on EVMs. He said that a mechanism would have to be developed for transparency in the election process, he said adding that EVMs fulfill all the requirements of Election Commission of Pakistan.

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## Taliban seizes more Afghan provincial capitals

Reports came in from the northern districts of Balkh, Badakhshan and Panjshir provinces, with the Taliban hoping to close in on their capitals. Unlike Jowzjan, Kunduz and Sar-e-Pol

**NEWS DESK**  
KABUL: The Taliban has captured a sixth provincial capital in Afghanistan in four days. The armed group's spokesman on Monday morning sent messages to the media, claiming it has overrun Aibak, the capital of the northern province of Samangan. Samangan's deputy provincial governor confirmed the takeover to a news agency. The Taliban is "in full control", he said, shortly after a Taliban spokesman tweeted that all government and police installations in Aibak had been "cleared". The armed group said its fighters now control the provincial governor's compound, the intelligence directorate, police headquarters and all other official buildings. Aibak is the fifth northern provincial capital to fall to the Taliban in less than a week, and the sixth overall in the country. The fall of Samangan will put further strain on an already stretched Afghan security forces, as commandos and backup forces have been dispatched to the five other provinces whose capital have fallen – Kunduz, Takhar, Jowzjan, Sar-e-Pol, Nimruz – as well as the provinces of Herat, Kandahar and Helmand. The group also said on Monday that they were moving in on Mazari-Sharif, northern Afghanistan's largest city. Overnight on Sunday and throughout the day on Monday, reports came in from the northern districts of Balkh, Badakhshan and Panjshir provinces, with the Taliban hoping to close in on their capitals. Unlike Jowzjan, Kunduz and Sar-e-Pol, Samangan was once known to be one of the safest provinces in Afghanistan, with a minimal Taliban presence. However, the last three years saw a growing presence of the group in the province. On Sunday, the Ministry of Defence claimed government forces had launched clearance operations in Kunduz, but residents speaking to Al Jazeera said the Taliban spent much of Monday trying to get closer to the airport. According to sources on the ground, the armed group has made it within 3km (2 miles) of the airport and fighting continues in the city. With the road from Kabul to Kunduz having been under the rebel's control for several months, residents fear that a Taliban takeover of the airport would be a "disaster", robbing officials and residents of a possible evacuation. Continued on Page 06

### Vaccination must for train travel

**KHAYAM ABBASI**  
ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Monday decided that only vaccinated individuals would be allowed to travel by rail from October 1. The NCOC meeting chaired by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar expressed concern over the growing spread of COVID-19 in the country and especially in Rawalpindi and Peshawar. The forum issued instructions to the concerned districts to implement the safety protocols and SOPs. The forum also considered the measures to be taken in view of the arrival of Muharram. The forum also expressed satisfaction with the vaccination process, and called for steps to be taken to administer the second dose in a timely manner.

## Germany opposes calls of sending troops back

**BERLIN: Germany's minister for defence, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer on Monday turned away the calls for German troops to return to Afghanistan following the fall of Kunduz city and its Taliban takeover. Germany had the second-largest military contingent in Afghanistan after the United States, losing more troops in combat in Kunduz than anywhere else since World War II. The Taliban overran six provincial capitals, including Kunduz, at the weekend as it pressed an offensive since foreign troops began a withdrawal. "The reports from Kunduz and from all over Afghanistan are bitter and hurt a lot," wrote Kramp-Karrenbauer on Twitter. "Are society and parliament prepared to send the armed forces into a war and remain there with lots of troops for at least a generation? If we are not, then the joint withdrawal with the partners remains the right decision," read the post. Some within her own conservative party want German troops to participate in an intervention against the Taliban, but Kramp-Karrenbauer said defeating them would require a long and hard campaign. – Agencies**

## Briefs

## People urged to vaccinate themselves

PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar Division, Riaz Khan Mehsud has urged upon the people to show responsibility in arresting of Corona pandemic, adding every individual will have to play crucial role in vaccination and creation of awareness in society in this regard. He expressed these views while talking to traders' associations, who called on him soon after assuming charge of his duty here on Monday. He termed vaccination and implementation of Corona preventive SOPs in bazaars as welcoming. The traders' associations were led by president Markazi Tanzim-e-Tajiran, Malik Meher Elahi and president Tajir Insaaf Group, Shahid Khan. During meeting, traders assured that they will ensure the use of safety masks both by shopkeepers and shoppers as well. They said that shopkeepers will ensure administering vaccination to themselves and their employees within a period of one week and will extend full cooperation to district administration and police. Meanwhile, presiding another meeting, the Commissioner directed Transport Associations, Regional Transport Authority (RTA), Motorway Police and Traffic Police for implementation of Corona preventive SOPs in public transport at any circumstances. — APP

## Pakistan's HC designated to Brunei visits LCCI

LAHORE: Pakistan's High Commissioner designated to Brunei Darussalam Maj. Gen. (R) Farhat Abbas Sami said on Monday that the Pakistan is pursuing strong economic diplomacy to explore new markets instead of depending on a few countries for trade. He was speaking here at Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI). The LCCI President Mian Tariq Misbah, Vice President Tahir Manzoor Chaudhry also spoke on the occasion. The High Commissioner appreciated government's vision of diversification to penetrate into the unexplored and relatively small markets. "It will ensure our economic sovereignty due to sustained and durable policies", he said and added that he would exploit his experience as Director General Defense Export Promotion Organization (DEPO). He said that he would also visit other chambers to have a clear vision of Pakistan's economic strength which could be utilized to enhance exports to Brunei in addition to attracting maximum Foreign Direct Investment from that rich country. The High Commissioner quoted his previous experience and said that he organized a single country exhibition in Moldova, a small country of Eastern Europe. — APP

## Majority of FTAs, PTAs not in favor of Pakistan: FPCCI

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistan's most of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) signed with various countries, with exception of few, are not in favor of local industry, as they are inked without taking the real stakeholders of trade and industry onboard. These views were expressed by the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) president Nasir Hayat Maggon and Businessmen Panel Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar during a dinner reception hosted in honor of FPCCI and BMP leadership. The reception was also attended by the business community's representatives from across the country. The FPCCI President said that the government has been suffering a revenue loss of billions of rupees due to FTAs and PTAs, urging the authorities to always consult the apex trade body of FPCCI before finalizing any business treaty with any country. Nasir Maggon said that the leadership of FPCCI



CI and BMP were in touch with the federal and provincial ministers to resolve the problems of the business community. And despite the business closures due to Covid-19, the FPCCI has been raising its constant voice at every forum for the cause of trade and industry's promotion. FPCCI's Businessmen Panel Chairman Mian Anjum

Nisar said the government should redesign the FTAs and PTAs with a view to promote the domestic industry, suggesting that Pakistan should have entered into FTAs and PTAs with only those countries where it had a clear and mutual competitive advantage. He said the concerned stakeholders should also be taken on board while framing

the recommendations in that regard. Mian Anjum Nisar suggested the government to devise a strategy in the light of impact on domestic industry, convincing other countries to liberalize their import policy by reducing tariff lines and easing sensitive list for Pakistan merchandise. He suggested that Pakistan should have en-

tered into FTAs and PTAs with only those countries where it had a clear and mutual competitive advantage. FPCCI former president said that local cost of production was already high on account of high tariff of electricity and gas, coupled with import duties on inputs, making the local production uncompetitive. On the other hand, local

processors were unable to export their products to those countries as they were absolutely uncompetitive owing to hosts of reasons, he said. If imports are not checked immediately, the entire industry in general and the emerging industrial sectors in particular will suffer a serious setback, he warned. If relaxed import policy continues billions of rupees investment in domestic industry would be shattered, he added. The BMP Chairman asked the government to prioritize agriculture sector in its economic planning to avert shortages of essential goods and industrial inputs. Agriculture sector has proved to be the weakest link in the current macroeconomic planning and strategies, Anjum Nisar said. Poor governance, bad planning, climate change and lack of investment in seed technology and agriculture research have already resulted in shortage of wheat, sugar and cotton. Pakistan's food security is dependent on production of essential crops that are providing basic food and input for industrial production, Anjum Nisar added.

## Meeting held to overview anti-dengue campaign

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

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. He said that anti dengue teams should present in the field for chemical treatment of larvae and hotspots should be checked on regular basis. He said that hotspots should be checked regularly and negligence in this regard would not be tolerated. Meanwhile Deputy Commissioner informed that 1293978 general public and HCWs have administered the corona vaccine. He informed that yesterday 30278 general public and 99 HCW administered. Earlier DC went to Agriculture University and inspected the process of typing test in connection with recruitment of patwaris in Tehsil Chak Jhumra. AC Chak Jhumra Muhammad Haider informed that 700 candidates apply for posts and 550 got roll number slips and typing test is being taken of applicants in a pleasant environment. Deputy Commissioner asked the ACs for smooth conduction of test. AC Sadar & City Umar Maqbool and Syed Ayub Bukhari were also present.

## Benefits of Ehsaas extended to Faisalabad

ISLAMABAD: Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division (PASSD) has extended various benefits of multi-pronged Ehsaas initiatives to the residents of Faisalabad district during the fiscal year 2020-21, like other districts of the country. According to an official source, an amount of Rs1.84 billion has been disbursed among 86,043 beneficiaries of Faisalabad district under the Ehsaas Kafalat programme during 2020-21. Under Ehsaas Emergency Cash Programme, an

amount of Rs779 million was disbursed among 64,966 beneficiaries of Faisalabad district during the period. The Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Waseela-e-Taleem Programme expansion in Faisalabad district was approved on July, 13, 2020 and enrollment activities have been operational from October, 2020. During the year 2020-21, payment of 12,369 children of 6,386 mother beneficiaries has been made under Waseela-e-Taleem programme in Faisalabad district. — DNA



FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali inspected the process of typing test for recruitment of patwaris in Tehsil Chak Jhumra. — DNA

## Minister food directs for availability of quality flour

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister Food Atif Khan Monday directed the Food Safety Authority officials to start laboratory tests by taking samples from flour mills to ensure availability of quality and safe flour to people in the province. The provincial minister said that the food department should expedite the inspection process to ensure the quality of flour in flour mills. He expressed these views while presiding over a meeting at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety Authority office on Monday. Director General Food Safety Authority Shah Rukh Ali Khan and Director Food Department also attended the meeting. During the meeting, DG Food Safety Authority Shah Rukh Ali Khan also apprised the provincial minister about the progress made in setting up mobile labs. The DG Food Safety Authority said the establishment of a mobile lab would help food-related businesses be better monitored. The Food Minister was also apprised of the progress made so far on e-licensing. The Food Minister Atif Khan directed the concern authorities to start e-licensing in practice as soon as possible. — APP

## PMLN govt committed massive corruption: Farrukh

LAHORE: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said on Monday that previous PML-N government led by Shehbaz Sharif had committed massive corruption in the then Punjab Saaf Pani Company (now Punjab Aab-e-Pak Authority-PbAPA). Briefing media persons here, he disclosed that last PML-N government had installed 116 water filtration plants under its Punjab Saaf Pani Company with exorbitant cost of Rs 7.5 billion which means Rs 65 million cost per plant, while PTI government was installing water filtration plants under Punjab Aab-e-Pak Authority at a cost of Rs 3 million only, and so far a total of Rs 4 billion had been spent on water filtration plants. "This is the difference between



PTI and PML-N way of governance, and a true change (Tabdili) as every project is being executed transparently and on merit by the present government. The way of thinking and vision of PTI leadership is only and only ensuring better public service delivery and equitable utilization of public exchequer," he added. Farrukh Habib further said

that one could better understand standards and merits of PML-N government from the fact that N-League leadership had preferred to establish Punjab Saaf Pani Company office in a plaza owned by relatives of Shehbaz Sharif then Chief Minister of Punjab. He mentioned that Prime Minister Imran Khan had entrusted the Punjab Governor Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar to look after the affairs of Punjab Aab-e-Pak Authority and the Governor was performing his responsibility with dedication and efficiently by spending each penny of the people with austerity and transparently. The PTI government would install around 1500 clean drinking water filtration plants under PbAPA in 36 districts of Punjab

by this year end, he said and added that on the directive of Prime Minister, PC-I of 177 drinking water projects (Aab-Pak Markaz) for 1,000 villages had been completed and was in its approval stage. Farrukh Habib said that Aab-Pak Markaz projects would be initiated in the second phase early 2022, asserting that projects aimed at providing safe and clean drinking water to those south Punjab areas and Faisalabad where ground water was brackish or of bitter taste. He said that provision of clean and safe drinking water to the people had not only helped substantially elimination of water-borne diseases such as diarrhea, hepatitis and typhoid etc but also reduced the load on hospitals. — APP

## CM takes notice of constructions in forests area

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister KP Mahmood Khan has taken notice of illegal construction activities being carried out in Makhniyal forests area in District Haripur and purchase/sale of forests land for commercial purposes and directed the concerned authorities for imposition of ban on all types of construction activities in the area with immediate effect. He has further directed the quarters concerned to impose section 144 to this effect and ensure its strict implementation further directing them to take strict action under section 188 of Pakistan Panel Code against those who violate section 144. He issued these directives while chairing a meeting held

here on Monday to devise a strategy to ensure preservation of Makhniyal Forest acres. Besides, Acting Chief Secretary Zafar Ali Shah, Principal Secretary to CM Amjad Ali Khan, concerned Administrative Secretaries, Commissioner Hazara, Deputy Commissioner and District Police Officer (DPO) Haripur, Director General Galyat Development Authority and other concerned senior officials attended the meeting. The chief minister directed the high ups of Local Government Department to initiate strict action against the concerned Tehsil Municipal Officer (TMO) of Haripur for the issuance of illegal NOCs for the construction of commercial buildings in the guzara forests of Makhniyal and refer the case to anti-corruption establishment for investigation.



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## Emerging threats

**T**HE chaotic situation unfolding in Afghanistan most of all affects Pakistan and its future. Should a situation emerge such that the Afghan Taliban assume greater power and where the self-exiled leader of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan gains any degree of influence, there could be further problems for Pakistan with the TTP insisting to take over the former tribal areas of Pakistan, and set up an Islamic Emirate in that area. We know that Pakistan now has limited power with the new generation of Taliban who have assumed growing influence and growing hold over territory in Afghanistan. Pakistan's inability to bring about a settlement during round after round of talks in Doha makes the country's role much less strategic as it used to be. This is of crucial importance for Pakistan, which has already seen an increase in terrorist attacks on its soil, the latest coming yesterday in Quetta. The country is also keen to avert a new refugee crisis such as the one seen in 1989 as Soviets pulled out of Afghanistan. But the issue of refugees needs to be handled carefully, and with some concern towards humanity. The people of Afghanistan are not responsible for what has been done to their country and how things have unfolded within it.

The paramount priority should be to bring nations around the world with influence in Afghanistan together to try and bring about something resembling peace and settlement in Afghanistan. Interventions from the outside over so many years have not helped Afghanistan, its people or even Pakistan. The Taliban gaining ascendancy in Afghanistan will not just harm the Afghan people but also bode danger for the rest of the region's countries, most of all Pakistan. Nothing, other than talks and dialogue – with the aim of preventing Al-Qaeda from gaining a firm hold on Afghanistan and the territories which lie alongside it – will fix this mess. Pakistan cannot do this alone, but it can play a role alongside other nations to try and finally bring some kind of peace to the troubled lands of Afghanistan.

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## Tackling climate change

**P**RIME Minister Imran Khan's 10 billion tree plantation programme is coming along incredibly well as on Saturday, government officials, teachers and students, politicians and social workers planted a record 700,000 saplings in Attock city. Tree plantation is not only vital for the green future of Pakistan, but it will also ensure a healthy environment for the coming generations. Another encouraging aspect of such programme's is the fact that the federal government is targeting to create 200,000 new green jobs by the end of 2021 under its ecological protection and restoration projects. In addition to the Billion Tree Tsunami, the government has introduced multiple other campaigns to combat climatic issues. Such initiatives should continue and must be appreciated; however, this is not where the line should be drawn. Given how Pakistan is particularly vulnerable to climate related threats, a more holistic strategy will be required to cope with future challenges.

Pakistan's increasing vulnerability has been illustrated with the substantial increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, droughts, floods and heatwaves. The effects are likely to become more severe due to our geographic location, heavy reliance on agriculture and water resources, and low capacity to deal with climate emergencies. Sectors such as water, agriculture, livelihood and economy at large have been and are projected to be impacted seriously by climate change. The accelerated warming, coupled with changing water availability in the future, underscores the need to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change impacts along with efficient disaster preparedness and response actions to confront the climate-related hazards and disasters. The impact of these changes will be felt differently across the country. Therefore, it is crucial to formulate a bottom-up response to climate change. This will require the government to work in conjunction with federating units to increase their capacity to tackle climate issues.

# Climate change warnings can no longer be ignored

Sinem Cengiz



The climate crisis is having other serious effects on the country. For example, it has recently been dealing with the largest-ever outbreak of marine mucilage, more colorfully known as "sea snot." This brown and gray slime that floats on the surface of water is secreted by marine algae, and its elevated levels are blamed on rising sea temperatures and pollution. A sea snot outbreak recently took over the Sea of Marmara, stifling tourism, stripping local fishermen of their livelihoods

**F**OR the past week, Turkey has been experiencing the worst and most painful wildfire crisis in the country's history. At least nine people have died in blazes that have destroyed forests on the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts, which are major tourist hot spots. Homes have been destroyed, animals killed, and large sections of the country's natural habitats have turned to ash in front of our eyes. This heartbreaking disaster has shown us that there is something seriously wrong in the ways we approach environmental issues. For years, experts have been warning that the climate crisis could lead to environmental disaster. Their calls fell on deaf ears.

Climate change is a global concern that requires action from the international community. For example, Turkey is just one of several countries in the Mediterranean region, including Greece, Italy and Spain, that have been struggling with wildfires as summer temperatures soar. However Turkey has been worse-affected than other countries, and there are many reasons for this. It is prone to fires, floods and earthquakes. While forest fires are not uncommon in the country's Mediterranean and Aegean regions, the most recent incidents have been particularly severe.

The climate crisis is having other serious effects on the country. For example, it has recently been dealing with the largest-ever outbreak of marine mucilage, more colorfully known as "sea snot." This brown and gray slime that floats on the surface of water is secreted by marine algae, and its elevated levels are blamed on rising sea temperatures and pollution. A sea snot outbreak recently took over the Sea of Marmara, stifling tourism, stripping local fishermen of their livelihoods – because it clogs boat engines – and threatening to kill coral, shellfish and other marine life.

These are not the only signs of the severity of the climate problems Turkey faces. Sev-

eral lakes have started to dry up, the most recent of which is Lake Tuz in the central province of Konya. Hundreds of baby and adult flamingos have been found dead in its dried-up areas, prompting a renewed focus on the effects of drought on the ecosystem. As temperatures have steadily risen in the country as a result of climate change, water levels have fallen significantly. This has prompted experts to warn of a looming water crisis within a decade. Such is the nature of the climate crisis, while one part of the country faces drought, other parts face deadly floods, such as those last month that killed at least six people in Rize province, in Turkey's flood-prone Black Sea region. This latest tragedy occurred one month before the first anniversary of the previous such disaster.

This and the increasingly severe wildfires in Turkey are the result of climate change caused by global warming. Although forest fires are a reality of life in some areas, it is up to the government to take action to address the escalating threat. Whether they are started deliberately, or the result of the effects of human activity on climate, the severity of the environmental threat cannot be ignored. The consequences of the climate crisis have become impossible to dismiss and all countries must be organized and prepared for similar disasters in the future. Turkey is one of the countries worst-affected by climate change and so it is important for policymakers to recognize the significance of the climate crisis and the need to counter it by any means necessary. The current fires have been raging for eight days and people across the country are questioning how we got to this point and why the country has fallen short in efforts to counter threats to the environment.

Some have criticized the government for its handling of the disaster, in particular the lack of firefighting planes. Others accuse the opposition of politicizing the crisis.

Unfortunately, the worst fire disaster in the country's history has further divided Turkish society rather than uniting it. Yet, despite the deep political polarization in the country, great public solidarity is evident in the areas destroyed or damaged by the fires and this gives cause for hope.

Many of the criticisms that have been made do have merit, but for the moment the environmental disaster should not become a political squabble. What is most important now is to focus on what can be done to help, as people work tirelessly to put out the fires across the country. The lack of coordination of efforts, a cohesive strategy and proper equipment, especially the aforementioned shortage of firefighting aircraft, has increased the pain people are feeling and is fueling their anger. So the first priority is to recognize the importance of planning for disasters and how to respond to them, before thinking about the reforestation of burned areas.

The path to development, progress and enrichment depends on effective planning. As with the economy, education, health and the workforce, environmental issues also require proper short, medium and long-term planning. Turkey also needs to focus on obtaining water-bombing planes that can help to tackle fires quickly. Most important, though it has yet to sign the Paris Agreement on climate, Turkey also needs to raise public awareness of the looming environmental crisis. For example, workshops could be organized to educate residents about the risks. This heartbreaking crisis has once again proved, in the most bitter way possible, that ignoring or downplaying the importance of climate change, and delaying efforts to counter it, can be disastrous. Turkey needs effective tools to prepare itself for future environmental disasters so that the people of this country can be spared more pain.

– Courtesy: Arab News

## Education after COVID-19

Huma Arshad



"The students of the future will demand the learning support that is appropriate for their situation or context nothing more or nothing less." Marcus Specht Education Technology is not the complete answer to sit at home and taking online classes by using your personal computers seems very convenient. Technology has made our lives more comfortable

**T**HE beginning of COVID-19 has brought many changes in the world. Many sectors have been affected and most of them are still struggling to survive. Among them, the education sector has been hit badly. Schools, colleges, and universities have been affected and students are still suffering. According to UNESCO 1 in 5 learners cannot attend school and almost 102 countries have ordered nationwide school closure. The pandemic has adversely affected the progress few governments were making around increasing the education budget. This is a crisis that requires urgent attention globally.

In some countries, distance learning programs were launched immediately after a lockdown in 2020 within few weeks of schools closing. While other countries took a much longer time. However, children in many countries have no access to any kind of education for months. A recent study finds a socioeconomic gap in Google searches for home-based learning resources following COVID-19 related school closures mentioning that rich parents are looking for distance learning opportunities at higher rates than poorer households and suggests that learning loss during school closure is likely to be even more critical and uneven than before.

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gy has made our lives more comfortable. In-depth if we dissect the issue we realize that online education does not cover all the areas of holistic development as is not as beneficial as traditional classroom teaching and learning process. Technology cannot replace teachers or reduce inequality. Traditional education when you are physically in school makes students feel less lonely which improves their interpersonal skills. The students build more confidence, as the student might feel like they are not facing problems related to academics alone. Working in groups and interacting with students strengthen social ties which are very important in this rapidly growing technological world.

"COVID -19 has intensified and exaggerated fault lines in contemporary societies revealing back to us our ways of dealing with inequality." (Julian Sefton-Green – UNESCO Future of Education Idea LAB, 26 August 2020).

Traditional education urges students to attend lessons and to study when required. This is not surprising that online education depends on technologies that a large number of families around the globe do not have access to. In underdeveloped countries, only 1 in 5 households has access to the internet. Blended learning (online and onsite learning) is the answer to many problems.

COVID -19 has intensified and exaggerated fault lines in contemporary societies revealing back to us our ways of dealing with inequality. Julian Sefton-Green – 26 August 2020 Education in Pakistan during COVID - 19.

All educational institutions in our country closed in March 2020 and since then the already struggling education system is fight-

ing its battle for a smooth sail. In between, there are periods when the COVID-19 ratio is low and students do attend classes physically. Education plays a pivotal role in the growth and prosperity of any country.

The sudden shift towards digital teaching and learning has caused huge disturbance for students, teachers, and even for parents. Teachers are not technically trained or lack computer skills. The Unavailability of the internet and other hardware and software resources is a great matter of concern.

Pakistan launched eTaleem portal and apps like Taleemabad to encourage remote learning. On the other hand, the government has faced major criticism from students, asking for exams to be postponed or canceled. According to an estimate, Pakistan will suffer the loss of \$67-155 billion if the recently opened educational institute will close again. The world Bank has offered \$20 million to Pakistan to start an inclusive teaching and learning system targeted at 19.1 million out-of-school children who might opt to support their families facing pandemic originated financial hardships. This is one of the significant achievements of the government. The government is striving to restructure the educational sector in the country.

The government has implemented various educational reforms especially in the field of curriculums, teaching methodologies, and other resources along with infrastructure. Now we all are in a wait-and-watch situation when it comes to the effective implementation of government reforms in the education sector, the severity of COVID-19 in the future, and the future of onsite and online education in Pakistan.





