



Islamabad POST

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

Peace, security a pre-requisite for foreign investments

Detailed News On Page-01

NAB committed to lay hands on big fishes

Detailed News On Page-04

Nuclearization of Indian Ocean threatens peace

Detailed News On Page-07



Briefs

Germany to end free COVID testing

WEB DESK

BERLIN: German leaders have agreed that the German government will stop paying for rapid coronavirus tests in order to encourage more people to get vaccinated. Unvaccinated people will still be required to take tests. Merkel said after the meeting that Germany needed to encourage more people to get vaccinated, as it provides "protection for everyone." The chancellor added that the rising number of COVID cases in Germany can be fully attributed to people who have not yet been vaccinated.

Green line BRT from October

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar on Tuesday said the Green Line Bus Rapid Transit System (BRT) service in Karachi would become operational by October this year. "Prime Minister Imran Khan reviewed progress of five federal projects in Karachi transformation plan and Green line BRT will start from October this year," he said in his tweet. He said storm water drains, sewage, and roads project would be completed this fiscal year. In addition, he informed that construction of the K-IV water project, modern Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) and freight corridor projects would also start in this fiscal year.

Kabul must own its failures

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Energy Hamid Azhar on Tuesday said Pakistan rejects allegations from 'certain quarters' in Afghanistan and Kabul should 'own its failures'. As the Afghan situation deteriorates, there are elements within and outside Afghanistan, who have increased their rhetoric against Pakistan, blaming Islamabad for the chaos, particularly the allegations of using the Taliban as a proxy to impose a govt of its choice in Kabul.

Taliban, govt forces' fight gains speed

Taliban captures 7th capital; the capture of Farah also provides another border crossing into Iran

NEWS DESK/DNA

KABUL: The Taliban has captured the provincial capital of Farah in southwest Afghanistan, the seventh provincial capital the group has seized since Friday. "This afternoon the Taliban entered the city of Farah after briefly fighting with the security forces. They have captured the governor's office and police headquarters," Shahla Abubar, a member of Farah's provincial council, told a news agency on Tuesday. Local sources in the southwestern province of Farah also said that the group has taken over the province's eponymous capital city. The Taliban has also captured the province's central prison, according to parliamentarian Abdul Nasir Farahi and provincial council member Shahla Abu Bakr. Farah is now the second provincial city in the southwest of Afghanistan that the group has taken. On Friday, the Taliban captured neighbouring Nimruz province. The capture of Farah also provides another border crossing into Iran for the group. Abubar said local security forces had retreated towards an army base outside the city.

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Extended troika meets today

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: At the invitation of Dr. Mutlaq Al Qahtani, Qatari Special Envoy for Counter Terrorism and Mediation in Conflict Resolution, Ambassador Muhammad Sadiq, Special Representative for Afghanistan is visiting Doha to participate in the Regional Conference on Afghanistan and meeting of Troika Plus. Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan Mr. Mansoor Ahmed Khan is accompanying the Special Representative. The U.S. special representative for Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, and his counterparts from Russia, China and Pakistan, will meet in the Qatari capital, Doha, today (Wednesday) under what is officially known as the "extended troika," Pakistan attaches high importance to the Troika Plus mechanism, involving Pakistan, U.S., Russia and China.

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Pakistan on road to recovery: PM



KARACHI: PM Imran Khan being presented a memento during the inauguration ceremony of Ship Lift and Transfer System. (KSEW). - APP

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Regretting that Pakistan's true potential could not be tapped, Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Tuesday that the country was now beginning to stand on its

own feet by developing in the field of technology. Addressing the inaugural ceremony of ship lift and transfer system at Karachi's shipyard, Imran Khan said when Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government had taken over in 2018, there was record budget deficit.

Continued on Page 06



RAWALPINDI: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Nong Rong, calls on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS). - DNA

Andrew Cuomo resigns

Cuomo and his aides unlawfully retaliated against at least one of the women for making her complaints public



WEB DESK

ALBANY: Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York said on Tuesday he would resign from office, succumbing to a ballooning sexual harassment scandal that fueled an astonishing reversal of fortune for one of the nation's best-known leaders. Mr. Cuomo said his resignation would be effective in 14 days. Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat, will be sworn in to replace him. She will become the first female governor of New York. The governor framed his resignation as a necessary step given the firestorm of controversy surrounding his continued leadership, including an impeachment inquiry that he referred to as a "distraction" from pressing issues pressing the state as it recovers from the pandemic. "Given the circumstances, the best way I can help now is if I step aside and let government get back to governing," Mr. Cuomo said. "And therefore that's what I'll do."

COAS, Chinese envoy discuss CPEC

Ambassador Nong Rong appreciates Pakistan's sincere efforts for peace in the region

NEHAL MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Nong Rong, called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ, on Tuesday. According to an ISPR press release, matters of mutual interests, defence collaboration, progress on CPEC and regional security were discussed in detail during the meeting. Visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's sincere efforts for peace and stability in the region. The Chinese ambassador reiterated that China shall continue to support Pakistan as a strategic partner. Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed, Director General ISI was also present.

US Defence chief for improved Pak ties

MONITORING REPORT

WASHINGTON: United States (US) Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin on Tuesday telephoned Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa to discuss Afghanistan and mutual goals of security and stability in the region.

According to the details of the conversation shared by the US defence secretary on Twitter, Secretary Austin expressed his interest in continuing to improve the relationship between the US and Pakistan, build upon the multiple shared interests in the region. Secretary Lloyd Austin and COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa also discussed the ongoing situation in Afghanistan, regional security and stability and the bilateral defence relationship more broadly.

Earlier in the day, the United States said it was up to Afghan security forces to defend the country after Taliban captured a sixth provincial capital on Monday, along with border towns and trade routes.

Qureshi, Ukrainian FM discuss bilateral ties

Both the Ministers extended invitations to each other to undertake bilateral visits

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a telephonic conversation with Foreign Minister of Ukraine Mr. Dmytro Kuleba. Views were exchanged on the entire gamut of bilateral relations. Foreign Minister Qureshi emphasized that Pakistan highly valued its relations with Ukraine and desired further to



Continued on Page 06

Peace, security a pre-requisite for foreign investments

Korean ambassador says he sees the Pak govt do its best for the peace process and on the other hand fencing the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan to prevent happening insecurity

EXCLUSIVE

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Republic of Korea to Pakistan Suh Sangpyo talked to Daily Islamabad POST on a variety of issues. He discussed in detail the ongoing cooperation between the two countries. Ambassador Suh also explained salient features of bilateral cooperation in the field of agriculture and as to how this cooperation can further be enhanced. Here is the text of his interview.

1. Bilateral relations

KOREA'S annual trade volume is over 1 trillion dollars and the trade volume between Korea and Pakistan is only 1 billion dollars. So, trade and economic relations between the two countries need to be expanded. Recently joint ventures between Korea and Pakistan have been created, such as Kia and Hyundai in auto industry and Samsung in electronics as well. In June two hydro power projects of 1.5 billion us dollars obtained Letter of Intent from the KP provincial government.

2. Business potential

The Pakistani government has done well to make business easy for foreign investors. So I see the increase of Korean companies in trade and investment. However, there exist some aspects to be improved for creating even better environment for business. For example, transparency and predictability are very important in doing business and so more sophisticated business regulations need to be introduced.

3. Korean companies in Pakistan

There are Korean companies in various

sectors. If I enumerate some of Korean companies in Pakistan, there are Korea Energy, K-Water, Lotter Construction Company in hydropower sector, Hyundai and Kia in auto industry and Samsung and LG in electronics sector.

Most of difficulties that Korean companies encountered have been resolved thanks to the full assistance by the federal and local governments of Pakistan. But as I told earlier, some difficulties such as unpredictability in doing business might be a barrier for Korean companies to come here. Recently an abrupt imposition of taxes on the imported mobile phones gives difficulties to Samsung electronics.

4. Pakistani manpower in Korea

Pakistani manpower is skillful and diligent, so they are welcomed by the Korean companies. The Korean

government established a work visa system for the skilled foreign workers. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, around 500 Pakistani workers entered Korea under the work visa system. Pakistani workers in Korea contribute a lot to cement the ties between the two countries. Their excellent work performance and their kindness are well explaining Pakistan to the Korean people.

5. Business environment

Security in a society is one of important elements to bring foreign investments. Therefore, Afghan peace process is very important to continue to host foreign investment in Pakistan. I see the Pakistani government do its best for the peace process and on the other hand fencing the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan to prevent happening abrupt insecurity in Pakistan.

6. Tourism

In 2019 a big Korean Buddhist delegation of

Joyge Oder visited Pakistan to boost Buddhist pilgrimage tourism here. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, tourist exchanges have been limited. Once the pandemic is over, we will see a rapid increase of Korean tourists here. Other than Buddhist heritage, the Northern mountainous areas are also famous to Koreans. So there is great potential in touristic exchanges.

7. Your impressions about Pakistan and its people?

Pakistan is a huge country with a population of 220 million and endowed with natural resources and vast farmland. Pakistan is a country where Indus valley civilization, one of three ancient civilizations of the world, is originated. So my impressions about Pakistan is amazing. Pakistan is making efforts to do its role as a responsible country in the world. Pakistani people are enjoying their lives in all the aspects of society such as culture and economy. Even people of Pakistan are very kind to foreigners and make them feel at home. Pakistan is a preferred country for diplomats to come.

8. Cultural relations

Cultural relations between Korea and Pakistan go up to the 4th century when Malananda, a Buddhist monk from Pakistan, brought Buddhism to the Korea. In 8th century Hyecho, a Korean Buddhist monk made a pilgrimage visit to Pakistan. Now cultural exchanges of the two countries have expanded to various areas. The Korean embassy recently held a festival of K-Pop, Korean popular music and many Pakistani young people attended the festival and enjoyed themselves.

- The detailed interview shall be published in the coming issue of CENTRELINE magazine



Inside...

USA and KP partner to prevent illegal crop production - Page 02

Pakistan pledges scholarships for the Niger students - Page 03

Special Council set-up to facilitate around 6121 PWDs - Page 04

Anarchic means for peace - Page 05

KPL: Imran lead Rawalakot to victory over Muzaffarabad - Page 06

Six EU countries warn against open door for Afghan refugees - Page 07

Book "GEMS and JEWELS: The Religions of Pakistan" launched - Page 08

Briefs

PM AJK
hails Pak
support

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi said that the state of Pakistan and especially Prime Minister Imran Khan has exercised the right to represent Kashmir's in every forum of the world with courage and honesty. The people of Kashmir can never forget the everlasting love and sacrifice of Pakistani's for Kashmir. He said this while talking to a delegation led by special Coordinator to Prime Minister of Pakistan Ahmed Niazi. Chairman Chief Minister's Complaints Cell Rawalpindi Division Akbar Khan Tanoli and Umar Sultan were also present on the occasion. The delegation congratulated Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi on assuming the office of the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir.

Thousands
of new jobs
sanctioned
in UAD

DNA

DERA GHAZI KHAN: The Vice Chancellor University of Agriculture Dera Ismail Khan (UAD) Dr. Masroor Elahi Babar (TI) chaired the second meeting of Finance and planning here on Monday. The house unanimously accorded the approval and creation of jobs of three hundred academic and more than one thousand supporting staff for the university of Agriculture Dera Ismail Khan. The Representatives from Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Higher Education Department KP (HED) participated online. The Director Finance UAD presenting the agenda items also briefed the house that admissions intake to the faculties already approved by the syndicate will be commenced immediately. Dr. Masroor Elahi stressed the need of enhancing quality education remarked that no compromise shall be made on merit. He also directed the UAD staff to ensure necessary arrangements for the state of Art facilities to the students joining through already offered programs and explore the possible opportunities of scholarships for them home and abroad. "Only your hard work and dedication can make UAD successful" he concluded advising his staff.

2300 cops to
be deputed

FAISALABAD: More than 2300 police officials will be deputed to provide security cover to mourning processions and Majalis on 2nd Muharram Haraam (Wednesday) in the district. Police spokesman said on Tuesday that 181 Majalis would be held in the district on 2nd Muharram including 54 Majalis in Jarawal division, 47 in Iqbal division, 34 in Sadr division, 32 in Madina division and 14 in Lyallpur division. Similarly, 4 mourning processions would be taken out on Wednesday including 2 processions in Iqbal division and one procession each in Madina division and Sadr division. He said that police had deputed more than 2300 security Jawans along with 400 volunteers for the security of mourning processions and Majalis, whereas 5 SPs, 13 DSPs, 16 Inspectors, 76 Sub Inspectors (SIs) and 310 Assistant Sub Inspectors (ASIs) would supervise the security arrangements in their respective areas. He said that police would provide four-tier security to the Muharram activities at all places. In the first circle, the volunteers will conduct body search and identification of the procession participants while walk-through gates and metal detectors would be used at third security circle. In other two circles, the security personnel will watch and keep vigil eye on the suspects and miscreants. He said that 10 teams of elite force would also remain alert on Wednesday and ensure a thorough patrolling on various routes. - APP

USA, KP government partner to
prevent illegal crop production

The project successfully replaced poppy cultivation with more socially acceptable crops yielding greater income

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: On August 9, the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Planning and Development Department (P&D) celebrated the successful completion of a crop control and area development project worth \$4.2 million that benefitted more than 4,500 families from the Bajaur, Khyber, and Mohmand districts. At the same event, partners celebrated the launch of a new project worth \$1.3 million that will benefit farming communities from the Torghar district. Director of the U.S. Embassy's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) team Mark Tervakoski and Director General of P&D Muhammad

Bakhtiar Khan chaired the ceremony. With U.S. government funding, the KP government built 21 kilometers of roads, 31 irrigation channels, and 18 drinking water supply systems, and gave 350 farmers high value crop seeds and training to cultivate more than 1,733 acres of land with lucrative legal crops in lieu of illegal ones. The new roads gave law enforcement access to the rural communities, and those communities gained access to markets to sell their legal crops, hospitals to care for their sick, and schools for their children.

P&D Director General Khan said, "The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa highly values the long-term partnership with and commitment of INL towards eradicating illicit crops and providing alternate sources

of livelihoods in the tribal districts of Khyber, Mohmand, and Bajaur. The project successfully replaced poppy cultivation with more socially acceptable crops yielding greater income. With INL's assistance, the government of KP was able to construct roads to formerly inaccessible areas, develop water sources for drinking and irrigation, and train farmers to increase yields." He expressed appreciation for the collaboration with the United States to bring sustainable "change to the lives of the targeted communities."

During the ceremony, INL Director Tervakoski recognized the long-standing and strong partnership between the U.S. and KP governments to curb illegal crop production in the province. "This achievement

illustrates the fruits of our labor. The \$4.2 million investment to offer lucrative legal alternatives to farmers vulnerable to illicit crop production will have a lasting impact in the Mohmand, Bajaur, and Khyber districts," Tervakoski said.

For more than 30 years, the United States and Pakistan have worked together to reduce the supply of poppy and enhance alternative livelihood opportunities for the farmers of the KP province and its newly merged districts. The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement works in more than 90 countries to help combat crime and corruption, counter the narcotics trade, improve police institutions, and promote court systems that are fair and accountable.

30 cases referred to drug court



FAISALABAD: DC Muhammad Ali presides over the meeting of District Quality Control Board. - DNA

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The meeting of District Quality Control Board was held with Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali in the chair. The medical store inspection reports of Drug Inspectors were reviewed in the meeting. The total 40 cases against medical stores found involved in different violations of Drug Act were

examined during the meeting and hearing of pleas of medical store owners were made in this regard. After hearing, the meeting decided to refer the cases against 30 medical stores to the Drug Court. Moreover owner of some 6 medical store was given warning and 4 cases were adjourned till next meeting due to not appearing of medical stores owners. The Deputy Commissioner

also reviewed the performance of the Drug Inspectors and directed them for accelerating the drive against sale and manufacturing of spurious drugs. He said that stern action should be taken against the quacks who were playing with the health of patients. He urged upon sealing the medical stores immediately involved in sale of spurious and intoxicating medicines. The Deputy Commissioner gave

clear and loud message to the functionaries of health departments that the any kind of corruption would not be tolerated. He strictly warned that no complaint of sale of spurious drugs should be reported in the district and drive against drug mafia should be made result oriented. Among others, the meeting was also attended by Secretary DQCB Rubina Akhtar, members and Drug Inspectors.

FCCI welcomes
TADP's B2B
web portal

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) has welcomed the launching of world class TDAP's (Trade Development Authority of Pakistan) B2B web portal in order to accelerate the pace of Pakistani exports.

In a statement issued here today, he said that TDAP is an organization with a mandate to promote trade with a special focus on increasing exports. He said that this newly launched B2B web portal will showcase Pakistani products to international buyers around the world. He said that initially data of one thousand short listed companies will be posted on this portal free of cost. He said that TDAP will also make arrangements for photography and videography of their products in the studi-



os which may be established in designated TDAP's offices across the country. He further said that it was encouraging that special priority will be given to the women, new, micro, small and medium enterprises having diverse product range. He urged upon the FCCI members to avail from this free facility by getting them registered with the TDAP. Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed has also requested TDAP to arrange a special awareness session so that maximum FCCI members could avail from this opportunity.

PHA to
distribute
free saplings

DNA

FAISALABAD: Parks & Horticulture Authority (PHA) Director General (DG) Asima Ejaz Cheema Tuesday said that free-of-cost saplings would be distributed among the public in connection with the Jashn-e-Azadi, being celebrated on Aug 14. Talking to the media in her office, she said that the PHA had evolved a comprehensive strategy to celebrate Jashn-e-Azadi by planting maximum saplings in green belts, parks and other available spaces in the city. For the purpose, the PHA would also provide free saplings to citizens on the Independence Day. She said the PHA had planned planting one lakh saplings in Faisalabad during August, and for the purpose, the authority had started plantation drive from August 10 by planting 15,000 saplings in the city in one day including 7,000 at Samundri Road alone.

Telenor
empowering
students and
teachers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Building upon its efforts to innovate the country's education system, Telenor Pakistan has partnered with Noon Academy to improve the students' online learning experience. Under this partnership, K-12 students across the country will be provided with data rewards to incentivise their learning on the noon platform. This partnership comes as a result of last year's education challenges that affected students all over the country as schools remained shut. Noon provides quality education free of cost to around 10 million students across the MENA region, including 1.2 million in Pakistan. Telenor Pakistan takes pride in its rapid, ongoing progress in removing roadblocks to online learning by enabling STEM, language learning and exam preparation. The company's vast education portfolio grows at phenomenal rates and is projected to rise to even greater heights this year. As the students sign up and attend a complete lecture, a data reward will be posted against the number. Telenor Pakistan's Chief Operating Officer, Khurram Ashfaq, commented, "By working together and creating collaborations with partners like Noon we can reduce the gap in the resources available to over 40 million K-12 students around Pakistan. We aim to motivate young minds to tackle today's education obstacles while Noon equips them to counter tomorrow's challenges with the latest 21st-century skills. Together, we aim to optimize new technologies to upskill our youth and ensure that learning and up skilling never stops."

Corona claims 18
more lives in KP

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Health Department Tuesday confirmed 18 more deaths due to corona in the province during the last 24 hours. According to health authorities, the total number of deaths till date is 4588. Out of 18 deaths, 11 are reported in Peshawar, one in Malakand, two in Hazara, one in Kohat and three deaths in D I Khan. The tally of total corona cases reported so far is 149532 after 476 new cases that are reported during last 24 hours. The total of recoveries till date is 138780 while 654 patients were recovered in last 24 hours. As many as 9580 corona detection tests were conducted in the same period and the total of tests conducted till date is 2439441. The number of persons administered second dose of vaccine in a single day is 6411 and the number of second dose administered so far is 35282. The tally of vaccinations in all categories in a single day is 163838. - APP

Wearing face
mask mandatory
in BRT buses

PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar Division, Riaz Khan Mehsud has banned traveling in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) buses without wearing face mask and in wake of operation with 50% capacity increase in its fleet. He issued these directives while presiding over a high-level meeting regarding implementation of Corona preventive standard operating procedures (SOPs) here on Tuesday. Besides, Director Transport, Fahad Ikram Qazi, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Peshawar, Shama Niamat, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Trans Peshawar, Deputy Director, Peshawar Bus Terminal, Kamran Ajmad

and other administrative officers attended the meeting at large. The meeting decided the cancellation of the route permits of those commuters' buses where drivers and commuters are not wearing facemasks and ensuring of the implementation of all Corona preventive measures including vaccination and SOPs in bus stations. In this connection, the meeting was told that 80% public sector staffs of the bus stations have completed vaccination. The Commissioner directed the ensuring of loading 50% commuters in public transport as directives of the provincial government and stern action against the violators. - APP

Swedish Embassy launches
digital reading campaign in Urdu

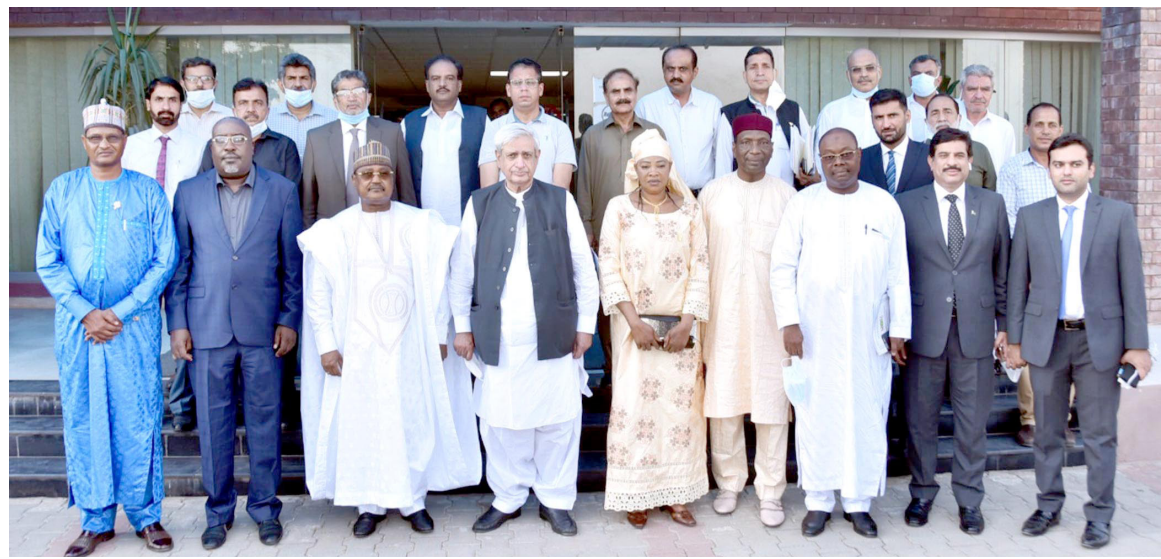
DNA

ISLAMABAD: Embassy of Sweden in Pakistan on Tuesday launched a digital reading campaign in Urdu "Pippi ki Kahani" featuring Pakistani artists. In collaboration with a local organization, Olopolo media the project was launched on Embassy's Facebook page by the Ambassador H.E Henrik Persson. "Pippi Longstocking" is a world-known children's book character, created by the Swedish author Astrid Lindgren to Pakistan. Astrid Lindgren is one of the most translated authors in the world, and one of the most well-known Swedish authors.

The first book about Pippi was published in 1945 and has since been translated into more than 70 languages. Pippi Longstocking is a confident and courageous young girl who thinks differently and uses her very own, innovative ways to resolve problem and issues encountered on daily life. UNESCO in partnership with Swedish company Volvo and Embassy has translated this book into Urdu, and launched its digital readings for viewers in Pakistan. In a video message released on social media platform, Sweden Ambassador



to Pakistan H.E Henrik Persson said: "I believe the reading experiences we have especially as children have an impact on us for life and shape our worldview." Therefore, he said "It is important to have a right to excellent literature: to books that are entertaining, innovative and challenging. Reading books in translation fosters understanding among people and cultures." As Astrid Lindgren once put it: "Children have the right to great stories". The envoy said: "To lose yourself in a story is to find yourself in the grip of an irresistible power. A power that provokes thought, unlocks language, and allows the imagination to roam free." The Digital readings features renowned Pakistani artists Sania Saeed, Samiya Mumtaz, Mina Malik-Hussain, Nadia Afgan and Fawad Khan. First episode will be aired on Embassy's facebook page on 11th August 2021 at 8:00 pm.



ISLAMABAD: A group photo of Syed Fakhur Imam Federal Minister for M/O NFS&R with Niger delegation headed by Seini Oumarou President of National Assembly of Niger, Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan Chairman PARC and other high officials of PARC/NARC. - DNA

UBG hails record FBR revenue collection

UBG Spokesperson Gulzar Feroze, UBG Patron General SM Munir elaborated "The increase in tax collection is not only historically highest in the month of July 2021 but has also surpassed the monthly target by about 22 percent, which proves that the Government's efforts to make positive changes

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The top brass of UBG leadership commended Shaukat Tarin Minister for Finance & Revenue and Mr. Asim Ahmed Chairman FBR for exceeding July tax collection target by a wide margin and achieving record revenue collection of Rs 413 billion- an increase of over 36 percent from last year figure - in July 2021. According to a statement issued by UBG Central Spokesperson Gulzar Feroze, UBG Patron General SM Munir elaborated "The

increase in tax collection is not only historically highest in the month of July 2021 but has also surpassed the monthly (July 2021) target by about 22 percent, which proves that the Government's efforts to make positive changes in the FBR and for documentation of economy has started yielding fruitful results". Zubair Tufail President UBG appreciated the Board for successfully meeting the tax collection target of Rs 4691 billion for the outgoing year 2020-21 and managed to collect Rs.4725 billion showing an increase of 18.2 per-



cent as compared to last year revenue collection of Rs.3997 billion and hoped that the position of tax collection and tax-to-GDP ratio which is one of the lowest in the world will further improve in the years to come. For this purpose

the UBG proposed to broaden the tax base, distortionary exemptions and concessions be removed, new tax payers be identified through digitization, reliance on indirect taxes and issues in improving tax-administration should be properly taken care of as they have adversely affected tax-to-GDP ratio which is one of the lowest, about 10%, in the world.

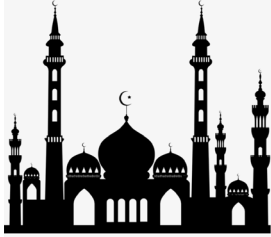
They said that the country's economy had witnessed resilience even in the unfavorable circumstances particularly in the wake of COVID-19 and its different kinds

of variants which have generally and globally affected economic growth thus reducing tax collection in almost all the countries irrespective of developed, under developed and developing. They urged the Chairman FBR that tax contribution of all the three major sectors of Pakistan's economy i.e. agriculture, industry and services should be proportionally increased according to their share in GDP. "For example the agriculture sector accounted for 19.4 percent in GDP in 2020 while contributing less than 2 percent in tax", they elaborated.

Need
stressed to
promote
oilseed crops

FAISALABAD: Pakistan must promote oilseed crops in the country to meet its domestic demand instead of importing over 3.5 million metric tonnes of edible oil every year. This was stated by University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan while addressing an international seminar on "Palm Oil Trade, Applications and Diet" held here at UAF. The seminar was jointly organized by the National Institute of Food Science and Technology, UAF and Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB). The UAF VC said that it was need of hour to promote oilseed crops in the country to overcome the issue. He said that palm oil was one of the famous vegetable oil and there was a need to dispel the misconception about it. He said, "We have to ensure proper procedures and measures for the production of edible oil for the health of people". He called for joint efforts to cope with the food security which was posing a threat. Johari Minal from MPOB said that Pakistan edible oil consumption had risen significantly from 2.7 million metric tonnes in 2000 to 5.3 million metric tonnes in 2020. - APP

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	03:54 am
Zohr.....	12:13 pm
Asr.....	05:01 pm
Maghrib.....	07:00 pm
Isha.....	08:32 pm



Hotels & Restaurants

Serena Hotel.....	111 133 133
Marriott.....	051-2826121
Monal.....	0334-5421812



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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Emergency

Rescue (Police).....	15
Bomb Disposal.....	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.....	1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....	9266044
Motorway Police.....	9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....	9222596
Rawalpindi.....	9270601-20



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....	115
PIA Flight Info.....	114
PIA Cargo.....	9280979
Railway Inquiry.....	117
Railway Exchange.....	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.....	5555489
CAA.....	9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....	5611111
MH.....	5611116
Cantt Hospital.....	9270907-11
DHQ.....	5556311-4
RGH.....	9290301-7
Holy Family.....	9290322-7
PIMS.....	9261170-79
Polyclinic.....	9218300-09
Shifa International.....	4603666



Departments

CDA.....	9221334-43
CDA.....	9208301-04
Met Office.....	9250360-6
RDA.....	5555864
TMA.....	5770886
Cantonment Board.....	9270151-3



Complaints

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11.....	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8.....	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8.....	9266316
Wapda Islamabad.....	9217579
Wapda Rawalpindi.....	111-309-309

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....	9209224
Potohar Town.....	9209224
Rawal Town.....	5773343

Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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Pakistan pledges scholarships for the Niger students

Welcoming the recent signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Parliamentary Cooperation, the President expressed the hope that the MoU would bring the two countries further closer

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its brotherly relations with Niger and wants to further broaden the scope of cooperation in all areas of mutual interest. He said that both countries enjoyed excellent relations and had unanimity of opinion on various issues at the international fora. He made these remarks while talking to the visiting Speaker of the National Assembly of Niger, Mr. Seyni Oumarou, who along with members of his delegation, called on the President, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr. Asad Qaiser, also attended the meeting. Welcoming the President of the National Assembly of Niger, President Arif Alvi said that the entire scope of bilateral cooperation between the two countries needed to be further augmented through the regular exchange of political, parliamentary and commercial delegations. He conveyed to the visiting dignitary that Pakistan would provide 100 scholarships for students of Niger in 2021-22. He said that Pakistan accorded great significance to its ties with Niger under its "Look Africa" policy and wished to sign a Preferential Trade Agreement with Niger that would help enhance economic and business cooperation between the two countries. Welcoming the recent signing of the Memorandum



of Understanding (MoU) on Parliamentary Cooperation, the President expressed the hope that the MoU would bring the two countries further closer. He added that Pakistan was focusing on reforming and developing its health, education and agriculture sectors to put the country on the development path. Mr. Seyni Oumarou said that relations between the two countries were based on brotherhood that needed to be further cemented for the

mutual benefit of the two sides. He underlined the need for transforming the existing relations into more robust economic and business cooperation between the two countries. Mr. Seyni Oumarou sought Pakistan's help and expertise in developing the irrigation system of his country to meet its food requirements. President Dr. Arif Alvi said that Pakistan would help Niger, in this regard, by sharing its experiences and expertise with her in

the agriculture and irrigation sectors. The Speaker of the National Assembly of Niger thanked the Government of Pakistan for offering scholarships to students of Niger. He also invited the President to visit Niger to further boost bilateral relations. He expressed his gratitude to the Government of Pakistan for extending a warm welcome and hospitality to him and the members of his delegation during their stay in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Amer Ali Ahmed distributing shields to officers of Audit and Accounts group of 48 Common Program. Other CDA officials are also present during the welcome ceremony of visiting officers. – DNA

Flowers shops being forced to shut at 8:00pm

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Desparity is being meted out to different poor flowers shopkeepers at Super Market while the relevant authorities showing leniency towards those who are well-connected. Talking to media here on Tuesday, a flower vendor Muhammad Ishaq said that desparity is being meted out to different poor flowers shopkeepers at the Super Market while the relevant authorities showing leniency towards those who are well-connected. While sharing details, he said that electricity is switched off at 8:00 pm and the flowers vendors are forced to shut their shops at this time while their flowers cannot be sold the other day as they wither. He said his business is being damaged by the officials of police and Capital Development Authority on the daily basis as after 8:00pm, the customers mostly visit the shops but discrimination is being done with them which should be stopped but they have to shut their shops. On the other side, the well-connected vendors at Super Market don't shut their shops at 8:00pm and keep them open till 11:00pm, he said and added that such discrimination should not be done to the people as this is tarnishing image of police and CDA. Other two vendors Farhan and Furqan the viewpoint of the said vendor and requested the government to provide them justice as early as possible.

COMSTECH holds first meeting of CCoE focal persons



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) organized meeting of Focal Persons of COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence (CCoE) to discuss progress and review various initiatives of CCoE. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH said in his opening remarks that the

most important asset is the human resources and what we can do to furnish it by giving quality education. Talking about African region he suggested that Pakistan should expand diplomatic presence in the region to help make outreach and interaction with African nations easy. He asked the participants to find out how we can use CCoE platform to benefit Pakistan. Prof. Choudhary informed that the role of COMSTECH in CCoE is to facilitate

the interaction of member universities with the OIC member states, but the key role to run this initiative is of the member institutions. COMSTECH would fund and facilitate travel arrangements, whereas local hospitality will be arranged by the host institution. The major agenda items of the meeting included for discussions were, frequent interaction among the institutions, information sharing, active participation in COMSTECH events, up-

date on CCoE activities, introduction to COMSTECH technology and innovation portal, and COMSTECH-CBS international exhibition among others. The participants of the meeting assured their utmost cooperation in effective implementation of various initiatives of the consortium. It was also agreed that consortium member institutions would work closely together through experience, expertise and knowledge sharing.

PAC displays photo exhibition "Umeed Ka Safar"

While addressing the ceremony, Member National Assembly Wajih Akram said that Pakistan is the interpretation of the dreams of the Muslims of the subcontinent

SHUJAAT HAMZA

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council displayed a photo exhibition on Tehreek-e-Pakistan under the title "Umeed Ka Safar". The special guest of the exhibition was Wajih Akram, Member National Assembly and Parliamentary Secretary for Federal Education. The exhibition features photographs based on the struggle for Tehreek-e-Pakistan from 1857 to 1947. The arrival of refugees in Pakistan after independence in 1947 and the atrocities along the way are also on display. While addressing the ceremony, Member National Assembly Wajih Akram said that Pakistan is the interpretation of the dreams of the Muslims of the subcontinent.



Looking at the photo exhibition, it is said to see how many sacrifices and hardships Pakistan was built after. Quaide-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah made a dream come true by working day and night. Our young generation is very hardworking and worthy. The young generation has to protect Pakistan on ideological basis, she added. Former Director Arts Council Naheed Manzoor said that freedom is the greatest blessing of the world. Today we are breathing in the open air because of our Quaide-Azam. The value of freedom should be asked of Kashmiris. At the end, Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed thanked the special guest and participants. A large number of people from different walks of life participated in the exhibition. The photo exhibition will continue for a week.

Bikers to get challan for not wearing masks

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Rai Mazhar Iqbal has directed the Traffic Wardens to issue challan slips to bikers, motorists and the drivers of Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) for not wearing face masks. According to a CTO spokesman, CTO had directed all the circle incharges, sector incharges and traffic wardens to penalize the corona Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) violators particularly bikers, motorists and the drivers of PSVs if passengers of PSVs found without face masks while travelling. He said, in view of the alarming situation of coronavirus, strict action would be taken against the SOP violators. We will utilize all resources to protect human lives, he said adding, single biker would not be issued challan while the mask restriction would be for pillion riding. It is necessary to use masks for two or more people in private vehicles, he said adding, challan would not be issued in case of one person in a private vehicle while masks would be required for all the passengers in a Public Service Vehicle.

IWMB directed for action against invasions

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday instructed the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) to take action against encroachments in Margalla Hills National Park. Chief Justice Athar Minallah, hearing the case, expressed annoyance with chairman IWMB and asked that what action the department had taken against the encroachment. What were the consequences of encroachment in the national park, he questioned. The court asked the IWMB that why Pakistan Navy and Air Force were not served notices for violations, adding that no one was above the law. Chairman IWMB Raina Saeed Khan said that his department had taken no action as it had no such powers. To this, the chief justice asked that what powers the IWMB have in this regard. IWMB's lawyer said that anyone could be given imprisonment sentence along with fine under IWMB Ordinance 1979. The board had powers of arrest under section 29.

IHC summons DC ICT in land acquiring case

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) Tuesday summoned deputy commissioner ICT in person in a case of land acquiring. Two women claimed that their land had been acquired by a housing society in the jurisdiction of Sihala Police Station. IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah heard the case. The court inquired, under what law the land had been acquired. The court instructed the deputy commissioner and additional deputy commissioner general ICT to appear in person on September 6, and submit written comments into the matter.

ANC awards three years imprisonment in drug case

RAWALPINDI: An Anti-Narcotics Court (ANC) on Tuesday awarded three years imprisonment to one accused in a drug smuggling case. Israr Ahmed Butt was found guilty of possessing 1120 grams of hashish and was arrested by Naseerabad police in April 2020. Additional Session Judge Malik Asif Ejaz pronounced the judgment after recording evidence of the witnesses and final arguments by the defence and prosecution counsels. The Court also imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on the convicted. – APP

Briefs

Domain of Safe City Project extends

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The domain of Islamabad Safe City Project is being extended keeping in view the increase in population which would help to control crime and maintain law and order in the city.

According to details, CCTV cameras installed at shopping malls and private housing societies would be connected with Safe City project. In a statement, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman said that extension of Safe City project would help control crime in the city and maintain law and order.

The IGP said that Islamabad police is committed to ensure protection to the lives and property of the citizens and arrests of anti-social as well as criminal elements are being ensured.

He said that Islamabad police achieved great success in 2021 and ensured effective crackdown against criminal elements. All accused wanted to police in crime cases of heinous nature occurred in Islamabad were arrested and relief was provided to the complainants.

The special meetings were conducted with officials of Rawalpindi police and desired results were achieved during joint search operations. The IGP said that several gangsters belonging to other districts were nabbed and effective action was ensured against criminal elements.

He said that Islamabad police would leave no stone unturned to provide protection to the lives and property of citizens.

PNCA to resume weekly talent hunt

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) is planning to resume online weekly talent hunt singing and music edition. The arts council has started this special program for the promotion of classical and semi-classical folk music, modern and pop singing among the younger generation and to groom hidden talent at National Art Gallery, an official of PNCA told APP.

Since its inception, the talent hunt program had conducted more than 32 talent hunt online open competitions.

Renowned artists in different specialized music fields were taking auditions of registered participants at PNCA's official social media online group.

The program was postponed due to the fatal accident of DG PNCA Dr. Fouzia Saeed. – APP

Lucky Motor to manufacture Samsung

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has issued Mobile Device Manufacturing (MDM) authorization to Lucky Motor Corporation Limited for manufacturing of Samsung brand mobile devices.

The company had applied for authorization to setup mobile device manufacturing plant in Karachi, where it will manufacture Samsung brand mobile devices, said a news release.

The authorization to manufacture Samsung mobile devices in Pakistan is a landmark achievement and will further revolutionize the vibrant mobile manufacturing ecosystem in the country by ensuring presence of major local and foreign players in the market.

This is possible only due to the conducive policies of the Government of Pakistan in its "Digital Pakistan" endeavor. PTA has so far issued MDM authorizations to 25 foreign and local companies for the production of mobile devices (2G/3G/4G) locally. Mobile devices manufactured by these companies shall not only be sold in the country but will also be exported to other competitive markets of the region and beyond.

Special Council set-up to facilitate around 6121 PWDs

National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) issues special Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) with universal logo of disability only to holders of disability certificates

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: The government has established a Council on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as a sole authority for issuance of disability certificates at Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) level to ensure social benefits and other allied facilities to around 6121 male and female Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Capital.

National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) issues special Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) with universal logo of disability only to holders of disability certificates.

As part of measures to ensure social benefits and other facilities being provided to disabled persons under Disabled Persons Employment and Rehabilitation Ordinance during last few years, Sehat Sahulat Cards are being issued to all PWDs while free medical treatment is also provided to PWDs



and their dependents in government hospitals and dispensaries. According to official information issued here on Tuesday, the other details of the

schemes include 2 (two) per cent disability quota reserved for PWDs in employment which is being implemented, PWDs are given concession in air and rail fares, PWDs are allowed to appear in CSS examination in all groups and are entitled for import of duty free cars.

Moreover, the Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are given individual financial assistance by the government and are provided vocational training facilities to make them self-reliant through skill development. Awareness campaigns are carried out in electronic media through Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA). The data of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Islamabad according to Population Census, 2017 obtained from Pakistan Bureau of Statistics showed that of the total around 2.3088 million population, around 6121 are PWDs. Out of total PWDs in Islamabad, 3743 are male and 2378 are female PWDs.

NA refers 6 bills to committees

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Tuesday witnessed introduction of six private members' bills which were referred to the relevant committees for further consideration.

The bills introduced in the House were the Constitution (Amend) Bill, 2021 (Amend in Article-27); the Trade Organizations (Amend) Bill, 2021; the Constitution (Amend) Bill, 2021 (Amend in Article-59); the Drug Regulatory Authority (Amend) Bill, 2021; the Pakistan Medical Commission (Amend) Bill, 2021 and the ICT Destitute and Neglected Children Bill, 2021. Two bills including the Constitution (Amend) Bill, 2021 (Amend in Article-54) and the Contractors Registration Bill, 2021 were deferred following the consent of their movers. Another bill titled, the Memon University at Islamabad Bill, 2021 – was deferred due to the absence of mover. – DNA



RAWALPINDI: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed visiting newly established state of the art COVID-19 isolation ward at Holy Family Hospital. – APP

HEC, Huawei launch 'Seeds for the Future' program 2021

It's an 8-day long culture and ICT technologies learning program where the nominated 40 brilliant engineering students from Pakistan will attend the online training together with students from Bahrain

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Huawei Pakistan together with Higher Education Commission (HEC) launched its 'Seeds for the Future' program 2021.

It's an 8-day long culture and ICT technologies learning program where the nominated 40 brilliant engineering students from Pakistan will attend the online training together with students from Bahrain.

Due to the restrictions put in place by Covid-19, just like last year, the program will continue to stay online. The program first launched in Pakistan in 2015 and this is the 7th time 'Seeds for Future' is happening in Pakistan. Out of a pool of more than 1000 applicants,

40 have been nominated by the Higher Education Commission. They are all undergraduate engineering students. The initial period of the

cloud computing, AI, strategic leadership and etc. They will also participate in the "Tech4Good" Group Project in this year. The 'Seeds for the Future'



learning is about Chinese culture and Chinese language. Later on, they will get technical training from Huawei and industry ICT experts who will share their expertise on a wide range of courses covering 5G,

program has been a successful addition to Huawei's social-enterprise partnership goal in Pakistan since the first batch of Pakistani students traveled to China in 2015. The aim of the program,

which has been active in more than 130 countries & regions since its inception in Thailand, has been to nurture upcoming STEM talent from around the world.

As a global ICT market leader, Huawei has taken it upon itself to promote local ICT industries as part of development in their operational regions. The ICT industry is one of the fastest growing in Pakistan, and the world. The demand for qualified and market-ready professionals in the field is growing rapidly – it is becoming a need, in our burgeoning online-based globalized reality. Programs such as Seeds for the Future address this long-term possibility of deficiency with appropriate foresight.

ICT Police, NFSA sign MoU for speedy investigation

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Forensic Science Agency (NFSA) to ensure speedy investigation into crime cases of heinous nature. The MoU was formally signed by Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman and Project Director NFSA Sabir Ahmed in a ceremony held at Police Line Headquarters. Senior officials of Islamabad police were also present on the occasion. As per MoU, two mobile vans of the agency would provide assistance to Islamabad police during the investigation process of any crime incident. The capable and experienced staff of the agency would help Islamabad police in crime scene processing and collection of evidences. Special operations at crime

scene including review of blood spots, the scientific analysis, and investigation of the murder incident, shooting scene, fire pattern and auto-crash would be carried out through mutual cooperation. The NFSA would coordinate with Islamabad police in setting up Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) Unit at the level of police stations. The investigation would be carried out minutely and all evidences at crime scene and its vicinity would be collected to proceed the investigation on right track.

Three experts of NFSA would also provide training to cops related to investigation of crime incident while all the services would be provided to Islamabad police free of cost. On the occasion, the IGP Islamabad thanked Director NFSA and said that resources are being allocated for Islamabad police to improve the standard of investigation and secure the crime scene.

Gastritis cases on rise in twin cities: Expert

ISLAMABAD: The health expert on Tuesday underlined the need to avoid taking substandard food items during the month of August (ongoing Monsoon) leading to stomach diseases particularly 'Gastritis' causing serious illness.

Talking to APP, health expert Dr Azhar Mehmood said Gastritis directly affects the stomach and may cause nausea or vomiting, while gastroenteritis affects both the stomach and the intestines due to poor quality meal disturbing the digestive system.

He informed that Gastroenteritis symptoms may include diarrhea in addition to nausea or vomiting which rapidly caused water and mineral loss from the body resulting weakness and drastic health deterioration. He said acute gastritis occurred when the lining of a stomach is damaged or weak this allows digestive acids to irritate the stomach.

During outdoor visits people tend to buy various local delicacies and venture into multiple foodies offering unhygienic and poor quality food and there was no check on the food standards in such places which at times was perilous, Dr Mehmood noted.

He urged the masses to avoid taking food items from outdoors and unverified food outlets for at least two months, adding, "acute gastritis comes suddenly, and could be caused by bacteria, viruses, stress, or spicy food." – APP

Irsa releases 254382 cusecs water

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 254382 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 298839 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1541feet, which was 149 feet higher than its dead level of 1392 feet.

Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded at 162200 and 132600 cusecs respectively.

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1200, 80 feet, which was 240 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 36857 and 22000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded at 149053, 185448 and 227155 cusecs respectively.

Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 38800 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 60982 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.

250 new Covid cases reported in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: As many as 250 new Covid-19 cases has been reported across the district during the last 24 hours.

Such cases include eighteen belonging to Rawal Town, seventy-three from Potohar town, seventy-two from Rawalpindi Cantt, twenty five from Gujjar Khan, ten from Kahutta, fourteen from Kotli Sattian, nine from Kalar Syeda, six from Murree, eight each from Islamabad and AJK, 2 each from Mianwali and Chakwal and one each from Attock, KPK and Okara. According to the daily situation report issued by the District Corona Management centre on Tuesday, 197 Coronavirus confirmed patients were admitted to various facilities of the city including 41 were admitted in Holy Family Hospital, 27 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 66 in Institute of Urology, 47 in Fauji Foundation Hospital, 5 in District Headquarter hospital, 4 in Begum Akhtar Memorial trust, 3 in Bilal hospital and two each in Hearts international and Attock hospital.

The report updated that 7 patients were on ventilators in critical condition, 63 stable and 127 on oxygen. So far 1,563,100 people including 38,638 health workers and 1,524,462 other citizens have jabbed themselves against the lethal coronavirus across the district since the vaccination administering drive launched on March 10. – APP

NAB stresses conclusion of corruption cases

Chairman NAB says that youth is our future; NAB has signed an MOU with Higher Education Commission in order to aware youth about the ill effects of corruption in universities and colleges

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Justice (r) Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB chaired a meeting to review overall performance of NAB since its inception at NAB Headquarters. Hussain Asghar, Deputy Chairman NAB, Syed Ashar Hairder, Prosecutor General Accountability, (PGA) Zahir Shah, DG Operations NAB, and other senior officers of NAB attended the meeting. During the meeting, it was informed by DG Operations that NAB had received 496,460 complaints since its inception, out of which 487,124 complaints were disposed of. NAB has authorized 16,093 Complaint Verification (CVs), while 15,378 Complaint Verification were completed. NAB has authorized 10,241 inquiries, out of which 9,275 inquiries have been completed. NAB has authorized 4,654 Investigations, out of which 4,358 Investigations have been completed by NAB since its inception. It

was informed that has recovered Rs. 816.793 Billion directly and indirectly since its inception, which is a record achievement. It was further informed that NAB had filed 3754 references in various Learned Accountability Courts, out of which 2477 References were decided by Learned Accountability Courts. Currently, 1277 references having worth of Rs. 1335.019 Billion are under trail at various Learned Accountability Courts.

The Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB has said that NAB is absolutely committed to nab big fish and logical conclusion of mega corruption cases by adopting Accountability for All policy. He said that NAB has chalked out an effective Anti-Corruption Strategy comprising Awareness, Prevention and Enforcement in order to eradicate corruption through Zero Tolerance policy. He said that NAB is considered role model among SAARC countries. Due this reason, NAB was selected first Chairman of



SAARC anti-Corruption Forum. NAB is focal Department of Pakistan under United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). He said that NAB has signed an MOU with China to oversee CPEC projects being conducted in Pakistan. He said that NAB has introduced a new concept of Combine Investigation Team (CIT) in order to benefit from the experience and collective wisdom of senior supervisory officers in order to

further improve the standard and quality of inquiries and investigations on the basis of solid evidence as well as statements of witnesses and documentary evidence besides establishing state of the art Forensic Science Lab which has facilities of Digital Forensics, Questioned Documents and Fingerprint analysis. These initiatives of NAB are lending quality.

He said that youth is our future; NAB has signed an MOU with Higher Education Commission in order to aware youth about the ill effects of corruption in universities and colleges at an early age.

Under this initiative, NAB has successfully established more than 50 thousands Character Building Societies in various universities and colleges besides constituting prevention committees in consultations with respective provincial and federal government department in order to assist them to identify and plug loopholes in order to check corruption.

He said that as per Gillani and Gallup survey, 59 percent people have shown trust upon NAB. Moreover, reputed national and international organizations like Transparency International (TI) Pakistan, World Economic Forum, Global Peace Canada, PILDAT and Mishaal Pakistan have appreciated NAB's efforts in eradication of corruption. He said that NAB has devised a comprehensive Quantified Grading System in order to further improve the performance of NAB Headquarter and all Regional Bureaus.

Under Quantified Grading System, NAB Headquarters and Regional Bureaus are being evaluated on annual and midterm basis at a given criteria which has proved very successful in increasing the repute and image of NAB manifold due to regular monitoring, inspection and implementation of decisions taken by the present management of NAB under the dynamic Leadership of Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB.

Railway report

THE Federal Government Inspector of Railways (FGIR) finally released the report for the derailment and collision of two passenger trains in the Ghotki district that killed 67 people in total. Citing poor maintenance and ineffective leadership as the primary causes, a call for greater responsibility has been made. The government must act quickly and take action to prevent the steady decline of the Pakistani railways. The problem with our railways is systemic; the rapid politicisation of the industry has enabled various inefficiencies to seep in. The matter may not have been as grave if accidents were infrequent and countless lives were not lost. In the case of the Ghotki incident, improper track maintenance, welding and the use of poor quality materials resulted in immediate derailment. The FGIR implicated 20 officials whose job description entailed preventing such occurrences and bringing about change in how the industry operates.

For the previous fiscal year, the revenue stream for Pakistan's railways decreased by 50 percent—falling to Rs8 billion from the expected Rs16 billion. There have been many reasons for this decline; a lack of funding, failure to generate revenue, inept services, upgradation failures and rapid politicisation. If nepotism dictates minister appointments then we can expect little progress in regards to maximising profits or attracting funding. Thus, the standard of quality of the railways always remains subpar at best. There are no checks, no upgrades and barely any repair work that is done on time. It is this kind of negligence that the FGIR has rung a bell against.

At the same time, there are claims that those implicated are being used as scapegoats for a larger problem that plagues the railways. This view must be given due weightage because by making a government department for the industry, an institutional dichotomy has been created in which a bureaucratic system continues to clash with the expectations of commercial level profits. Either we have to change the system or readjust our expectations but either way, the government needs to act now.

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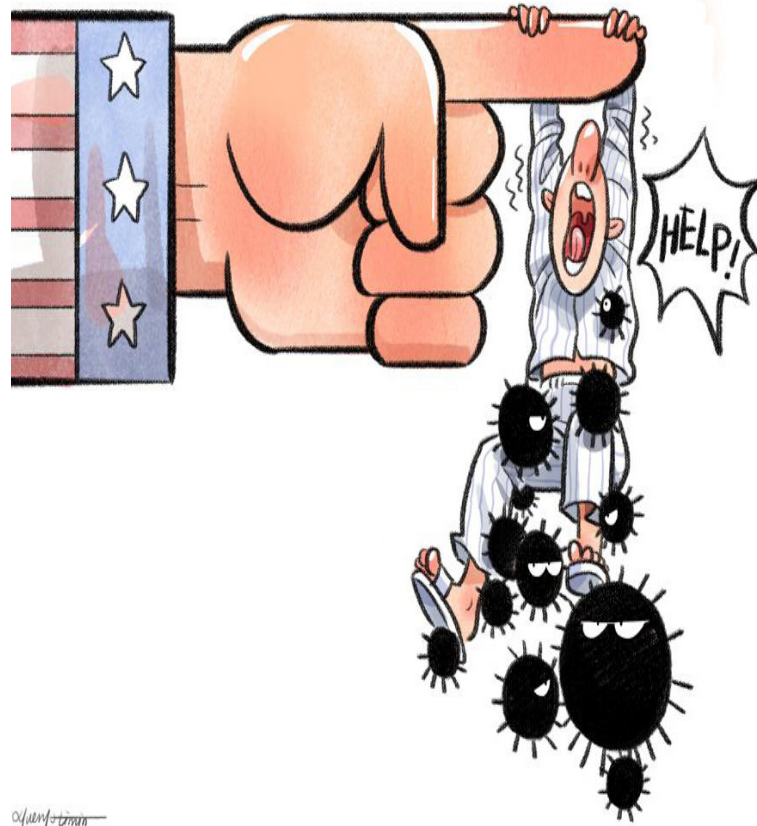
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Power sector reforms

CONCLUDING his week-long visit to Pakistan, the World Bank's VP South Asia, Hartwig Schafer has emphasised that it is crucial for Pakistan to stay the course on the structural reform programme launched by the government. The VP stressed on the power sector in particular, as he urged the government to accelerate the pace of reforms which are critical for achieving higher growth and resilient recovery from the Covid-19.

While the World Bank's assessment regarding the urgency for reforms is on the money, the nature of those reforms must ensure that they benefit Pakistan and its citizens. There is no doubt that the power sector must be on a financially viable footing to support Pakistan's green, resilient and more inclusive development. Nonetheless, the reforms in the power sector cannot be instituted at the expense of the final customer, as the IMF has been suggesting. The issue of ballooning circular debt has been plaguing us for far too long. The current government had committed to bring the circular debt to zero by December 2020, but it still remains over Rs2.3 trillion despite a massive increase in electricity prices.

The SAPM on Energy, Tabish Gauhar has rightly pointed out that holistic and structural reforms are needed to tackle energy sector challenges. Meaningful reform in the power sector can only come about by undoing the distortions present in it. This would involve making power companies reduce their transmission and distribution losses, revise tariff setting mechanisms, renegotiating deals with IPPs, cutting down on power theft and ensuring that government organisations foot their own electricity bills. Additionally, given the risks posed by climate change, reforms should also include a switch to cheaper alternative sources of energy such as wind and solar power. The growing circular debt is a continued threat for the economy and if structural reforms are not introduced at the earliest, the future of the energy sector will remain at stake.

Anarchic means for peace

Wajeeha Bilal



People may buy into the malicious propagandas for peace but only because the powerful have been trained to believe that they have an advantage. But when the means and campaigns are anarchic, so will be the results. Chaos and anarchy will only follow when the focus of peaceful solutions for a dispute are undermined by spitting poison at the opposite parties

OUR historical timeline seems to suggest that colonial and empirical wars might be a thing of the past. While the human population has improved with an inclination towards democracy and a better civilization, we tend to believe more in peace and diplomacy. But with all the ongoing conflicts, it is hard to imagine that we have achieved peace. Most of these conflicts are mostly civil wars as a result of cold wars or political instability. We may be directed towards peace with the establishment of peace-oriented organizations and defined international borders, but we are a long way from achieving true peace. Apparently free from colonialism or communist dictatorship nowadays, civil and local wars are the primary cause of global conflicts.

In his book, "The Anarchy", a notable British historian William Dalrymple had examined East India Company's contribution to the decline and crippling of the Mughal Empire between 1756 and 1803, as "the supreme act of corporate violence in world history". "Anarchy" is related to the subcontinent's condition following the death of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1707. The company's story that left a permanent mark in the history of the subcontinent, is a dreadful warning about the possibility for the abuse of corporate power and the corruption by which the influence of the investors is manifested. "... if history shows anything, it is that in the intimate dance between the power of the state and that of the corporation, while the latter can be regulated, the corporation will use all the resources in its power to resist." The corporate rule could be the main demon, but the fact is that violence, exploitation, and corruption were not merely corporate's debt but con-

tinued to mark the timeline of human existence. The influence of multinational corporations or foreign takeovers in the third world countries could be as harmful as colonialism. Violence and exploitation, the absurd atrocities still continue, which only makes us more depressed. In the recent decades, American invasions of Afghanistan or Iraq have revealed that our world is far from being free of colonialism or powerful manipulation. The superpowers or empires act as global powers that use marketing strategies, multinational and global campaigns with the accumulation of new surveillance-capitalism. The corporate influence is enhanced with military conquests and economic sovereignty.

The use of force and economic power are the main manipulating weapons in this war of exploitation, hiding behind the curtains of diplomacy. Though the means and tools might seem different, yet manipulation of the masses continues both at the national and the international level.

With the ongoing electoral battles in our local politics as well, the manipulation of the public continues in a spiteful manner through mendacious propaganda. At a time when the powerful campaigns need to justify the standing of the high commands, a dirty game of mud splashing continues. Amidst the chaos and corruption, a superior exploitation once again takes advantage of weak and poor. It was heart wrenching to see the major stress of the electoral campaigns being shifted from a platform of democracy to one of manipulation and anarchy. There was more focus on aggressive attacks than on the issues faced by the public or the land itself.

Though the election commission had given directives to ensure decency in their conversa-

tions and avoid use of improper language, as the campaign for elections in Azad Kashmir warmed up, political rivals fired all kinds of accusations at each other that proved to be a mere insult to the right cause. Electoral campaigns needed to align with the just cause of the Kashmir issue rather than based on shameful allegations that could adversely affect Pakistan's stance on the Kashmir Dispute in the international community. And the elections that came after weeks of heated and disruptive campaigns, from the three mainstream parties – the PTL, PPP and PML-N throwing spiteful allegations at each other, were bound to be chaotic in practice. According to reports, this year the pre-poll campaign had surpassed the previous records of hostility towards their rivals and as a consequence of the violence, voting in some polling stations was temporarily suspended; several people were reportedly injured, and a number of political activists were also detained.

People may buy into the malicious propagandas for peace but only because the powerful have been trained to believe that they have an advantage. But when the means and campaigns are anarchic, so will be the results. Chaos and anarchy will only follow when the focus of peaceful solutions for a dispute are undermined by spitting poison at the opposite parties. Democratization and globalization may have helped humans understand the idea, but true peace can never be attained unless the powerful learn to embody the true spirit of these words. When the technical tools and means of marketing campaigns are used to value the people they tend to serve, only then can humanity progress on a massive scale.

– Wajeeha is the author of "The Conscious Ego", "The Beautiful Present"

Kazakhstan at 30: Achievements & future prospects

Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan



Kazakhstan is the "biggest" economy of the Central Asian Region which has also "plentiful" of natural resources. It celebrates 30 years of its independence in 2021. During these years it has successfully "transformed" its macro-economy which is now stable and sustainable with bright prospects

Unemployment is low 4.9 percent in 2020. It joined the World Trade Organisation in 2015 which further strengthened its economic ties with the outer world. Strategic vision of the government provides great opportunities for local entrepreneurs. The government plans to increase the number of people employed in SMEs to 4 million compared to 3.3 million in 2020, thus increasing the GDP share of SMEs to 35 percent by 2025 compared to 31 percent in 2020.

Constant structural reforms in economy, administration, business, trade and industries have transformed into biggest recipient of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in the Central Asia. It was ranked 25th in the World Bank's Doing Business Report 2019. It has attracted over \$330 billion in the FDIs since 1991 which has increased 16-fold since independence. Now Kazakhstan accounts for approximately 70 percent of FDI into Central Asia. According to Kazakhstan statistical data (2020) around 50 percent of FDI in Kazakhstan has been attracted from the EU, including \$96.6 billion from the Netherlands, \$16.7 billion from France, \$8.7 billion from Belgium, \$6.8 billion from Italy and \$5 billion from Germany. Kazakhstan has been introducing comprehensive reforms in recent years to strengthen protection for investors, abolishing red tape, and transparent tax system and support domestic and international investors, businessmen and entrepreneurs. In this context, Kazakhstan was ranked 34th in the 2021 Index of Economic Freedom (in comparison with 59th in 2019) among 180 countries which is again highest among the CIS countries. The Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC) was established in 2018, aimed at making Nur-Sultan a financial hub in the region.

It has stable, and accommodative political system in which opposition has stakes to participate in the decision making process of the government. On political front, parliamentary elections were held on 10 January 2021, to elect members of the Mazhilis and local representative bodies. The elections were the first since the implementation of new national guidelines designed to further increase the openness, fairness and transparency of Kazakhstan's electoral system. 3 out of 5 political parties gained enough votes to win seats at the lower house of Parliament following the election. In this regard, Kazakhstan president H.E. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has successfully institutionalized concepts of "Listening Stat" in the hierarchy of government's vertical and horizontal presentations. In this connection, Kazakhstan was ranked 29th in the UN E-Government Survey 2020 among 193 countries (compared to 39th in 2019) the highest among CIS countries.

According to the Constitution of Kazakhstan, it has a presidential form of governance. Executive power is shared by the government, while legislative power is exercised by Parliament consisting of the Senate and the Mazhilis.

Right from the beginning, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev introduced various meaningful political, law, civil, and judicial reforms in the country aimed at modernising the political system and ensuring protection of human rights. It included, establishment of the National Council of Public Trust, an advisory body under the President to conduct

open dialogue with representatives of the public, legal formalisation of an institute of parliamentary opposition, 30 percent quota for women and young people to be included in political parties' candidates lists, decriminalisation of libel, liberalisation of peaceful assemblies and registration of political parties, lowering the threshold for political parties to enter Parliament from 7 percent to 5 percent, joining the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, thus abolishing the death penalty and last but not least, strengthening the role of the Ombudsman for Human Rights which has now further strengthened its political stability and democratic norms in the country. It seems that substantial reduction of electoral threshold, relaxation in formation of political parties, paradigm shift from indirect elections to direct, further empowerment of women, free role of media, NGOs, civil society, and last but not least inclusion of very young people in the various elections has now further revolutionized the process of politicization and democratization in the country. In this context most recently held "Akim Elections" in rural areas of Kazakhstan through direct votes has consolidated true spirits of democracy in the society at the grass-root levels.

It has strong political commitment having strategic vision to play a wider global role and widen its strategic partnership with South Asia especially with Pakistan which was among the first few states to recognize it in 1991.

It aims to become among the 30 most advanced countries in the world by mid-century, while shifting from a resource-intensive growth model to one that is cleaner, more innovative and more diversified. Reaching those goals will require further substantial reforms to improve public governance, to make the economy more open and competitive, to promote greener growth and to promote more equal access education, employment and economic opportunity.

Right from the beginning, Kazakhstan initiated a series of reforms to introduce spirits of decentralization and a modern free market model to achieve the desire goal of socio-economic prosperity, massive industrialization and eradication of poverty and generation of new jobs. It successfully transformed the outlook of political canvas by changing its one-party government to a multi-party democratic system. Over the past 30 years Kazakhstan has established diplomatic relations with 186 countries and transformed into one of the dynamically economies of the region and world alike. On the front of external relations, Kazakhstan has implemented a multi-layered foreign policy to establish good relations worldwide and is a world leader in the movement to ensure nuclear security.

On 29 August 1991, Kazakhstan closed the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site and gave up the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. It contributed to the establishment of the Central Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (CANWFZ) in 2009. A Low-Enriched Uranium Bank under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been established on the territory of Kazakhstan. It has now become hub of diplomacy, conflict resolution, interfaith harmony and last but not least, multiculturalism.

Kazakhstan plays a crucial role in enabling the 'Belt and Road' initiative. Kazakhstan accounts for 70 percent of transit traffic passing from China to Europe and vice versa.

It previously hosted two rounds of nuclear talks between the P5+1 and Iran. Kazakhstan convened the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), which now consists of 27 member states. It is also a founding member of the Eurasian Economic Union which was established in 2014. It may also be recalled that Kazakhstan became the first Central Asian country to be elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for 2017-2018.

Moreover, Kazakhstan is an active participant of regional projects being as a co-founder of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States (CCTS). It became the first post-Soviet and the first Muslim-majority country to chair the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2010, and hosted the first OSCE summit in eleven years, which adopted the Astana Commemorative Declaration towards a Security Community.

Kazakhstan successfully chaired the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 2011-2012. Kazakhstan hosted the EXPO 2017 International Specialised Exhibition in Nur-Sultan with the theme of Future Energy.

Kazakhstan has made a significant contribution to the settlement of the Syrian crisis through the Astana Process, which provided a platform for negotiations between the Syrian government, the armed opposition and the guarantor states Russia, Turkey and Iran. Contribution to rebuilding of Afghanistan is a major priority for Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan has rich ethnic diversity which is indeed core strength of its state and people alike. There are approximately 140 different ethnic groups and almost 4,000 religious organisations operating freely across the country representing 18 religious denominations. The key ideas of ethno-politics were devised during 1993 by former president, founder and father of the nation H.E. Nazarbayev. It was derived from Kazakhstan's century's old civilization, rich traditions, culture and customs based on the preservation of interethnic harmony, ethnic diversity, equality of citizens regardless of ethnic affiliation as well as instruction in proper patriotism

It has been pioneer of interfaith harmony in the region and the world alike. It has been judged as the best tolerant country in the region by many regional as well as international organizations of humanities.

The largest ethnic group is Kazakhs 68.5 percent. Other ethnicities include: Russians 18.9 percent, Uzbeks 3.3 percent, Uighurs 1.5 percent, Ukrainians 1.4 percent, Germans 1.0 percent and Koreans 0.6 percent. Every three years, the capital Nur-Sultan hosts the Congress of Leaders of World & Traditional Religions to provide a forum for religious leaders to discuss the core issues facing the humanity and communities worldwide. The UN Human Development Index (2020) ranked Kazakhstan 51st in the (compared to 76th in 1999) the highest among CIS countries.

Briefs

Qureshi,
Ukrainian
FM discuss
bilateral ties

FROM PAGE 01

enhance bilateral cooperation in all areas of mutual interest including political, trade and investment, defence, education and culture. The Foreign Minister highlighted Pakistan's focus on geo-economics as per the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan and reiterated the importance of augmenting economic ties between Pakistan and Ukraine. He underlined the need for the Pakistan-Ukraine Business Council to play an instrumental role in this regard.

The two Foreign Ministers agreed to hold the next round of Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) and inaugural session of Pakistan-Ukrainian Joint Economic Commission in September 2021. Both the Foreign Ministers stressed the importance of exchanging high-level visits between the two countries to boost bilateral relations further. Foreign Minister Qureshi and Foreign Minister Kuleba extended invitations to each other to undertake bilateral visits. They also agreed to remain in regular contact. The telephone conversation was in the spirit of Pakistan-Ukraine friendly relations. The ties are underpinned by close bilateral cooperation and collaboration on issues of regional and global importance.

Thai police
fire rubber
bullets at
protest

BANGKOK: Riot police fired water cannons, rubber bullets and tear gas at protesters in Bangkok Tuesday as hundreds rallied for democratic reform and against the government's handling of the coronavirus pandemic. Demonstrators defied a ban on public gatherings as Thailand tries to quash its worst virus outbreak so far, with new cases hovering around the 20,000 mark daily. The slow start to the coronavirus vaccination programme in Thailand and economic pain from restrictions and business closures has heaped pressure on Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha's government. Hundreds of protesters wove their way through Bangkok streets on motorbikes and in cars. By early evening there were clashes. Two police traffic booths were set ablaze and some demonstrators threw firecrackers and fireworks at officers, who had earlier unleashed water cannons, rubber bullets, and tear gas on the crowd. Protesters defaced a logo of Sino-Thai Engineering and Construction - a company with links to Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul - with pig's blood. They also targeted the logo of King Power, a major duty-free company, over its perceived support for the government. "The authoritarian Prayut Chan-O-Cha government continues to seek, allocate, and distribute benefits for the ruling class, allowing people to get sick and die on their own fate," student activist Benja Apan told the rally. - APP

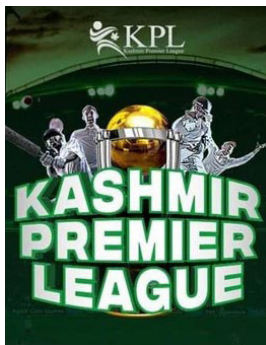
Indonesia
reports 32,081
Covid cases

JAKARTA: The number of COVID-19 cases in Indonesia rose by 32,081 within one day to 3,718,821, with the death toll adding by 2,048 to 110,619, the Health Ministry said on Tuesday. According to the ministry, 41,486 more people were discharged from hospitals, bringing the total number of patients recovering from COVID-19 to 3,171,147.

The Indonesian government on Monday extended its further restrictions on community activities (locally known as PPKM) across the country's most populated island of Java and the resort island of Bali until Aug. 16 after having extended it twice. The policy, which began in Java and Bali on July 3, aims to curb the spread of the highly transmissible Delta variant. The latest restrictions stated that 26 municipalities in Java, such as Pandeglang, Purwakarta, Pekalongan and Kediri, are now down to PPKM level 3 from level 4, the highest in the four-tier alert system. - APP

KPL: Imran leads Rawalakot to victory over Muzaffarabad

Hawks made comeback in the last overs with Randhawa bagging Sohail Tanvir on the last ball to win the match for his team by just a run



MUZAFFARABAD: Mohammad Imran Randhawa's all-round performance led Rawalakot Hawks to second consecutive victory in the Kashmir Premier League (KPL). Randhawa picked up the last two wickets to hand the Hawks a nail-biting one-run victory over Muzaffarabad Tigers in the seventh match of the league. Earlier, Randhawa performed with the bat and scored 40 runs off 23 balls with the help of two boundaries and three sixes to help his team post 175-7 in 20 overs. Shahid Afridi-led Hawks suffered three back-to-back wickets with Mohammad Wasim Jr taking a maiden hat-trick of the event. They were 9-3 in 1.3 overs. But, Ahmed Shahzad and Hussain Talat stood firm and added 75 runs for the fourth wicket. Ahmed scored 50 runs off 33 balls with the help of nine boundaries whereas Hussain made an unbeaten 69

Tigers beat Lions by five wickets

MUZAFFARABAD: Zeeshan Ashraf starred with an unbeaten 107-run knock as Muzaffarabad Tigers beat Kotli Lions by five wickets in the ongoing Kashmir Premier League (KPL) on Tuesday. Chasing a target of 195 runs, Ashraf was in attack mode from the get go and took Tigers to 50 inside the powerplay. Despite losing his opening partner, Taimoor Sultan, for 4, the left-hander kept accelerating. Tigers kept losing wickets at regular intervals, but it didn't slow down Ashraf, who reached his century in just 58 balls. Ashraf got much needed support from the lower-order in the shape of Anwar Ali (15 runs in 9 balls) and Mohammad Wasim Jr (19* in 6 balls), who played blistering cameos to take Tigers over the finish line with nine balls to spare. Batting first, Lions posted 195/4 in their allotted 20 overs with middle-order batsman Asif Ali top-scoring with 67 runs off 34 balls. Opener Abdullah Syed scored 35 in 16 balls to give an ideal start to Lions. Saif Badar struggled to get going as he scored 28 not out from 30 balls. However, a late cameo of 19 runs from 8 deliveries from Khalid Usman helped Lions finish on a high momentum. Sohail Tanvir, Mohammad Wasim Jr, Mohammad Hafeez and Usman Yousuf bagged a wicket each. - DNA

laced with six boundaries and three maximums. Wasim bagged three wickets, Arshad Iqbal took two while Mohammad Hafeez bagged a wicket for the Tigers. In reply, the home side lost opener Inzamam-ul-Haq earlier but Zeeshan Ashraf carried the inning from there, after surviving on a no-ball. He scored 38 runs off 20 balls with the help of four boundaries and three sixes. Sohail Maqsood scored 22 before Hafeez utilized his experience to score 44 off 31 including three boundaries and a six. Hawks made comeback in the last overs with Randhawa bagging Sohail Tanvir on the last ball to win the match for his team by just a run. Zaman Khan took the highest three wickets for the Hawks followed by Randhawa and Asif Afridi taking two wickets each. Skipper Afridi managed to get one wicket. - DNA



PARIS: Lionel Messi waving towards fans upon reaching Paris to complete his transfer to PSG. - DNA

Lionel Messi to be unveiled as PSG player today

PARIS: Lionel Messi will be unveiled as a Paris Saint-Germain player on Wednesday after agreeing a two-year deal with the French club. The 34-year-old Argentine was greeted by thousands of supporters at Le Bourget Airport in Paris on Tuesday after flying over from Spain with his father and agent Jorge to complete a medical. When asked by reporters whether his son would be joining PSG, Jorge answered "yes". A news conference will take place at the Parc des Princes stadium on Wednesday (today) at 11am (1pm UAE time) and the six-time Ballon d'Or winner will be officially announced as PSG's superstar new signing - barring any last-minute glitch with the medical. He will have the option of a further season in France and is expected to earn £25 million (\$34.6m) per year after tax, plus bonuses, as well receiving a £25m signing-on fee. Messi has left Barcelona after being told by the Spanish club that he could no longer afford his wages - even after agreeing to take a 50 per cent pay cut - due to La Liga's financial fair play rules. He is both Barca's record goalscorer and top appearance maker of all time, with 672 goals from 778 matches, winning four Champions Leagues and 10 La Liga titles along the way - and 35 trophies in total. Messi scored 474 goals in La Liga, including 36 hat-tricks, and has notched 123 times in European competitions. At a tearful press conference on Sunday, Messi admitted that he had no choice but to leave the club he joined at the age of 13. - DNA

ICC confirms bid for cricket's inclusion in 2028 Olympics

FOREIGN DESK



KARACHI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has confirmed its intention to push for cricket's inclusion in the Olympic Games going forward, starting preparations for a bid on behalf of the sport with the primary target being its addition to the Los Angeles 2028 itinerary. The world's cricket governing body has formed a working group that will lead the bid. The ICC Olympic Working Group will be chaired by England and Wales Cricket Board Chair Ian Watmore. He will be joined by ICC Independent Director Indra Nooyi, Chair of Zimbabwe Cricket Tavengwa Mukuhliani, ICC Associate Member Director and Vice President of the Asian Cricket Council Mahinda Vallipuram and Chair of USA Cricket Parag Marathe. "Thirty-million cricket fans live in the USA, making LA 2028 the ideal Games for cricket to make its return to Olympic competition," ICC believes. ICC Chair Greg Barclay said the addition of cricket to the Olympic Games would be beneficial to both the sport and the Games themselves. "Firstly on behalf of everyone at the ICC, I would like to congratulate the IOC, Tokyo 2020, and the people of Japan for staging such an incredible Games in such difficult circumstances. It truly was fantastic to watch and captured the imagination of the world and we would love for cricket to be a part of future Games," Barclay said. "Our sport is united behind this bid, and we see the Olympics as a part of cricket's long-term future. We have more than a billion fans globally and almost 90 percent of them want to see cricket at the Olympics.

"Clearly cricket has a strong and passionate fanbase, particularly in South Asia where 92% of our fans come from whilst there are also 30 million cricket fans in the USA. The opportunity for those fans to see their heroes competing for an Olympic medal is tantalising." "We believe cricket would be a great addition to the Olympic Games, but we know it won't be easy to secure our inclusion as there are so many other great sports out there wanting to do the same. But we feel now is the time to put our best foot forward and show what a great partnership cricket and the Olympics are."

AGENCIES

KABUL: A US peace envoy brought a warning to the Taliban on Tuesday that any government that comes to power through force in Afghanistan won't be recognized internationally after a series of cities fell to the insurgent group in stunningly quick succession. Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. envoy, traveled to Doha, Qatar, where the Taliban maintain a political office, to tell the group that there was no point in pursuing victory on the battlefield because a military takeover of the capital of Kabul would guarantee they will be global pariahs. He and others hope to persuade Taliban leaders to return to peace talks

with the Afghan government as American and NATO forces finish their pullout from the country. The insurgents have captured five out of 34 provincial capitals in the country in less than a week. They are now battling the Western-backed government for control of several others, including Lashkar Gah in Helmand, and Kandahar and Farah in provinces of the same names. After a 20-year Western military mission and billions of dollars spent training and shoring up Afghan forces, many are at odds to explain why the regular forces have collapsed, fleeing the battle sometimes by the hundreds. The fighting has fallen largely to small groups of elite forces and the Afghan air force. The success of the

RISJA Independence Cup semi finals due today

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Hum TV, Geo, Dawn and Dunya TV entered into semi-final round of ongoing first RISJA Inter-Media Independence Cup Cricket Tournament will held today (Wednesday). Under the aegis of Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA) in collaboration with Park View City and NasGas at National Cricket Ground Islamabad, Hum TV and Dawn TV teams will compete in first semi-final encounter while the second semi-final will be played between Geo and Dunya TV. In the last match of pool round, the team of Parliamentarians defeated the team of Sama TV by 73 runs. Parliamentarians XI won the toss and elected to bat and scored 123 runs for the loss of 6 wickets in the stipulated 15 overs. Zulfi Bukhari scored 28 runs with the help of four fours. Wahab, Anwar and Hassan took two wickets each. In reply, Sama TV team could not meet their target but scored 50 runs for the loss of 10 wickets in 9 overs. Naveed scored 14 runs with the help of a four. Ahmed Kundi got three wickets, Imran Khattak and Zain Qureshi got two wickets each while Saboor, Gul Zafar and Murtaza Mahmood got one wicket each.



Prince Andrew sued for alleged sex abuse

NEW YORK: Britain's Prince Andrew was sued in a New York court on Monday for alleged sexual abuse of a woman who says she was "lent out" for underage sex by late US financier Jeffrey Epstein. The filing at the US district court in Manhattan said Virginia Giuffre was the plaintiff in the case against the defendant, named as "Prince Andrew, Duke of York." Giuffre alleged in the filing that she "was regularly abused by Epstein and was lent out by Epstein to other powerful men for sexual purposes. "One such powerful man... was the Defendant, Prince Andrew." According to the complaint, Giuffre said Andrew sexually abused her at the London home of socialite Ghislaine Maxwell more than 20 years ago, when she was under 18. "Epstein, Maxwell, and Prince Andrew forced (the) Plaintiff, a child, to have sexual intercourse with Prince Andrew against her will," it said. Andrew, 61, has vehemently denied claims he had sex with Giuffre, and said he has no recollection of meeting her, but the allegations threaten to damage the British royal family. Andrew, the Queen's second son, stepped back from royal duties in 2019 over his friendship with Epstein. Giuffre also claims Andrew abused her at Epstein's New York mansion and on Little St. James, Epstein's private island in the US Virgin Islands. Giuffre, now 38, is suing Andrew under the Child Victims Act as she was 17 at the time. Epstein was a multimillion-dollar hedge fund manager who befriended celebrities including former President Bill Clinton and Bill Gates. He killed himself in jail in 2019 while awaiting trial on charges of sex trafficking minors. The court papers included a photograph alleged to show Andrew and Giuffre at Maxwell's London home before one incident of sexual abuse. Maxwell in April pleaded not guilty in court to charges of recruiting underage girls for Epstein. - DNA

US vows to isolate Taliban if they take power by force

The new pressure from Khalilzad follows condemnations from the international community and a similar warning from the United Nations that a Taliban government that takes power by force would not be recognized. The insurgents have so far refused to return to the negotiating table

AGENCIES

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with the Afghan government as American and NATO forces finish their pullout from the country. The insurgents have captured five out of 34 provincial capitals in the country in less than a week. They are now battling the Western-backed government for control of several others, including Lashkar Gah in Helmand, and Kandahar and Farah in provinces of the same names. After a 20-year Western military mission and billions of dollars spent training and shoring up Afghan forces, many are at odds to explain why the regular forces have collapsed, fleeing the battle sometimes by the hundreds. The fighting has fallen largely to small groups of elite forces and the Afghan air force. The success of the

Taliban blitz has added urgency to the need to restart the long-stalled talks that could end the fighting and move Afghanistan toward an inclusive interim administration. The new pressure from Khalilzad follows condemnations from the international community and a similar warning from the United Nations that a Taliban government that takes power by force would not be recognized. The insurgents have so far refused to return to the negotiating table. Khalilzad's mission in Qatar is to "help formulate a joint international response to the rapidly deteriorating situation in Afghanistan," according to the U.S. State Department. He plans to "press the Taliban to stop their military offensive and

to negotiate a political settlement, which is the only path to stability and development in Afghanistan," the State Department said. Meanwhile, the Taliban military chief released an audio message to his fighters on Tuesday, ordering them not to harm Afghan forces and government officials in territories they conquer. The recording was shared on Twitter by the Taliban spokesman in Doha, Mohammad Naim. In the nearly five-minute audio, Mohammad Yaqoob, the son of late Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar, also told the insurgents to stay out of abandoned homes of government and security officials who have fled, leave marketplaces open and protect places of busi-

ness, including banks. It was not immediately clear if Taliban fighters on the ground would heed Yaqoob's instructions. Some civilians who have fled Taliban advances have reported that the insurgents imposed repressive restrictions on women and burned down schools. There have also been reports of revenge killings in areas where the Taliban have gained control. The insurgents have claimed responsibility for killing a comedian in southern Kandahar, assassinating the government's media chief Kabul and a bombing that targeted acting Defense Minister Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, killing eight and wounding more. The minister was not harmed in the attack.

Taliban, govt forces' fight gains speed

FROM PAGE 01

Local police spokesman Farooq Khalid told Anadolu Agency that intense clashes between government forces and the Taliban fighters were underway. He claimed that over 80 advancing Taliban fighters were killed by security forces. The Taliban, however, claimed to have reached the city centre. "Two checkpoints were captured near the intelligence and police command centre a moment ago... The battle continues and the Mujahideen advance," tweeted Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid. In a major push to repel advancing Taliban from urban centres, the Afghan forces claimed killing 361 Taliban fighters in air and ground offensives in the past 24 hours. The Defense Ministry said the operations were conducted in the Nangarhar, Kunar, Logar, Pakia, Paktika, Maidan Wardak, Kandahar, Sare Pol, Helmand, Kunduz, and Baghlan provinces.

Extended troika meets today

FROM PAGE 01

This meeting of Troika Plus in Doha is taking place at an important time when the security situation in Afghanistan is continuously deteriorating particularly as the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO troops from the country continues. A press statement from Foreign Office said that Pakistan hopes the meetings in Doha would help facilitate resumption of Intra-Afghan Negotiations with a view to achieve a political solution for a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan, at peace with itself and with its neighbours.

Pakistan on road to recovery...

FROM PAGE 01

Imran Khan said Pakistan did not progress as rapidly as it was supposed to, citing money laundering and corruption as major drawbacks. "Since I grew up side-by-side with Pakistan, let me say on this occasion that we [country] were not able to progress and reach our potential as we were supposed to," said PM Khan. The prime minister said instead of standing on their own feet and using their genius, Pakistanis lost their way. "We became an import-led economy and Pakistan started relying on foreign aid," regretted Imran, adding "We didn't recognise our power. Whenever someone starts to depend on crutches, his physique deteriorates." The premier used this example to state that God has made nations in a similar way, adding that when they learn to struggle and rise above hurdles, they prevail in the end. He said the Almighty Allah tells Muslims to learn from the example of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), adding that whichever states adopt the principles of the Riyasat-e-Madinah, it would always rise above its problems.

Highlighting his government's priorities, he said Pakistan must end reliance on imports and attract foreign investment in the country. He said it was also important for the country to end money laundering so that the dollars it earns does not leave the country. Towards the end of his speech, the premier expressed happiness that Pakistan was finally on the path to achieve prosperity, paying tribute to Chief of Naval Staff Amjad Niazi for taking the initiative to launch the Ship Lift and Transfer system.

Syria's Assad approves new cabinet

DAMASCUS: Syrian President Bashar al-Assad issued a decree on Tuesday approving a new cabinet headed by Hussein Arnous, following a May election that secured Assad's grip on power in the war-torn country. The new 29-member government, announced less than two weeks since Assad tasked Arnous with forming it, is little changed from its predecessor. Those at the head of the key defence, foreign affairs, interior and finance ministries remained unchanged. - APP

Briefs

Bangladesh begins vaccination for Rohingya

FOREIGN DESK

DHAKA: The government of Bangladesh and aid agencies have started vaccinating Rohingya refugees against coronavirus as a surge in cases raises health concerns in the sprawling, cramped camps where more than one million people who fled Myanmar are sheltering. The highly transmissible Delta variant is driving an infection surge across Bangladesh, with about 20,000 infections and 200 deaths recorded so far in Cox's Bazar district, the southern region bordering Myanmar where the 34 refugee camps are located.

Bangladesh evacuated 10,000 Rohingya after deadly landslides in Cox's Bazar and aid agencies began the vaccination campaign on Tuesday across 34 camps alongside Bangladesh's national vaccination effort. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said a national positivity rate of about 30 percent indicates the spread of COVID-19 is much higher, especially given the sheer number of people living in these camps. The government's Civil Surgeon's office in Cox's Bazar said the vaccination campaign on Tuesday across 34 camps alongside Bangladesh's national vaccination effort.

Azerbaijan, US mull co-op in SMBs field

FOREIGN DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijan's Agency for Small and Medium Business Development Chairman Okhan Mammadov held a meeting with US-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce Chairman Reza Vaziri on August 9. During the meeting, the parties discussed the Agency's support and services for the creation of new business structures and the development of SMBs. In addition, the sides exchanged views on opportunities for joint cooperation.

Moreover, Agency's representatives expressed readiness to support the involvement of American investors in the projects of Azerbaijani SMBs, the establishment of ties between the businessmen of the two countries and the expansion of existing cooperation. The presentation of potential projects of local entrepreneurs at "roadshow" in the US and the cooperation with the US Small Business Administration was also on the agenda of the meeting. Additionally, the sides discussed organization of trainings for local SMBs interested in conducting trade transactions with the US using the capabilities of the Agency's SMB Development Centers and participating in the creation of SMB clusters. In July, Azerbaijan's Agency for Small and Medium Businesses Development and the U.S. Agency for International Development signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of SMBs.

Uzbekistan's official reserves exceed \$35bn

MONITORING DESK

TASHKENT: The volume of official reserves of Uzbekistan as of 1 August 2021 exceeded US\$35.1 billion, according to the data of the Central Bank. According to the regulator, this indicator increased by US\$965 million compared to last month. The regulator notes that reserves in foreign currency as of 1 August were US\$13.19 billion against US\$13.54 billion as of 1 July. Foreign currency reserves decreased by US\$346.4 million. The volume of gold rose from US\$20.23 billion to US\$21.54 billion in the reporting period. The volume of gold in net troy ounces increased from 11.3 million to 11.8 million troy ounces.

Six EU countries warn against open door for Afghan refugees

The Taliban, fighting to reimpose their strict interpretation of Islamic law after they were removed from power in 2001, have stepped up their campaign to defeat the government as US-led foreign forces pull out, capturing a sixth provincial capital

AGENCIES

BRUSSELS: Six European Union member states have warned against halting deportations of Afghan asylum seekers despite major advances by Taliban fighters in the war-torn country. The Taliban, fighting to reimpose their strict interpretation of Islamic law after they were removed from power in 2001, have stepped up their campaign to defeat the government as US-led foreign forces pull out, capturing a sixth provincial capital on Monday. "Stopping returns sends the wrong signal and is likely to motivate even more Afghan citizens to leave their home for the EU," Austria, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece and Germany said in the letter to the EU's executive, dated August 5 and seen by Reuters.

"This is why we urge you and your teams at the Commission to intensify talks with the Afghan government on how returns to Afghanistan can and will continue in the coming months." The European Commission said it had received the letter and would reply in due time. Asked if it considers Afghanistan a safe country to return to, a spokesman for the EU executive said it is up to member states to make that judgement. "At an EU level there isn't a list of countries considered safe relating to asylum applications or for returns. It's up to each member state to assess ... the country of origin and the situation of the person concerned," he told Reuters. The deportation issue is expected to come up at an online crisis meeting of EU domestic affairs ministers on August 18, which was arranged mainly to discuss a surge of border crossings from



Belarus to Lithuania. Since 2015, approximately 570,000 Afghans have requested asylum in the EU, the letter from the six EU countries noted, including 44,000 in 2020 alone, making Afghanistan the second-largest country of origin last year. "We fully recognise the sensitive situation in Afghanistan in light of the foreseen withdrawal of international troops," the countries said, adding that an esti-

mated 4.6 million Afghans were already displaced, many of them in the region. The six EU members urged the bloc to support refugees in neighbouring countries by increasing cooperation with nations such as Pakistan and Iran. Belgium's state secretary for asylum and migration, Sammy Mahdi, defended the initiative against criticism. "That regions of a country are not safe does not mean that each national of that country automatically is entitled to protection," he tweeted on Monday. "Afghans that, after a thorough and independent investigation, obviously do not need asylum, cannot remain in Belgium." Meanwhile, a spokeswoman for the Netherlands' Safety and Justice Ministry said that if individuals had the right to asylum they could receive it, but there should be no catch-all label for

one country. "The situation is very worrying, it's always under review," said spokeswoman Charlotte Hees. The position of the six countries clashes with EU member states Finland, Norway and Sweden, which recently announced they were suspending deportations to Afghanistan, owing to the deteriorating security situation in the country. The moves came after Kabul urged European countries in early July to halt forced deportations for the next three months. More than 30 NGOs, including Human Rights Watch, Save the Children and Oxfam, have also called on EU members to immediately stop the practice. "The security situation in Afghanistan does not allow to return people to the country without putting their life at risk," the group said in a joint statement.



RAWALPINDI: General Hulusi Akar (Retired), Minister of National Defence of Turkey called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest including defence & security cooperation between both the countries and overall regional security situation especially Afghan Peace Process were discussed. - DNA

More than 200 arrested in latest Saudi anti-corruption purge

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia announced the arrest of 207 employees across about a dozen government ministries in the latest sweep by an anti-corruption body empowered by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The kingdom's National Anti-Corruption Commission, known as "Nazaha", announced the arrests late on Monday. Those detained were not named and it was unclear when the arrests were made. The crown prince's anti-corruption purge began in late 2017. It has helped him consolidate power and netted the government \$106bn in assets. Saudi nationals have long complained of rampant corruption in government and of public funds being squandered or misused by those in power. The commission said more than 460 people were investigated in this latest round, and that as a result, 207 Saudi citizens and residents were detained on allegations of corruption, abuse of authority and fraud. Those accused will be referred to prosecution, the commission said. They hail from the national guard and a range of ministries, including defence, interior and health and justice, among others. In April, the commission said 176 people from across the public sector had similarly been detained for alleged corruption. In late 2017, Prince Mohammed targeted more than 300 princes, public figures and businessmen who together symbolised the elite structure encircling the ruling Al Saud family and its vast patronage networks. - Agencies

Half of Azerbaijan's population might be fully vaccinated soon

DNA

BAKU: Over half of Azerbaijan's population might be fully vaccinated in the near future, the Health Ministry's chief infectious disease specialist Teyyar Eyvazov has said. Noting that the vaccination process in Azerbaijan has proceeded more rapidly in recent months, Eyvazov said that 40,000-60,000 people receive vaccination daily, according to the information provided by the Operational Headquarters of the Cabinet of Ministers. "We see that more than five million people have already been vaccinated, of whom more than two million received two doses of vaccine," he stated. Highlighting the fact that

the immunity is formed sometime after the second vaccination, he underlined that the vaccination of a large number of population - approximately 70-80 percent - is needed in order to stop the spread of the disease. He emphasized that currently, the vast majority of those who are infected are unvaccinated. "It is important to remember that there are a small number of people who have contraindications to vaccination. Thus, as we increase the number of people who are vaccinated, we protect the whole population." Azerbaijan confirmed its first COVID-19 case on February 28, 2020. The country introduced a special quarantine regime on March 25 and took a number of meas-

ures to fight COVID-19 in the country. The country started vaccinating citizens using China's Sinovac on January 18, Vaxzevria vaccine produced by AstraZeneca on May 3, Russia's Sputnik V on May 18 and US-produced Pfizer on June 7. The country started offering COVID-19 vaccination to citizens aged over 18 from May 10. The nationwide vaccination is free and on a voluntary basis and is in line with the "Strategy of vaccination against COVID-19 in Azerbaijan for 2021-2022". Under the amendments made to the decision "On measures to extend the special regime and remove some restrictions" in the Cabinet of Minister briefing, as of September 1, residents over 18 will be

required to have COVID-19 vaccines for use services of public catering establishments, hotels and large trade centers. COVID-19 passports were first applied as of May 31 for entry to sports and recreational centers and later for entry to concerts and weddings. At the same time, as of August 9, Azerbaijan started issuing vaccination exemption certificates for citizens with contraindications to coronavirus vaccines approved for use in the country. Azerbaijan has registered 352,926 COVID-19 cases so far. Some 5,418,754 COVID-19 vaccines have been provided to the citizens to this date. The first dose of the vaccine was given to 3,160,755 citizens, and the second one to 2,257,999 citizens.

Nuclearization of Indian Ocean threatens int'l peace

"In pursuance of its hegemonic designs, India has nuclearized the Indian Ocean and continues to induct advanced weapons systems and naval delivery platforms"

NEW YORK: Pakistan Monday told the UN Security Council that India's "belligerent and aggressive" policies posed an immediate and pervasive threat to international and regional peace and security, especially as the Indians had nuclearized the Indian Ocean, an important avenue for global trade. "In pursuance of its hegemonic designs, India has nuclearized the Indian Ocean and continues to induct advanced weapons systems and naval delivery platforms," Ambassador Munir Akram said in a written statement submitted to the 15-member Council, which was held virtually. "In light of these developments, he said, Pakistan would continue to take all necessary measures to maintain full spectrum deterrence and ensure its national security on land, in the air and at the sea. The Security Council meeting on Enhancing Maritime Security was convened by India, which hold the council's presidency for the month of August. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi presided over the meeting. In his statement, the Pakistani envoy called on the international community to be cognizant of the fact that any military conflict in South Asia could endanger stability in a region that was critical for global trade and global peace and security. The Indian Ocean, Ambassador Akram

said said, hosted international maritime traffic that included half of the world's containerized cargo, one-third of its bulk cargo, and two-thirds of its oil shipments. "Yet," he said, "emerging issues, ranging from piracy and territorial water disputes to global environmental pressures on coastal and marine resources, pose considerable challenges for policymakers. The Indian Ocean offers promising potential for mutual cooperation and collaboration. But geo-strategic competition and the pursuit of military dominance by some States have gravely jeopardized that potential." "In particular, India's belligerent and aggressive policies - currently driven by an extremist Hinduva ideology - pose an immediate and pervasive threat to international and regional peace and security," the Pakistani envoy added. Pointing out that Pakistan's Gwadar Port, which is part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), occupies a strategic location overlooking the Strait of Hormuz and the North Arabian Sea, he said that it placed Pakistan at a point of convergence, linking

active sea-lanes to landlocked Central Asian Republics for shipment of oil, coal and agricultural products. As the success of the CPEC and the Gwadar Port project was linked to the safe and secure maritime environment in the Indian Ocean region in general and the Arabian Sea in particular, Ambassador Akram said it was of utmost importance to keep the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC) open and protect Pakistan's coast as well as the ports of Karachi, Bin-Qasim, Ormara and Gwadar. "Accordingly," he said, "a special organization known as Task Force-88 (TF-88) has been created and assigned the duty for the seaward security of Gwadar Port and protection of associated sea lanes against both conventional and non-traditional threats." "We are proud that Pakistan Navy continues to maintain a robust security posture along Pakistan's coast and in the regional seas, in order to prevent nefarious elements from illicit activities in the maritime domain," the Pakistani envoy said. Pakistan Navy, he said, had always been ap-



preciated for its efforts to promote peace and security. Among others, it has been actively participating in the Combined Task Forces 150 and 151 in the larger interest of the international community and regional maritime security. Since 2013, he added, Pakistan was operating a Joint Maritime Information Coordination Centre (JMICC). It gathers and shares all required information among all the national stakeholders for maritime domain awareness. "Our Navy has also provided valuable assistance at the high seas to vessels in distress, including during anti-piracy operations, and has extended humanitarian assistance to regional countries on several occasions," he added. The Pakistani envoy also said that piracy and armed robbery against ships remained a major threat to maritime security. "Transnational criminal groups, such as those in the Gulf of Aden, on the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Guinea, are involved in multiple illegal activities, including drug trafficking, weapons smuggling, migrant-smuggling, trafficking in persons, piracy, and armed robbery and, in some cases, terrorist activity," he said. "The link between transnational organized crime at sea and the threat that it poses to the stability, security and economies of both coastal and landlocked States is visible and a matter of grave concern." - APP

World Forum on Youth to be held in Uzbekistan

DNA

TASHKENT: Uzbekistan will host the World Conference on Youth Rights on 12-13 August 2021. The initiative to hold it was put forward by the President of the country Shavkat Mirziyoyev at the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council. The global forum will be held in a hybrid format, with UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, UN Secretary General's Envoy for Youth Affairs Jayatma Vikramanayake, Inter-Parliamentary Union Secretary General Martin Chungong, OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmidt and other leaders expected international structures. More than 500 representatives from more than 30 countries and international organizations have confirmed their participation in the World Conference on Youth Rights "Engaging Youth in Global Action". The "Convention on the Rights of Youth" is currently in the process of being developed, which is also being created on the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan, which was voiced at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly.

Azerbaijan, Belgium upbeat about relations

DNA

BAKU: Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov has said that there is broad agenda of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Belgium and that bilateral relations are developing successfully, the ministry's press service reported. At the same time, he spoke about mutually beneficial partnership of Azerbaijan with the European Union. Bayramov made the remarks while receiving Belgian Ambassador Michel Peetermans on August 9. Furthermore, Bayramov informed the ambassador about Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan, the international community's stance on this matter, the Second Karabakh War, the post-war situation in the region, the scale of destruction by Armenia in the liberated territories and the restoration and reconstruction work carried out there by Azerbaijan. In turn, the ambassador reminding the successful development of relations, talked about the future cooperation between Azerbaijan and Belgium in the areas of economy, trade, commerce, education. The ambassador especially stressed the importance of mutual student exchange between the two countries.

Germany to supply vaccines to Uzbekistan

DNA

TASHKENT: Germany will supply Uzbekistan with coronavirus vaccines as part of Germany's promised supplies to developing countries. This was announced on August 9 in Berlin by the deputy official representative of the German government Ulrike Demmer, writes Deutsche Welle. Ulrike Demmer noted that Tashkent will receive 355,200 doses of the vaccine. Deutsche Welle notes that Germany will supply the drug from the British-Swedish manufacturer AstraZeneca to Uzbekistan. The vaccine will be supplied through the global COVAX facility. As of 8 August 2021, more than 10 million doses of vaccines have been used in Uzbekistan. The first dose was received by 6.8 million people, the second - 2.3 million, the third - 887.9 thousand. Over 1.3 million people received the full course of vaccination. Uzbekistan received 14.58 million doses of vaccines. In particular, Uzbekistan received 10.5 million doses of ZF-UZ-VAC2001 vaccine from China. Also, 3 million doses of Moderna vaccine, 710 thousand doses of AstraZeneca (CoviShield) and 370 thousand doses of Sputnik V were delivered to Uzbekistan.

Briefs

Muharram gatherings to be held under SOPs

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Tuesday issued special instructions for managing Muharram-ul-Haram activities with proper COVID-19 standard operating procedures (SOPs) to contain disease spread. The Forum issued these instructions keeping in view the recommendations of the ulema (scholars) concerned regarding Muharram. The NCOC guidelines underlined that all gatherings and processions would be held under COVID-19 SOPs. Furthermore, use of face masks, social distancing, thermal screening during religious processions would be ensured by the administration of that event. The NCOC guidelines clearly stated that private gatherings would be discouraged in the homes. Hand sanitizers and masks would be provided at the venues of the gatherings and processions by the organisers, it added. The NCOC guidelines noted that the Muharram gatherings would be held in ventilated and open spaces. In addition, Corona SOPs would be prominently displayed during rallies and processions throughout Muharram.

Covid death toll crosses 24,000 mark

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: In the last 24 hours, 86 more people have died in Pakistan due to the ongoing fourth wave of the coronavirus pandemic, after which the death toll has crossed 24,000. The National Command and Operation Centre's (NCOC) daily numbers showed that 49,506 COVID-19 tests were conducted across the country in the last 24 hours. Of these, 3,884 came back positive. According to the NCOC, the positivity rate now stands at 7.84%. The number of deaths from coronavirus in the country has crossed 24,000 and reached 24,004 and the total number of cases has reached 1,075,504. In addition to this, 2,669 patients have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 24 hours, bringing the total number of recoveries to 967,073, while the number of active cases is 84,427. A day earlier, it was reported that Pakistan has been recording a slow decline in its daily COVID-19 numbers over the last few days.

UAE revises travel advisory for Pakistan

DNA

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has again revised its travel rules for residents flying into Dubai from six countries - Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Nigeria, and Uganda - saying they are no longer required to carry Covid-19 vaccination certificate for entry into the emirate, it emerged on Tuesday. According to the updated travel rules published on the national flag carrier Emirates' website, all passengers with a valid UAE residence visa will be allowed to travel to and through Dubai from the above listed countries upon fulfilling the following conditions: Dubai visa holders must apply for pre-entry approval through General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA). Passengers must have a valid Covid-19 test certificate issued within 48 hours between the time of sample collection and scheduled flight departure. Only Covid-19 PCR test reports from certified labs that issue a QR code linked to the original report will be accepted. Passengers must complete a Covid-19 PCR rapid test four hours before the departure of their flight. (Rapid antigen test will not be accepted).

Book "GEMS and JEWELS: The Religions of Pakistan" launched

Dr. Amineh is the author; Murree Brewery Company sponsored the book; the company will continue to support such initiatives in the coming days as well: Isphanyar

ANSAR M BHATTI

RAWALPINDI: Dr. Amineh Hoti, a well-known author and researcher's book "GEMS and JEWELS: The Religions of Pakistan" was launched at the Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi. The book was sponsored by Murree Brewery Company Limited, distinguished guest such as Dr. Qibla Ayaz the chairman of Islamic Council and Isphanyar Bhandara the Chief Executive of Murree Brewery Company Limited were present there along with the representatives of different religions in Pakistan. Ambassador of Nepal also attended the book launch ceremony. The author of the book, Dr. Amineh Hoti said that the book and the launch event was sponsored by Murree Brewery Company Limited, she took this opportunity to thank the chief of Murree Brewery Company Limited Mr. Isphanyar Bhandara. People perceive Pakistan as a Muslim nation only throughout the globe, though people from different religions reside in this country too and in this book Dr. Amineh Hoti has discussed these religions thoroughly. Furthermore, she added that she named the book "GEMS and JEWELS" because she believes people residing in Pakistan with different faiths are the real gems and jewels of Pakistan. Lastly, she thanked each and every one of the guests and people part of the launch ceremony. At this occasion, the Chief Executive of Murree Brewery Company said, "People from different faiths residing in Pakistan are wishful of a prosperous and peaceful Pakistan, with patience, resilience and discipline he minorities of Pakistan are



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Council of Islamic Ideology addressing on the occasion of book launch ceremony held at the Christian Study Center, Rawalpindi. - DNA



enjoying their lives with freedom in the country and this brotherhood amongst everyone in the country shall forever remain intact for the positive upbringing of the country." While talking about the book, Bhandara added that this book along with the

facts about different religions of Pakistan has also brought to light the notion of inter faith harmony and the historical facts about these religion and reading this book will most definitely help our young generation know more about the different people

with different faiths in the country. The Executive Director of the Christian Study Center Bishop Samuel also spoke on the occasion and praised the author for putting up a great work. He said in Pakistan all religions were co-existing

peacefully adding Pakistan government needed to be supported in its efforts regarding protection of rights of the minorities. This book is showcasing the soft image of Pakistan where we tell the world the people of all faith living in Pakistan peacefully.

This is not just a book but it is a service to the motherland. This book will help building positive image of Pakistan amongst the global world and proves, Pakistan is a peace striving nation. (Detailed coverage in the coming issue of Centreline magazine)

Rasheed blasts India over baseless allegations

"Foreign media is shifting the onus of the mess Afghanistan is in right now on Pakistan's shoulders"

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Strongly condemning the allegation levelled by the Indian home minister that Pakistan is sending infiltrators into the occupied Kashmir, Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed on Tuesday asked his Indian counterpart to give proof to substantiate his claim if any. Addressing a press conference at NADRA's headquarters in Islamabad, he said foreign agencies wanted to weaken the country from within. "Foreign media is shifting the onus of the mess Afghanistan is in right now on Pakistan's shoulders," he said, and added, "At the end of the day, they all would taste defeat." The minister further said that Pakistan's all border crossings into Afghanistan



were closed. "It is now up to the Afghans to decide their future. We have nothing to do with that. We are only the facilitators of 'peace' in our neighbouring country," he said emphatically. He disclosed that investigations into Dasu bus bomb blast incident had been completed. He informed that 3G and 4G services would remain suspended in the country's tribal areas from Tuesday. The interior minister said

the names of those found involved in the gruesome murder of Noor Muqaddam, ex-Pakistan's envoy's daughter, would be put on the Exit Control List (ECL). Assuring that the government would provide foolproof security during the holy month of Muharram, Rasheed appealed to the Shiite mourners to comply with the coronavirus-related standard operating procedures (SOPs) during majalis and processions.

India shuts last consulate in Afghanistan

FOREIGN DESK

KABUL: India sent a military plane to northern Afghanistan on Tuesday to pull out its citizens, officials said, as fighting raged between Afghan security forces and the advancing Taliban. The Indian government shut its consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif, the biggest city in the north, and urged its diplomats and Indian citizens to take the special flight home. Taliban fighters have overrun six provincial capitals in recent days in the north, west and south of Afghanistan. India, which has invested millions of dollars in development projects across Afghanistan, has now closed all its consulates, leaving only the embassy in Kabul operational, a government official said. Congress party urged the government also to help evacuate Afghanistan's tiny Sikh and Hindu communities, to protect them from any attack by the Taliban.

Crackdown reports on overseas dissidents rejected

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday categorically rejected "unsubstantiated media reports" alleging Islamabad was cracking down on overseas dissidents. In response to media queries regarding the allegations of Pakistani institutions cracking down on overseas Pakistanis, Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri said the provision of a platform for peddling of "unsubstantiated" and "false narratives" against Pakistan by any news outlet was regrettable. "There is no question of any threat being made to any national of any state including Pakistan's own nationals living anywhere on any pretext whatsoever," the spokesperson said. Chaudhri noted the allegations appear to be part of the "rather blatant ongoing misinformation campaign against Pakistan" to malign the coun-

try and its state institutions. "Pakistan is a parliamentary democracy with a vibrant civil society, free media, and independent judiciary, which remains fully committed to the promotion and protection of human rights for all its citizens without discrimination," the spokesperson said. Our strong commitment to the right to freedom of opinion and expression is demonstrated by the presence of scores of vibrant media channels and newspapers in the country, Chaudhri added. The Foreign Office responded to a report published in The Guardian, which claimed British security officials and European intelligence services had said the lives of Pakistani dissidents residing in the region were in danger. "British security sources are understood to be concerned that Pakistan, a strong UK ally - particularly on intelligence issues - might be prepared to target individuals on British soil," the publication said.

Pak to get 6mn doses through Covax

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will receive a batch of 6 million doses of COVID vaccine under COVAX this week, boosting the country's ability to inoculate its population as it faces the fourth wave of the virus. According to sources having knowledge of the shipment, 6 million doses of Sinopharm will be handed over to Pakistan in the ongoing week under the COVAX programme. "This is for the first time that Pakistan will be receiving Sinopharm vaccine under COVAX," they said adding that previously the platform has provided Pakistan with 6.1 million doses of Covid vaccines. Pakistan has received 5.5 million doses of Moderna, 2.5 million doses of Astra Zeneca, and 100,000 doses of Pfizer through the COVAX platform, they said. Pakistan has expedited efforts to inoculate its population through restrictions imposed on unvaccinated people and on August 05, the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) stated that over 1.15 million people were vaccinated during the last 24 hours in the country. The tally of COVID-19 vaccination in Pakistan is increasing with each passing day. According to the figures shared by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC), the vaccine doses administered across Pakistan in the last 24 hours stand at 11,58,744. It further shared that the total vaccines administered in Pakistan until now have reached beyond 34.24 million.

Accused in Noor murder case placed on ECL

ISLAMABAD: Names of all accused named in the Noor Mukadam case have been placed on the Exit Control List (ECL). According to the Interior Ministry, Zahir Jaffer his parents, Zakir Jaffer, Asmat and three domestic workers have been placed on the ECL. The accused have been placed on the ECL after the approval given by the sub-committee of the cabinet. A court on Monday had extended the judicial remand of accused Zahir Jaffer's parents until August 23 in the Noor Mukadam murder case. Zakir Jaffer and Asmat Adamjee were presented before the district and sessions court on the completion of their remand. The co-accused were made to wait in a Bakshi Khana (a temporary lockup). A judicial magistrate marked their attendance, after which police took them back to Adiala Jail. On July 20, Noor Mukadam, daughter of a former ambassador, had been put to death allegedly by her friend Zahir Jaffer, in the vicinity of Kohsar police station. - DNA

Wuhan reports four new Covid-19 cases

AGENCIES

BEIJING: The central Chinese city of Wuhan reported four new locally transmitted confirmed COVID-19 cases and three asymptomatic carriers on Monday, the municipal health commission told a press briefing on Tuesday. Since Aug. 2, the city has reported a total of 73 confirmed and asymptomatic corona-virus infections. Wuhan has completed a round of all-inclusive nucleic acid testing to contain the latest COVID-19 resurgence. China on Tuesday reported over 180 coronavirus cases, including 108 locally-transmitted infections, the highest single-day rise since the current outbreak began last month amidst a growing concern over the spread of the more virulent Delta variant. The National Health Commission (NHC) said in its daily report that the country reported 108 locally-transmitted cases, 35 imported and 38 asymptomatic infections on Monday.

Bilawal says Opposition can topple the govt

PPP Chairman says the federal government was deliberately doing injustice to Sindh province and Karachi city and that was the reason of people looking at the PPP for resolving their issues

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday said that the Punjab and central governments would be overthrown once the opposition jointly tabled no trust motion. Addressing a press conference in Karachi on Tuesday, he said that the general elections in the country could be held anytime, if the opposition is serious, we would have to do politics of principles. He said, "I do not believe signals, would go to Washington in a few days and would hear the screams of the rulers. The PPP chairman said that the opposition



PDM summons key meeting to discuss future

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) has summoned a key meeting to review future strategy for giving tough time to the incumbent government. As per details garnered, PDM head and JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman will preside the meeting. During the meeting, they will discuss to decide future political strategy. The participants of the meeting will overview the regional situation and relation with neighbors' countries. However, PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif will attend the session. Earlier, addressing a PDM rally in Swat, Opposition leader in National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif had said that they were all united on the platform of PDM. He said that till 2015, there was a loadshedding of 20 hours in the country, Nawaz Sharif came to power and ended the darkness from the country. He said in our government we were generating extra electricity. - DNA

would have to come out of personal politics if it wants to harm the government, adding that the incumbent government is going and the PPP will form next government. Meanwhile, talking to media at the Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) ground

after its inauguration, Bilawal Bhutto lashed out on the Prime Minister for calling the terrorists "Martyred". He urged PM Imran Khan to review his policy and should implement the National Action Plan (NAP) to curb the new wave

of terrorism in the country. He said his party would form the next government as the days of sitting rulers were counted. Bilawal said he believe in toppling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) regime through a democratic way. But, he added that general election could be held anytime as the sitting government would go home soon. He said Imran and Buzdar governments could be ended if joint opposition brought no-confidence motion in the centre and Punjab. The PPP chairman raising the issue of the development of Karachi city and said PM had not released a single penny in the head of announced package of Rs1100 billion for Karachi. He said the federal government was deliberately doing injustice to Sindh province and Karachi city and that was the reason of people looking at the PPP for resolving their issues. Bilawal said his party's government in Sindh was taking all possible steps for the betterment of Karachi city under the leadership of Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah.