



# Islamabad POST

Friday, August 27, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

**Azerbaijan to build its own future, says President Aliyev**

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**Qatar highly values ties with Pakistan**

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**Denmark lauds Pakistan's assistance**

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## Briefs

**Jiyalas will emerge victorious**

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Chairman of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Thursday said that jiyalas will emerge victorious in next elections and PPP will solve issues being faced by the country. Former President Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto met former prime minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf to discuss political situation of country as well as organizational structure of party in Punjab. Raja Pervaiz also apprised the top leadership of PPP about politicians who have expressed interest in joining the party.

**PDM's past reflects failures**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Information and Broadcasting Farukh Habib on Thursday asked the multi-party alliance—Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) to review its own performance instead of criticizing the government for its three-year in power. During the last couple of years, the parties to the alliance did nothing, but only resorted to infighting and washing each others' dirty linen in public, he said while addressing to opening ceremony of the first-ever tennis ball cricket tournament of Video Journalists Association of Islamabad.

**Ramiz to become new Chair PCB**

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Cricketer turned commentator Ramiz Raja could soon embark on a new career in sports administration as he says he has been nominated by Prime Minister Imran Khan to become the next chairman of the PCB. In an interview, Raja confirmed to "have been informed by the Prime Minister's Office" that he is PM Imran's choice to take over the PCB from Ehsan Mani. Raja said an official notification will be issued soon.

## 10 US SERVICEMEN KILLED

# Several die in Kabul explosions

**Pakistan condemns Kabul attack; at least 60 killed; over 100 critically injured; casualties include children**

NEWS DESK / DNA

KABUL: Explosions outside Kabul airport on Thursday killed at least 60 people, including children, and wounded many Taliban guards, a Taliban official said. The Turkish Defence Ministry said there were two explosions and the Russian govt said there were actually three explosions. The Russian Foreign Ministry said a second explosion went off outside the airport in the Afghan capital, adding that at least 60 were killed and 100 injured while the third explosion took place after a gap of around two hours. The Turkish Defence Ministry said there were two explosions. The casualties, according to the Pentagon, includes US service members also. Pentagon spokesman John Kirby also said one blast occurred near the airport's Abbey Gate and the other close to the nearby Baron Hotel. Two US officials said at least one of the explosions appeared to be from a suicide bombing. US officials say one of the explosions appears to be a suicide bomb. A United States official said US service members were among the wounded, adding he was citing an initial report and cautioning that it could change. He said there were casualties but did not know how many or of what nationality.

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## Taliban condemns Kabul blasts

NEWS DESK

KABUL: In a statement, Taliban spokesman Suhail SHaheen said, "The Islamic Emirate strongly condemns the bombing of civilians at Kabul airport, which took place in an area where US forces are responsible for security. The Islamic Emirate is paying close attention to the security and protection of its people, and evil circles will be strictly stopped." Earlier, The Pentagon rejected reports that they are preparing to end evacuations from Afghanistan before this weekend, saying the operations from Kabul airport will continue until August 31. "Evacuation operations in Kabul will not be wrapping up in 36 hours. We will continue to evacuate as many people as we can until the end of the mission," Defense Department Spokesman John Kirby said. Key US allies France, Canada, Hungary, the Netherlands and others already announced they had or would soon halt their evacuation flights, and Germany was also expected to carry out its last flights by Friday, amid intelligence that suicide bombers were threatening the Kabul airport.

## New Azerbaijan envoy to Pakistan assumes office



DNA

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Mr. Khazar Farhadov Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has arrived in Islamabad & assumed his office. Pakistan and Azerbaijan enjoy ex-

cellent relations. Both countries have been cooperating with each other on regional as well international forums. Azerbaijan has contributed a lot especially in the development of the social sector in Pakistan. It is hoped that during the tenure of new ambassador bilateral relations would further be strengthened. Meanwhile Pakistan Ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee also extended best wishes to the newly arrived ambassador of Azerbaijan on assuming responsibilities in Islamabad. Together, we will work for further strengthening our bilateral ties, Ambassador Bilal Hayee added.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador-designate of Pakistan to Switzerland, Mr Aamir Shouket, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. – DNA

## Alvi for enhanced Pakistan-Swiss ties

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan highly values its relations with Switzerland which are based on mutual trust and cooperation. He highlighted that Switzerland was an important trade and investment partner of Pakistan and commercial relations between the two countries needed to be further enhanced for the mutual benefits of the two sides. He added that the growing investment of Swiss multinational companies reinforced bilateral ties and reflected their confidence in Pakistan. He made these remarks while talking to Ambassador-designate of Pakistan to Switzerland, Mr Aamir Shouket, who called on the President, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

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## Three Levies personnel martyred

DNA

QUETTA: Three Levies personnel were martyred and as many injured when their vehicle hit a landmine in Balochistan's Ziarat district on Thursday. The explosion occurred when the Levies vehicle ran over a landmine near Mangi Dam, provincial government spokesperson Liaquat Shahwani said. He further said the injured were sent to a hospital in Quetta for treatment. According to Shahwani, the martyred personnel included a risaldar major, havaldar and a sepoy. The three injured were all sepoy. The Balochistan Levies is a force in charge of maintaining law and order.

## Power of suo motu lies with CJP only

SC wraps up petition against journalists' harassment

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Thursday wrapped up the matter of a suo motu notice taken by a bench of the apex court against the harassment of journalists. The court directed filing a petition which was later filed by petitioners Imran Shafiq and Aamir Mir along with the Press Association of Supreme Court (PAS). The court held that harassing journalists and depriving them of performing their professional obligations is a matter of public importance, as the Consti-

on August 20 when former president of the Press Association of the Supreme Court (PAS), Abdul Qayyum Siddiqui, brought to the court's notice an application over the alleged harassment of journalists. The court directed filing a petition which was later filed by petitioners Imran Shafiq and Aamir Mir along with the Press Association of Supreme Court (PAS). The court held that harassing journalists and depriving them of performing their professional obligations is a matter of public importance, as the Consti-

tution guarantees freedom of speech, freedom of expression and freedom of the press. Filed under Article 184(3) of the Constitution, the petition requested the apex court to initiate action to ensure their fundamental rights and take action against all those who are violating them. In an order issued on August 20, the SC summoned the director general of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the Islamabad police chief as well as the secretaries of interior,

Continued on Page 06

## FM Qureshi meets Iranian leadership

– also extends invitations to Iranian President and FM

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has arrived in Tehran on Thursday, the fourth phase of his regional tour to review developments in Afghanistan and deepen bilateral relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Foreign Minister held talks with the Foreign Minister and the President of Iran, separately. Foreign Minister had extensive discussions on regional security & a coordinated approach for Afghanistan, to work towards security, stability &



an inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan. Qureshi discussed Pakistan's outlook for a coordinated approach between all neighbours of Afghanistan for peace and prosperity. Foreign Minister also extended invitations to President and Foreign Minister of Iran.

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## COAS visits Sulemanki

NEHAL MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), visited troops deployed at Sulemanki Sector on Thursday. COAS was apprised on operational readiness of troops. While interacting with officers and men, COAS appreciated their professional preparedness, diligence and high morale. COAS also visited Bahawalnagar Garrison and witnessed battle drills of Heavy Mechanized Brigade troops. Praising the competence of soldiers, COAS expressed his satisfaction over high standards of training and combat readiness. The core capabilities should be further enhanced to tackle full spectrum threat in a befitting manner, COAS emphasised. Earlier, on arrival at Sulemanki, COAS was received by Corps Commander Lieutenant General Khalid Zia.

**Covid-19 positivity rate rises to 7.4%**

ZUBAIR AHMED

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reported 85 more deaths in the last 24 hours by novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The nationwide tally of fatalities has jumped to 25,320 on Thursday. The National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) said that the country's number of overall confirmed cases has risen to 1,140,411 after the emergence of 4,553 new infections. Overall 1,022,847 have recovered their health back from the pandemic, adding that the positivity rate of infections was recorded at 7.4 per cent as compared to Wednesday's 6.83%. The NCOC said 5,476 people are in critical condition.

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Arab League, OIC call for Algeria-Morocco dialogue – Page 06

Azerbaijan to build its own future: President Aliyev – Page 07

European Council, ADB laud Pak role in evacuation process – Page 08

## Pak will not become part of any conflict: PM

Says people have started criticizing Taliban even before their government is formed; Taliban should be given a chance

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has emphatically stated that Pakistan will not become part of any foreign conflict and vowed to economically uplift the country. He was addressing a ceremony in connection with three-year performance of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government in Islamabad on Thursday. The prime minister further said that Taliban should be given a chance to deliver. He said people have started criticizing Taliban even before their government is formed. He said Taliban have assured the world community that their soil should not be used against anybody therefore they should be given proper time. If they fail to keep up their promises then the world has every right to criticize them.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan addressing an event to commemorate three years of PTI govt. – DNA

Talking about the evolving situation in Afghanistan, Imran Khan urged the international community to play its due role in bringing peace to Afghanistan. He said the Taliban have assured to form an inclusive government for durable peace in Afghanistan and the world community should help them achieving this goal.

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## Fawad lauds PTI's performance report

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said it was the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government which had set the tradition of sharing yearly performance report with public. Before the PTI, there was no culture of sharing the government and its departments' performance with public continuously. Those who had had ruled for thirty years in the country were hiding their faces right now, Fawad Hussain told the Pakistan Television (PTV) here. "The PTI is the only government which brings its performance before the public. Before that, no other political party had dared to appear before the public so that it could tell as to what extent the promises made with people were fulfilled," the minister maintained. He said Prime Minister Imran Khan would proudly present the incumbent government's three years performance

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## Briefs

## Court sends 13 for identity parade

DNA

LAHORE: The local court hearing the Minar-e-Pakistan assault case has Thursday sent to jail for the identity parade 13 more suspects arrested by the police. The suspects were produced before the district court where the judicial magistrate sent the suspects to jail so their identity parade can take place. All the 13 suspects were brought to the court today with their faces covered. So far 144 faces have been arrested on suspicion of being part of the mob that sexually assaulted and violated the victim TikToker. All of the 144 have been sent to jail for the identity parade. Separately, it may be noted that the committee set up by Punjab Inspector General of Police (IGP) Inam Ghani to investigate the assault and harassment of a woman TikToker by a mob at Greater Iqbal Park on Aug 14 has made startling revelations in its report. According to the report, as many as 16 calls were made on the police's Maddadgar 15 helpline by the woman's friends and others present at the park but police didn't reach there in a timely manner. It said the police personnel were conspicuous by their absence at the park when the incident occurred.

## Free tickets cost PIA Rs30 million

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: In a startling disclosure, it has emerged that despite facing a fiscal deficit of billions of rupees, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) distributed 1,153 tickets to its favourites between 2017 and 2019 for free, thus causing a loss of over Rs30 million to the organisation. According to an audit report, the tickets, airline's management awarded to its own employees, are separate from these 1,153 tickets in question. The report tells that 535 tickets were distributed in 2017 while 561 in 2018. "In the financial year (FY) 2019, the national flag carrier dished out 57 tickets to its blue-eyed boys," the report reveals. The report informs that the airline had faced fiscal deficit of Rs51 billion in 2017, of over Rs67 billion in the following year, 2018 and of over Rs55 billion in 2019. The audit report says that the PIA management ought to have exercised frugality and refrained from taking unwanted steps rather than awarding tickets for free. Sources said that free tickets were allegedly given by PIA Chief Commercial Officer Ali Tahir Qasim to the ticketing agents.

## Double shift classes to start in KP

PESHAWAR: Provincial Education Minister Shahram Khan Tarakai Thursday informed that all arrangements have been made to start double-shift classes in the first phase at selected schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from September 1st (Wednesday). To arrange the tuition staff for second shift classes, he said new teachers would be hired from the market while the rest would be selected from the existing strength. He said all the authority for this task would be handed over to the Parents-Teachers' Council that would be monitored by the District Education Officers (DEOs). Talking to people at his residence in MozaTarakai he said this revolutionary step would help contain the ratio of dropout at schools and enabled the students to get education up to high level in their native areas. For the double shift classes, he said teachers would be appointed on the basis of their educational competence and experience. For the purpose, he said four teachers and a peon each would be appointed at middle level schools while in high schools seven teachers, one clerk and one peon would be appointed. - APP

## Uzbekistan, Pakistan enjoy excellent relations: envoy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Six weeks On-Campus Internship Program for the Under-Grad Students of Bahria University is being organized by Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad. Aybek Arif Usmanov, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Pakistan discussed Regional Connectivity between Central Asia and South Asia and the future of Pakistan and Uzbekistan. The lecture commenced with the video speech of President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev that he delivered at the International Conference on "Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities". Aybek Arif Usmanov, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Pakistan expressed gratitude to Dr. Adam Saud, Dean, Bahria University, Islamabad, Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram, Executive Director, CGSS and the interns. He praised the CGSS's initiative of organizing this on campus internship program. Aybek Arif Usmanov gave brief description on creation of Uzbekistan. He stated that the roots of Islam belong to Uzbekistan and Islam came from Uzbekistan. Pakistan and Uzbekistan have historical ties and they are linked to



each other. He praised the initiatives of Prime Minister of Pakistan regarding Regional Connectivity among Central Asia and South Asia. Aybek Arif Usmanov gave a detailed overview of Uzbekistan's President Speech presented at the International Conference on the Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities. Aybek Arif Usmanov emphasized that Uzbekistan is a reliable, stable and predictable partner aimed at devel-

oping the constructive and mutually beneficial cooperation. Aybek Arif Usmanov discussed the prospects for economic cooperation with Central and South Asian countries, he stated that main trading partners of Central Asia countries among the South Asian Countries are Afghanistan and Pakistan. Mr. Jasur Saidahmedov, 2nd Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan stated that in order to continue to effectively ex-

pand Pak-Uzbek bilateral economic and cultural cooperation, we developed strategy for intra-provincial partnership. That means direct cooperation between respective territories, provinces of two states without the involvement of central or federal government. Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram, Executive Director CGSS highlighted the significance of the Central & South Asia Connectivity presented by Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

## World acknowledging Tree Tsunami project: Zartaj Gul

Environmental issues had increased in urban areas especially in big cities and the situation could only be improved through maximum plantation at parks, green belts and all other available places

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Minister of State for Climate Change Zartaj Gul on Thursday said that the '10 Billion Tree Tsunami' plantation project is continuing successfully across country and it is being acknowledged at international forums. She was addressing the inaugural ceremony of Miyawaki Forest at Bagh-e-Jinnah here. Parks & Horticulture Director General Asma Ejaz Cheema, officers and a large number of staff were also present. The minister said that the government had taken a number of initiatives for provision of a clean and green environment to future generations. She said that environmental issues had increased in urban areas especially in big cities and the situation could only be improved through maximum plantation at parks, green belts and all other available places. She said that the credit of the 10 billion Tsunami programme, urban plantation and Miyawaki forestation and Miyawaki forestation goes to Prime Min-



ister Imran Khan. The minister said that environment pollution had been increasing in the cities especially in industrial city Faisalabad due to heavy industry and waste exhausted from factories adding that Miyawaki forestation is the best solution to provide clean and green environment to citizens. She said that Pakistan had offered to host 'World Environment Day' which is an honour for the country. She

said that the international Jury and SSG13 climate control said that Pakistan has reached near to achieve its environment target 10 years before. The minister said that the government was working on health, education and law & order situation despite other challenges including COVID-19. Zartaj said that, Prime Minister Imran Khan stands among 5 best leaders in the world who talked to tackle or address the cli-

mate issues. She said that Pakistan was the 5th biggest country which has a climate threat but we would be able to tackle this situation. She said that the PTI government had rehabilitated 80,000 power looms units including 50,000 old looms, resulting in hundreds of jobs being created. Later, she planted a sapling in Bagh-e-Jinnah. She also visited a children library set up in the garden.

## SHC adjourns hearing of Nisar Khuhro

STAFF REPORT

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) on Thursday adjourned hearing of a petition of PPP leader Nisar Khuhro, seeking removal of his name from the ECL. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) sought more time from the court to submit its reply over the matter. Khuhro, who served previously as Sindh food minister, is facing a NAB inquiry regarding alleged irregularities in wheat procurement. The court extended interim bail of Nisar Khuhro until September 28. The bench also adjourned further hearing of the petition till the date.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Information Minister Fawad Ch and State Minister Farrukh Habib present three year performance report to Prime Minister Imran Khan. - DNA

## Dar along with delegation of SCCI meet Chairman FBR

DNA

SIALKOT: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Usman Dar along with delegation of Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry comprising President of the Sialkot Chamber Qaiser Iqbal Baryaar and other senior office bearers of trade bodies met with Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Dr. Muhammad Ashfaq Ahmed at FBR HQ. Usman Dar and delegates of trade bodies congratulated Dr. Muhammad Ashfaq Ahmed on his appointment as Chairman FBR. The delegation appreciated FBR for taking special initiatives to promote ease of doing business in Sialkot. They also valued the automated issuance of refunds into taxpayer's account. During the meeting the matter relating to sales tax incentives for small and medium enterprise

exporters was discussed. Chairman FBR was assisted by FBR team comprising Member (Inland Revenue Policy) and Chief (Sales Tax Operations). The Chairman FBR appreciated the feedback of the delegation and invited concrete proposals from delegates for sector wise.

Accordingly, the Chairman FBR issued on spot instruction to Chief (Sales Tax Operations) to coordinate with Sialkot field formation officers and formulate a Committee to address the issues being faced by the house business community and submit a detailed report till 30th September, 2021.



## WAPDA's CBA observe nationwide strike

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: All Pakistan WAPDA Hydro Electric Workers Union (CBA) observed nationwide strike to record protest against the privatization of Distribution Companies (DISCOs). In this connection, the main rally was arranged from Bakhtiar Labor Hall to Chowk Abdullahpur Faisalabad under the leadership of the Regional Chairman Ch. SarfrazHundal. Hundreds of FESCO officials attended the protest rally and protested against privatization of FESCO. During his speech Ch.SarfrazHundal demanded the Prime Minister Imran Khan should immediately stop the privatization of the WAPDA and other departments, in view of the failed experiment of the K Electric. He also demanded to increase the salaries and pension, up gradation of scales and regularization of the contractual and part time staff. He further said that the government should amend the labor laws in accordance with the International Labor Organizations (ILO) conventions. He said that the government should introduce the reforms instead of privatization of the WAPDA because WAPDA and DISCOs are national institutes of the public interest but due to wrong policies there is severe shortage of staff in DISCOs. Despite shortage of staff, officials are showing excellent performance and production of electricity is increasing continuously, he added.

## Portal for new elec meters launched

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: On the special directives of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) Engr. Bashir Ahmed online portal for the installation of new electricity meters is fully activated and consumers of 8 districts of FESCO region including Faisalabad, Toba

Tek Singh, Jhang, Mianwali, Khushab, Chiniot, Bhakkar and Sardogha are enjoying this facility and applying online for new electricity connection. FESCO has spent millions of rupees for execution of the state of the art online system in all five operation circles of the FESCO region. Under this system latest computers and hardware systems have been provided in Sub Division.

## Capital Development Authority Directorate of Works

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONSTRUCTION FIRMS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF 400 SERVANT QUARTERS AT PARLIAMENT LODGES ISLAMABAD

Applications are invited for pre-qualification of constructions from reputable Companies / Firms having successfully executed construction project related upto Building works and have experience such projects. The interested contractors and required to submit their applications along with the following information.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. NAME AND TYPE OF THE FIRM AND FULL ADDRESS.
2. Enlistment with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) for the year 2021 as Contractor in Category C-3 and above having codes CE-01 and CE-02 will be considered only.
3. List of permanent professional staff for Construction, details of similar works completed and in hand.
4. Certificate of Satisfactory performance of Completed works from respective client. The works executed with Govt./Semi Govt./Autonomous bodies/Authorities shall only be considered in evaluation.
5. Affidavit on-judicial stamp paper of Rs 200/- duly notarized regarding non-black listing and bankruptcy
6. List of tools, machinery and plants, with its present location and ownership evidence.
7. Certificate from the Bank for available credit line limits upto Rs.300.000 million, Audited financial statements from QCR Firms and income tax returns supported with FBR Returns.

## PARTICULAR REQUIREMENTS.

In addition to the above, particular and detail requirements are given in the pre-qualification documents. The documents can be obtained at a cost of Rs.3,000/- (Non Re-fundable), payable in cash in from the office of Deputy Director Works-II, CDA Room # 22, Ground Floor Old Naval Headquarter Building Sector G-6 Islamabad during working hours till 14.09.2021. Applications complete in all respects should reach to office of Director Works CDA Room # 21 Ground Floor Old Naval Headquarter Building Sector G-6 Islamabad to be submitted by Post Courier latest by 14.09.2021 during office hours. Sealed envelope must contain title Pre-qualifications of Contractors for Construction of 400 Servant quarter at Parliament Lodges, Islamabad. The Capital Development Authority reserves the right to reject any or all applications as per PPRR Rules. For further information and enquiries please contact.

Tahir Mahmood

Direct Works CDA  
Room # 21 Old Naval  
Headquarter  
Markaz G-6 Islamabad  
office Tel # 051-9203773

PID (I) No. 1188/21



## Tender Notice

SUPPLY OF BOTTLED/MINERAL WATER THROUGH DISPENSERS UNDER TENDER ENQUIRY NO. 09 OF 2021

1. The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) invites sealed bids/proposal from well-reputed firms/suppliers/distributors having five (05) years relevant experience, registered with income tax, sales tax departments and PSQCA and having certification of PCRWR and ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 2200 and OHSAS 18001 for supply of quality bottled/mineral water for drinking purposes through dispensers, to its employees (250 approx.) working in office building located at 54-B, Fazalul Haq Road, Blue Area, Islamabad under Tender Enquiry No. 09 of 2021.
2. The Tender Documents containing detailed information, terms and conditions etc. are available on the websites of PPRR ([www.ppra.org.pk](http://www.ppra.org.pk)) and OGRA ([www.ogra.org.pk](http://www.ogra.org.pk)). These documents can also be obtained from office of the undersigned on any working day i.e. Monday to Friday from 09:00 am to 05:00 pm.
3. The sealed bids will be received on or before **September 14, 2021 by 11: 00 a.m.** at OGRA's Head Office located at Plot No. 54-B, Fazalul Haq Road, Blue Area, Islamabad and will be opened on the same date at **11:30 a.m.** in basement of OGRA's Head Office by OGRA's Bid Opening Committee.
4. In case the last date of submission of bids falls on closed official day(s)/ holiday(s), the date for submission & opening of the bids shall be the next working day.
5. OGRA reserves the right to cancel/reject any or all bids/proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of the bids/proposals as per PPRR Rules, 2004.

(Ejaz Ahmad Gohar)  
Joint Executive Director (Admin)

Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA)

Plot No. 54-B, Fazalul Haq Road, Blue Area, Islamabad. Ph: 051-9244373

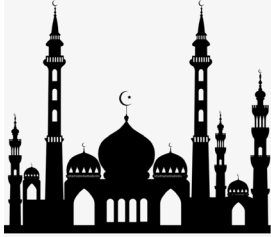
Public Service Message:

قدرتی گیس کے غیر ضروری استعمال سے اجتناب آپ کا اخلاقی اور معاشرتی فریضہ ہے۔

PID (I) No. 1189/21



## SERVICES



## Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	04:10 am
Zohr.....	12:10 pm
Asr.....	04:49 pm
Maghrib.....	06:41 pm
Isha.....	08:09 pm



## Hotels &amp; Restaurants

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



## Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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## Emergency

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



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CAA.....	9281092



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MH.....	5611116
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DHQ.....	5556311-4
RGH.....	9290301-7
Holy Family.....	9290322-7
PIMS.....	9261170-79
Polyclinic.....	9218300-09
Shifa International.....	4603666



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



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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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## 141 Pakistani students win Erasmus+ scholarships

Pak ranks third in the world in the number of scholarships, moving up from fourth place with a considerable increase in the number of scholarships. The Erasmus+ Programme provides funding for educational initiatives, training, and scholarships

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) organised on Thursday a send-off ceremony for Pakistani students who have secured Erasmus Mundus Scholarship for 2021-22 academic session.

Mr. Awais Ahmed, Advisor (Coordination) HEC chaired the ceremony, while Ms. Aayesha Ikram, DG (Scholarships) HEC and Mr. Ovidiu Mic, Head of Co-operation Delegation of the European Union were also present on the occasion along with a large number of scholarship winners and Erasmus+ alumni.

For 2021-22 session, 141 Pakistani students will receive the Erasmus+ scholarship out of a total of 2542 scholarships awarded worldwide. Pakistan ranks third in the world in the number of scholarships, moving up from fourth place with a considerable increase in the



number of scholarships. The Erasmus+ Programme provides funding for educational initiatives, training, and scholarships. It is designed to support programme countries efforts to benefit from European knowledge institutions in a lifelong learning perspective. The opportunities offered are available to Pakistani faculty and students.

Since coming under its ambit in 2016, HEC has taken proactive measure and effective communication strategies with universities students & faculty. Every year HEC conducts a series of workshops/information sessions in different cities of Pakistan to create awareness among Pakistani students about the Erasmus+ scholarships, and faculty members to apply for

research funding through defined proposal topics, and also capacity building in the field of higher education with counter partners of local universities and EU universities. These workshops and awareness sessions have turned out to be very effective, encouraging results of the previous years reflect the efforts of HEC. Addressing the ceremony,

Advisor Mr. Awais Ahmed said that the education and exposure not only defines an individual's career but also plays a positive role in nation building. He advised the departing students to focus on their study and play ambassadors of Pakistan abroad by their conduct. He hoped that the students, on completion of their studies, will further the cause of improving the quality of education in Pakistan. In his remarks, Mr. Mic appreciated the upward trend of the number of Pakistani students applying for and winning the Erasmus+ scholarships every year. He advised the students to keep in contact with their programme coordinators and the focal persons in case of any hardship related to Covid restrictions. The ceremony was also addressed by Erasmus+ alumni including Ms. Hajra Mumtaz, Mr. Rizwan Mumtaz and Mr. Waqar Baig.

## Police arrest five; recover liquor, drugs

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Police in their operation against drug peddlers and bootleggers arrested five and recovered 400 grams charras, eight liters liquor and a dagger from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Saddar Baroni police held Shazmir Khan for having 150 grams charras. Murree police seized 250 grams charras and rounded up Tahir Mehmood. Gujjar Khan Police arrested Sarfraz and recovered three liters liquor while Rawat police netted Hassan Ahmed for possessing five liters liquor. Waris Khan Police arrested Shaf Ali and recovered a dagger from his possession. Separate cases have been registered against all the accused while further investigations are underway, he added.

## Education Ministry developing SNC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Curriculum Council (NCC), Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training in consultation with Education Departments of all federating units of the country, is developing Single National Curriculum (SNC) from grade one to 10 in line with the vision of the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

According to a three years performance report of ministry of federal education and professional training on Thursday, the SNC would be taught in public and private schools in addition to Deeni Madaris.

It was further shared that the government has launched the Rehmatul-lil-Alameen scholarship program for the students hailing from low-income groups of Pakistan. During the fiscal year 2020-21, 69,000 students were being financed with the total cost of Rs. 8.46 billion. Under the National Endowment (NEST) Scholarship for Talent was a need-based scholarship program that was to be targeted towards deserving students of the arts and humanities to promote a diverse range of learning in secondary and higher education in Pakistan.

NEST was aimed to support the study of fine arts, visual arts, film & TV, interior & textile design, and a variety of other disciplines to ensure culture of education in Pakistan as vibrant and multi-disciplinary.

In wake of COVID-19, the government was ensuring 100 percent vaccination in all educational institutions, departments, and offices. During COVID-19, the federal government was handling all decisions regarding resumption of academic activities such as physical examination, and the admissions of students.

## Govt for steps to improve health delivery system

ISLAMABAD: The present government had tried its level best to improve the health of all citizens, particularly women and children by providing universal access to affordable, quality, essential health services.

According to available official document, during its three year tenure the government had made several efforts to improve health-care delivery system with focus on having a resilient and responsive health system, capable of attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfilling its other global health responsibilities.

The vision was described in the National Action Plan (2019-23) and the same was aligned with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) manifesto to ensure universal health coverage and enhancing the focus on primary health care while upgrading secondary and tertiary facilities. The government had also taken sincere steps to reduce the population growth rate for the health of mothers, children and families and the prosperity of Pakistan by reducing the impending burden on its resources. - APP

## CCoE approves IGCEP 2021-30

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCOE) Thursday approved the Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan - known as IGCEP 2021-30, an indicative annual plan prepared by the National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) as per National Electricity Policy (NEP) approved by the Council of Common Interest (CCI). The meeting presided over by Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Asad Umar here approved the Plan presented by the Power Division after detailed consultations with all the provincial governments.



ISLAMABAD: A large number of people standing in queue for getting free food distributed at Panagah in I-11 Sector under Ehsaas Program. - APP

## PNC to promote National artists in "The New Odyssey" exhibition

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of Arts is to host a National Art Exhibition 'The New Odyssey' opening on the 1st of September, 2021 of the top graduating students from different art universities across Pakistan. We are very excited to promote upcoming national artists. This exhibition will provide an opportunity for fresh talented Bachelor in Fine Arts graduates to showcase their works at the esteemed Pakistan National Council of Arts. This will not only

broaden their vision about the art industry but will also help them gain exposure towards the national art scene as PNCA is heavily visited by a very unique crowd including patrons from all walks of life, foreigners, government departments, NGO's etc., as well as get them connected with the media and press. Our primary focus is to promote the young talent and give them a compelling platform in these stressful times of COVID-19.



PNCA is dedicated to promote Pakistani Art on Local and National scale. Our elevate and unique programs that present the traditional and contemporary art practices we reflect upon the excellence and cultural diversity of Pakistan as well as supports professional development of the artist. PNCA is committed to promoting significant aspects of the country and encourages community participation in gallery activities, fostering curatorial practice

to artists own understanding of their work and encourages a healthy and sustainable local arts industry. PNCA has maintained a range of regionally focused visual arts exhibitions featuring both nationally and internationally recognized artists. The various universities of Pakistan including National College of Arts, Lahore and Rawalpindi campus, Beacon house National University, Punjab University, Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, University of Sindh Jamshoro, University of Peshawar, University of Baluchistan and University of Karachi are participating.

## CDA's BCD has received more than Rs 487M in revenue since June 2021

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The Building Control Department (BCD) of the Capital Development Authority has received Rs: 487,068,158 since June 2021 this year. In addition, the CDA's Building Control Department has issued 156 notices on illegal and additional constructions in various sectors since June 2021 this year, while show cause notices have been issued to more than 20 buildings and instructions have been issued to the owners illegal and additional constructions should be removed immediately, otherwise illegal and additional constructions will be sealed or demolished. In addition, the Building Control Department approved 253 residential buildings and building plans for 18 commercial buildings, while the CDA's Building Control completed processing of more than 80 percent of the public complaints it received. In addition, the Building Control Department has carried out these operations in Sector G-7, G-8, G-10, G-11, F-10, F-6, F-7, I-Series, Margalla Town and Rawal Town areas of Islamabad.

## Pak-China Institute organizes webinar on Covid

Amb. Munir Akram urges 'COVID-19 campaign be free of any prejudice & politics', Mushahid rejects demonization of China, urges 'Vaccines without Borders' Initiative

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-China Institute (PCI) organised a first-of-its-kind Webinar on "COVID-19 Origin and International Cooperation" under its flagship event series, "Friends of Silk Road (FOSR)". The webinar examined various reports and analyses about the origins of the Coronavirus Pandemic. The Webinar was attended by over 50 participants online, including different countries of Asia & Africa, and featured six panelists, including Ambassador to United Nations, Munir Akram, Naghmana Hashmi, former Ambassador to China, Senator Mushahid Hussain, Chairman of Senate Defence Committee, Hasaan Khawar, public policy expert, Hassan Daud Butt, CEO of KP Board of Investment and Trade, and Dr Manzoor Ahmed, former Ambassador to WTO. The Webinar discussed the report of the 17 US intelligence agencies, presented to President Biden on August 24, which remains "inconclusive" regarding the origins of the Coronavirus Pandemic. This follows the March 13 Joint Report of experts from WHO and China, comprising almost 20 experts from over a dozen countries, which said that it is "extremely unlikely" that the Coronavirus



Pandemic was a leak from a lab. Mustafa Hyder Sayed, Executive Director of PCI, highlighted how politicization of the pandemic is replacing multilateral cooperation in the fight against the Pandemic. He said 'Playing politics with the pandemic detracts developing countries like Pakistan from effectively fighting it'. Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, called the politici-

zation of tracing the origins of the virus, a 'regrettable move', and said the efforts have been tainted by 'conspiracy theories and smear campaigns.' Talking about the close cooperation of China with WHO to trace the origins of the virus, Ambassador Akram advised that the only way forward out of this misinformation epidemic is through, "science, as origin tracing is science, trust science, stay away from prejudice and poli-

tics." Hassan Khawar, public policy expert, highlighted how the coronavirus pandemic has taken more than 4 million lives so far, while continuing to wreak havoc throughout the world. He said that despite efforts to find the origins of the virus during the last almost two years, there is no scientific evidence to blame China. Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi, former Ambassador of Pakistan to China during the onset of the pandemic, called Covid-19 a 'politically-charged virus' that has increased global competition, and created two blocs in international system; one which alleges the virus was created in a lab in Wuhan, whereas the other thinks that it was created in a lab in Maryland, Senator Mushahid Hussain quoted the August 24 report by 17 US' intelligence agencies which failed to trace the origins of the coronavirus or lay blame on China. Senator Hussain said that despite this, China is demonized through a politically-motivated campaign. He mentioned how President Trump coined the term 'China virus', and said such ethnic targeting is similar to racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. He uncovered the prevailing Cold-War mentality among some in the US, which has tried to link the virus to Asians, "causing a spike of 169% in hate crimes against Asian-Americans."



## Briefs

## Senate panel for setting up overseas bodies

ISLAMABAD: Senate's Standing Committee for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development on Thursday underlined the need for establishing Overseas Pakistanis Commissions (OPCs) in other provinces on the pattern of Punjab. Presiding over the committee meeting, Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar observed that the provincial governments should own the idea of setting up the OPCs in provinces. Senator Shaheen Khalid Butt called for a detailed briefing from the team of Punjab Overseas Pakistanis Commission (OPC) on its working and steps taken so far for facilitating the expats.

The officials of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development told the committee that an OPC had been set up in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and was operational. The Sindh government also agreed to establish the OPC in the province, they added. The Chairman Committee said the problems faced by the expatriates could be overcome to a great extent if the OPCs were formed at the provincial level. — APP

## Defence Ministry upgrades four hospitals

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Defence has upgraded its healthcare facilities through construction and upgradation of 500 beds at four Cantonnments General Hospitals (CGH) and constructed two Medical Colleges and nine dispensaries. The upgradation of CGH at Peshawar was made whereas the construction of CGH at Lahore, Sialkot, Nowshera Cantt were in progress, said the Three Years Performance Report of the Prime Minister here on Thursday.

The establishment of Maternity Center at Malir Cantonment, construction of Medical College at Chaklala and Lahore was completed whereas additional six dispensaries have been made functional. Moreover, the Ministry also introduced E-Governance Procedures in Military Lands and Cantonment (ML&C).

It also included development of one window facilitation centres under CBCARE (Cantt Board Citizen Assistance and Rapid Execution) system, where Public Facilitation Centres were established in 37 Cantonment Boards in a phased manner. It also included automation through development and implementation of Software Systems i.e., Application, Complaint, Human Resource, Budget and Accounts, Revenue, Litigation and Mail Management system. — APP

## Water scarcity issue still remains unresolved

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Vice Chancellor Pir Mehr Ali Shah (PMAS) Arid Agriculture University Prof. Dr. Qamar Uz Zaman has said that water scarcity is one of the most serious emerging issues of this time at Pothohar region.

While addressing a seminar on water crisis in the Pothohar region, he said if the relevant authorities don't take prompt steps right now, things may get worse in Pakistan, particularly in the Pothohar region.

He said that Pakistan is an agriculture country and the water is much in demand over here but sadly it is decreasing with every passing day, adding water level is going lower day by day. There are no particular ways of storing water in the said region which is also exacerbating the situation, he said and added the agriculture at the arid regions is directly linked to the rains so in this case importance of water over here further increases. It isn't irrelevant to add here that there is a tradition of small man-made ponds in the suburbs of the villages. The rain water is collected here to facilitate normal chores and having drinking water for farm animals.



ISLAMABAD: Newly arrived Ambassador-designate of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov paying respects to the national leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev after arriving in Pakistan. — DNA

## Business community calls for deferment of POS installation

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that the traders have been fully cooperating with the government in the corona vaccination drive and they should be engaged in talks on POS issues instead of sending FBR's teams to monitor their sale at business premises

SHUJAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The business community in a meeting chaired by Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has called upon the FBR to defer the installation of POS machines in business premises till the time all the reservations of traders are addressed and consensus is developed on this important issue. Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Ajmal Baloch President Anjuman-e-Tijaran Pakistan, Tahir Abbasi, Muhammad Saeed Khan, Shehzad Shabbir Abbasi, Ahmed Khan, Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Khalid Chaudhry and others were in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that FBR should take traders and all market associations on board before installation of POS machines in the retail units that would help in broadening the tax base and improving the tax



revenue of the country. He said that instead of a POS system, the government should prefer promoting the self-assessment scheme as the business community has more confidence in this scheme and will be more willing to pay tax through the self-assessment system. He said that in the prevailing circumstances,

a self-assessment scheme would be more instrumental in improving the tax revenue collection of the country. Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that the traders have been fully cooperating with the government in the corona vaccination drive and they should be engaged in talks on POS issues instead of sending FBR's teams to

monitor their sale at business premises. Presence of FBR teams in business premises would not send a positive signal to the trading community.

Ajmal Baloch, President, Anjuman-e-Tijaran Pakistan said that the traders have a lot of reservations on the installation of POS machines at retail outlets and FBR should first address all their concerns before going ahead with this new system. He said that traders would not accept forceful implementation of the POS system and if any coercive tactics are used, the government would be responsible for the consequences. He said that traders are playing an important role in promoting the business activities they should be treated with due respect and regard.

He stressed that FBR should immediately withdraw all monitoring teams from business premises and the installation of POS machines should be deferred till the time all the stakeholders are fully taken on board so that with joint efforts, the tax revenue of the country could be improved.

## Political victory imperative for int'l recognition of Taliban

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI) held a webinar on "Evolving Situation in Afghanistan" on August 26, 2021. The distinguished speakers included: Dr. Abdullah Anas, author of 'To the Mountains: My Life in Jihad, from Algeria to Afghanistan', Mr. Tamim Asey, Founder & Executive Chairman of the Institute

of War and Peace Studies (IWPS), Kabul, Mr. Adam N Weinstein, Research Fellow at the Quincy Institute, Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA, ISSI, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director General ISSI, Dr. Daud Abdullah, Director Middle East Monitor (MEMO), and Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BOG, ISSI also spoke on the occasion.

During his introductory remarks, Dr. Daud Abdullah stated that the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan

was always seen as an affront to what it means to be an Afghan. The reaction which we saw as a result of the invasion was predictable for a country that was never colonised. There had long been a recognition that the war in Afghanistan was unwinnable. Even after the Afghan army mobilized a force, they were unable to reverse the trend of defeat and the invading forces could not motivate young Afghans to fight against their fellow Afghans. He also added that after what he called a 'misadventure', the inquisition, export and imposition of western values remains a fantasy. Afghanistan represents a classic case in this regard, he stated.

During his welcome remarks, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry said that the end of any occupation is an inevitable reality and should be endorsed. He believed that the Taliban could achieve political stability in Afghanistan, provided they form an inclusive setup and honour their commitments and adopt a more moderate outlook. Moreover, the Taliban should honour their promise that Afghan soil will not be used against any other country something which all of Afghanistan's neighbours are very sensitive about. He said that the Ashraf Ghani government was dependent on economic assistance from the West, but now the Taliban should not expect any economic assistance from the West.

## ANF seized 5496 kg drugs in 54 operations

ZUBAIR AHMAD

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force Pakistan seized 5496.405 Kg narcotics valuing US \$ 360.33 Million internationally, arrested 53 culprits including 3 x Women, 1 x Afghani & 1 x Nigerian National and impounded 20 vehicles while conducting 54 counter-narcotics strikes throughout the country. The seized drugs comprised 47.701 Kg Heroin, 5341.128 Kg Hashish, 70 Kg Opium, 3.655 Kg Amphetamine, 24.389 Kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 0.701 Kg Cocaine, 1900 x Al-Prazolam Tabs (0.290 Kg), 25 x MDMA Tabs (0.013 Kg), 3922 x Ecstasy Tabs (2.288 Kg), 3.900 Kg Soaked Suspected Drugs and 2.340 Kg Suspected Stone Shape Material. ANF Balochistan, recovered

4029.900 Kg Hashish in 3 operations while arrested 1 accused and seized 1 vehicle. The seized drugs were dumped for handing over to some other narco gang. ANF Punjab, recovered 722.524 Kg drugs in 16 operations while arrested 15 accused and seized 8 vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 32.625 Kg Heroin, 626.800 Kg Hashish, 30 Kg Opium, 0.455 Kg Amphetamine (Ice), 24.164 Kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 3800 x Ecstasy Tablets (2.240 Kg), 2.340 Kg Suspected Stone Shape Material and 3.900 Kg soaked suspected drugs. ANF KPK, recovered 7.99 Kg drugs in 5 operations while arrested 5 accused including an Afghan national and seized 2 vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 4.500 Kg Hashish, 3.200 Kg Amphetamine (Ice) and 1900x Al-Prazolam Tablets (0.290 Kg).

## Business community demands parking plazas

RAWALPINDI: President Traders Welfare Association, Punjab Sharjeel Mir has urged the government to construct more parking plazas in the city commercial areas to overcome the growing problem of traffic jams.

Mir while talking to APP said that traders of China Market, the commercial market, Sadiq Abad and other commercial areas were facing immense problems owing to encroachments and the non-availability of parking places in the markets. He said customers as well as motorists reluctant to visit the markets as they had to cover the distance of minutes in hours because of encroachment-cum-traffic mess. "It is need of the hour to construct more parking plazas at the commercial centres at earliest and strict action must be taken against the encroachers," he demanded. The President stressed that businessmen class was the major contributor to the national economy hence government must facilitate the business community for the betterment of the national interest.

When contacted, Chief Officer Rawalpindi Municipal Corporation Ali Abass told that the city administration was well aware of the problems being faced by the business community and residents of the city due to lack of parking space and frequent traffic jams in all markets of the downtown. He informed that consultation work in progress to build three more parking plazas in different areas of the city which would be constructed at Jinnah Road, Banni market and Children park, commercial market. The CO expressed hope that after the completion of the parking plazas the traffic jam on the city roads would be eased while the Municipal corporation was regularly taking against encroachments. — APP

## Corruption, a major obstacle in development

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Parliamentary Secretary for Housing Malik Timur Masood has said that corruption is a major obstacle in the way of national development and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) wants to end this menace and make the institutions functional and restore their dignity. We have completed so many projects in cantt during the last three years. He said this while talking to a delegation of constituency elders at the office of Abwa Dream International Chairman Khurram Shiraz. Educationist Chaudhry Khalid Hakeem, renowned scholar Abdul Rashid Tabasum and others were also present on the occasion. Meanwhile, PTI candidate Malik Fahad Masood from Ward 8 said that the opponents has nothing against us so they are propagandizing factionalism in PTI. Malik Fahad said that Ghulam Sarwar Khan is the head of our political family and his decisions have our full support.

## 3 years of govt and Ehsaas

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar, SAPM on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation has issued an official statement on the completion of three years of government and Ehsaas. Under the umbrella of Ehsaas, National Ehsaas survey has been completed after a lag of 10 years, despite COVID-19 pandemic. Budget for social protection has been doubled compared to any past government's budget and 100% budget utilized over the last 3 years. 15 million families (100 million people) have been supported during COVID-19. This is half the country's population. Ehsaas emergency Cash was the third largest program globally and the fastest the world over (World Bank) 12 million families will get cash grants this year, 30% of the country's population. Children in all classes, in every district, of all Ehsaas eligible families are eligi-

ble for Ehsaas education stipends. 50 Ehsaas Nashonuma centers have been opened to address stunting. Program being upscaled nationwide. 142,000 Ehsaas undergraduate scholarships granted in 2 years. The largest scholarship program ever run in the country. One Window Ehsaas is being upscaled nationwide. 20 other Ehsaas programs are also running, including Ehsaas Langars, Ehsaas Panagahs and Ehsaas Koye Bhooka Na Soye.

Phase 1 of "Ehsaas Building and Rebuilding Institutions Initiatives" is complete, the deepest reform ever carried out in the history of the country. Ehsaas regarded by the World Bank as a program from which other countries can learn. Ehsaas has shifted the governance paradigm in the country from, as stated by Sir Michael Barber, "Shift from politics of patronage to politics of performance".

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## Local governance

EVER since the local government's term expired in 2020, the provincial governments have been expressing reservations about holding elections for a replacement. Building upon this, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's new statement further hints at the third tier of government being on the back burner. The provincial government must do well to remember that devolving powers is its constitutional duty and the federal government must reiterate the integral value of local governments and immediately expedite this in all provinces.

Already, the Sindh government has postponed the local elections by as much as a year citing the need to fix the 'fraudulent' 2017 census as the main reason behind the delay. MQM also has reservations against the 2017 census, but has presented a solution in this regard—hold local elections on the basis of the 1998 census. The constitution requires for each province to replace their local governments within 120 days of the expiry of their term but we have yet to see any movement on this front in any of the provinces.

For the chairman of one of the biggest political parties in the country to say that local government elections are simply not a priority for Karachi as there are bigger fish to fry is problematic. It alludes to the belief that the third tier of governance is insignificant entirely. It also gives us a peak into the apathetic general perception that higher political bodies have of lower levels of governance. In reality, local bodies bridge the gap between the provincial governments and the masses and aid the implementation of policies, laws and solutions to problems. In fact, they are the ones who highlight the crippling issues of various cities in the first place.

To disregard them completely like this is irresponsible and must be revisited. If Karachi had a functional local government in place, many of its exigent problems might just have been resolved by now. This must be realised and any notions that promote dangerous indifference to local governance must be called out and corrected.

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## Another FBR chair

CHANGES in the positions of the head of a regulatory body can be a positive indication of a government recognising a flaw in leadership and trying to rectify it. However, when the leadership is subject to consistent changes, it reflects an institutional weakness and a need for the government to implement serious reforms. The consistent reshuffles in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) reflect a similar situation. The government removed the chairman of the FBR Asim Ahmad on Tuesday, who was fifth in a slew of shuffles in almost three years. Ahmad was removed after a major cyberattack on taxpayers' data, which was archived and managed by the FBR for automation. The sixth chairman in three years, Dr Mohammad Ashfaq Ahmed, a BS-21 officer of Inland Revenue Service (IRS), was appointed by the government as his replacement.

It has been speculated that the Prime Minister Secretariat is not happy with the performance of FBR's top management, particularly over the slow pace of reforms. It is true that digitisation and simplification are not happening at the rate the government wants. The Prime Minister has a big vision for tax collection, and though the FBR was performing better than previous years, structural problems and the prevalence of tax evasion still plagued its management.

However, the question is whether constantly replacing chairmen will mitigate any of those problems—for instance the amnesty scheme being considered by the government to people earning less than Rs1.2 million per year to fight adverse economic effects of Covid-19 and inflation, is along the same lines of amnesty schemes of previous governments which the existing government reversed. Though the government has a vision in sight, it does look to be executing it well and is going about it in circles. The government needs to make a five-year plan on taxation; simply meeting collection targets is not a good enough ask from the chairman.

# Kazakhstan bridging gap between world religions

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Zia-Ul-Haq

Various types of regional, economic and ethnic conflicts are oftenturning towards religious dimensions which help exclusivists and extremist to use 'them and us' mentality for controlling attitude of the people on the name of religion and killing the innocents on the name of religion. No theology is legitimizing their actions but the causes and consequences of their action determining that how and where religions will be dealt in twenty-first century. Incidents such as 9/11 have illustrated us the ability of a few persons to bring their entire civilization into a conflict with other civilizations whether their fellow majority agrees or does not agree with their thinking or actions

INCREASING religiosity has made faiths very important in global affairs. Faith has become a significant force in the global society. Religion is a force of conflict resolution but it has been portrayed as a reason for conflict creation. In contemporary international circumstances religion has returned as a powerful force for construction or destruction. The effectiveness of religion is particularly felt in the area such as Kashmir, Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Chechnya, Pakistan, India, Northern Ireland, the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and other parts of world which are acute zones of conflict. It is reported that Muslims, Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs of Balkan all are from same ethnic background and all three speak the same language and share the same race but divided by the religion. Religion is often considering at the fault-line along which the sides divide in global conflicts. The reason for tensions on the name of religion is its role in defining the identity. The twentieth century was dominated for ideology while the 21st century will be famous by the identity. The turn of focus from ideology to identity brought religious affiliations at the center stage of contemporary world. Various types of regional, economic and ethnic conflicts are oftenturning towards religious dimensions which help exclusivists and extremist to use 'them and us' mentality for controlling attitude of the people on the name of religion and killing the innocents on the name of religion. No theology is legitimizing their actions but the causes and consequences of their action determining that how and where religions will be dealt in twenty-first century. Incidents such as 9/11 have illustrated us the ability of a few persons to bring their entire civilization into a conflict with other civilizations whether their fellow majority agrees or does not agree with their thinking or actions. Present circumstances disclose that extremism is not limited to any specific race, religion, or region. It is a global phenomenon and extremists are present everywhere. Some theorists are of the view that religions are as they were before and contemporary religiosity is simply a modern version of the old theory of despotism and some fanatical religious subscribe this theory. In our view the real dichotomy is not among world religions, but between exclusivists and extremists, on the one hand, and pluralists and inclusivists on the other. Due to this dominating position of religions, Professor Hans King has rightly observed 'No peace among the nations without peace among the religions. No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions. No dialogue between the religions without investigation of the foundation of the religions.' First time in the history on this scale and frequency, there are the serious efforts at a global level for mutual understanding among world religion. In these global efforts the most effective and serious consideration to world religions was given by the HE Nursultan Nazarbayev, Founding President of Republic of Kazakhstan. After the independence, in the formative period of the republic of Kazakhstan, he realized that sustainable economic development is dependent on

peace and pace is not passable without bringing world religions closer and bridging gap among their followers. For this great task President Nursultan Nazarbayev invited leaders of world and traditional religions to Astana in 2003. The First Congress of Leaders of world and traditional religions was held on September 23-24, 2003 in Astana. Leaders and eminent representatives of religions as well as honorable guests from 13 countries of Europe, Asia and Africa participated in the forum. It was decided in this first congress that a permanent secretariat of the congress of world and traditional religions comprises of representatives of leaders and eminent personalities of religions should be established to promote following goals and objectives:

- promoting global dialogue among religions and cultures
  - deepening and strengthening mutual understanding and respect among different religious communities
  - development of the culture of tolerance and mutual respect as opposed to the ideology of hatred and extremism;
  - cooperation and interaction with all international organizations and structures that pursue the goals of promoting dialogue between religions, cultures and civilizations.
- To achieve these goals and objectives the Secretariat has organized up to know several congresses. As already mentioned first Congress of Leaders of world and traditional religions was held on September 23-24, 2003 in Astana. The participants of the First Congress decided to hold inter-religious summit on a regular basis and set up a working body. The Second Congress of leaders of world and traditional religions was held on September 12-13, 2006 in Astana on the theme of 'Religion, society and international security.' This Congress was held at the state of the art purposely built forum's permanent venue 'Palace of Peace and Harmony'. The second congress, which brought together 43 delegations from 20 countries of Europe, Asia, Africa and Americas, adopted 'The Principles of Inter-religious Dialogue' as core theme. On the basis of the recommendations the second congress International Centre for Cultures and Religions was established. 'The Role of Religious Leaders in Building a World of Tolerance, Mutual Respect and Cooperation' was theme of third Congress which held on July 1-2, 2009 in Astana. In this congress visionary leader of Republic of Kazakhstan proposed creation of a Council of Religious Leaders that would coordinate the activities of the Congress, engage in interaction and cooperation with other forums and international organizations that pursue the goals of promoting dialogue among cultures and religions. The Fourth Congress of leaders of world and traditional religions, was held on May 30-31, 2012 in Astana with the theme 'Peace and harmony as the choice of mankind. The Council of Religious Leaders - which brings together leaders and eminent representatives of world and traditional religions was set up in this congress. The members of the Council have founded an alley called 'Rukhanijarasy' (Spiritual harmony) in the capital city of Kazakhstan. 5TH Congress of Leaders of world and Traditional Religions held on 10-11 June 2015 at Astana, Kazakhstan.

It acknowledged the important role of the Congress and the contribution of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the promotion of inter-religious and inter-civilizational dialogue to build a peaceful, just and safe world in the XXI century. The VI Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in Astana officially ended on October 11, 2018. The Congress united representatives of more than 80 delegations from 46 countries, including politicians, religious leaders of Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, as well as representatives of international organizations. The participants adopted the final declaration outlining the role of the political and religious leaders in the maintenance of peace and stability.

All the initiatives of the republic of Kazakhstan through secretariat of world and traditional religions under the patronization of HE Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of Kazakhstan are contributing to bridge gap among the followers of world religions. It has not only created instructional framework for peace among world religion but also engaged religious leaders from all over the world representing all major religion in this great task. The substantive achievement of the secretariat is mutual respect and friendly relationship among the representatives of the world religions. The achievements of the pioneer work of the Republic of Kazakhstan are contributing in changing the differences into diversities.

The themes and sub themes that have been adopted in various interfaith meetings affirm that the present developments in science and technology require parallel progress in the relationship of followers of various religious and cultural traditions. The time has acknowledged the need for joint efforts by all major civilizations to promote a culture of dialogue on the basis of diversity, difference, plurality tolerance, freedom of expression, mutual respect and sincere readiness at the grass root level. Agreement on the agenda on the basis of common interests such as trans-cultural norms, spiritual satisfaction, justice and submission to the creature of the universe will lead dialogue to succeed. The dialogue is the only hope for saving the world from clashes and conflicts among world civilizations; otherwise, hatred, violence and worldwide conflicts will continue taking religious dimension after feeding from misunderstandings, misconceptions, and misrepresentations. Confidence of human beings on the movement of dialogue lead us ahead and we will be able to talk on other matters that are important to all nations, such as holy places, ecology, food technology, medical ethicsetc. Worldwide efforts against hunger, disease and natural disasters can be unified only after a better understanding, harmony and peace among the faiths through dialogue.

— The writer is the Director General Islamic Research Institute (IRI), International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan Permanent member of the working group of Secretariat of World and Traditional Religions, Kazakhstan

# Counter productivity of foreign invasions

Wajeaha Bilal



The Afghans who had been fighting one another, their neighbors and the Soviets for centuries are born in a fighting zone. But the US had always declared that its mission in Afghanistan was to train the Afghans to fight for their country. It seems apparent now that it was not about training the people but more about making the superpower image look good through media

MILITARY solutions and foreign interventions have never fixed political and societal problems. In occupied countries many people prefer their own rulers over foreigners as a means to preserving their freedom, culture and identity. Sirin Ebadi, a Nobel prize winning human rights activist, argues against western intervention. She implies that despite a regime's poor human rights record, gender discrimination and lack of democracy, any involvement by foreign powers would be undesirable and unhelpful. It would simply make matters worse. Instead, she insists that change must come from within, and points to the relatively strong women's movement in Iran compared with other Islamic states.

The recent results of foreign invasions are a proof of their failure in building trustworthy institutions through outside interventions. Both in Iraq and Afghanistan, the main aim was on engaging and training people and not on constructing strong, loyal organizations. As the people were trained by international forces to fight their own, corruption and exploitation prevailed due to the lack of trust, purpose and identity. Lack of moral and crisis of identity was strong enough to convince everyone to give up once the decision of withdrawal had been made. One thing that has been common in all the recent global invasions and their military trainings is a deep-rooted sense of instability, as a consequence of their downfall. America had faced great disgrace in Vietnam many years ago followed by other military blunders that it had staged since then, and as a result Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, among others have suffered the consequences. The countries, their people and the neighboring states have been made to suffer for superpower's follies. Always presuming that it will be better than before, foreign powers have not been able to derive a lesson from their mistakes. The scale of tragedy has worsened every time. Now after spending two decades and more than trillion dollars, the US abandoned Afghanistan just to

be handed over to the very people it had resisted in the first place. In a matter of days the Taliban retook a country, loaded with American weapons, corrupted with traitors, and filled with unsafe individuals. A professional soldier's potential is not just physical ability, but mental conditioning and discipline and most importantly his sense of loyalty. In the Ottoman Empire, the most elite and admired unit, the Janissaries were the private army of the Sultan. Well trained, lavishly dressed and of iron discipline. They were mostly converts who were often members of the Bektashi order. A Janissary's power was not just in his physical strength but also in keeping ranks, following orders, and standing against all odds. It was about fencing skills, following discipline, and staying faithful to the empire. A strong faithful unit was set as a basis for the loyalty of the Janissaries who led the Turks to many victories including that of Constantinople's. The Turks made a loyal, disciplined and highly trained unit that set an example across the world. A preference was laid over loyalty before their training to compose a strong unit of army for the empire.

The Afghans who had been fighting one another, their neighbors and the Soviets for centuries are born in a fighting zone. But the US had always declared that its mission in Afghanistan was to train the Afghans to fight for their country. It seems apparent now that it was not about training the people but more about making the superpower image look good through media. The US intended on showing an ideal liberal platform and funded the free media projects that appeal to the audience who hold their campaigns. These ideas are a means of manipulating one's way to sustaining the superpower image and having leverage over any country through its aid. The resulting trained army and government lacked trust, loyalty and stronger will for their nationalism. Nowadays every country and their media stand in a fight against terrorism and its effects. The focus of every news and their analysis is on finding a solu-

tion to extremism and on building a more peaceful world. Studies have shown that the use of military force by foreign powers to subjugate or reform societies serves only to promote a larger number of suicide terrorists than would otherwise be the case. The birth of terror organisations like the Islamic State and al-Qaeda are byproducts of foreign invasion policies. Robert A. Pape, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago specializing in international security affairs, had compiled evidence to suggest that suicide terrorism is in fact a secular tactic rather than a religious one, and forms part of a broader campaign to remove an occupying force from the area perceived by the perpetrators to be their homeland. Pape's research found that every terrorist campaign and more than 95 percent of all suicide bombings had the objective of national liberation at their heart. He argues that suicide terrorism is not the result of an existing supply of fanatics but is a demand-driven phenomenon. And thanks to the failed interventions by more powerful countries who focus on their leverage rather than strengthening the local governments, it is a rising concern.

The global power politics has left Afghanistan and its people at a major humanitarian crisis. While the rest of the world needs to find a way to interact with them on fighting terrorism and acknowledging human rights, the best that can be wished for the sake of humanity is that the new Taliban government is more rational, with a realization for global recognition and aid. Matters cannot be made worse by blocking or discontinuing foreign aids just because there is no leverage through foreign intervention. Whether the Taliban swept an easy takeover due to the lack of morale or loyalty, any American or western sanctions will only prove counterproductive for the humanity and world peace. Supporting local governments for the sake of their people to avoid uprisings and regional chaos is one hope for humanity and global peace.

—The writer can be reached at @WajeahaBilal



## Briefs

## Pak will not become part of any conflict: PM

FROM PAGE 01

Drawing a comparison between the performance of his government with that of the previous one, the Prime Minister said current account deficit was twenty billion dollars in 2018 which has now been reduced to 1.8 billion dollars. Foreign exchange reserves have increased to 27 billion dollars which were 16.4 billion dollars, three years ago. The Prime Minister said our tax collection has increased from 3800 billion rupees to 4700 billion rupees and the remittances from 19.9 billion dollars to 29.4 billion dollars.

He said the industry has witnessed a growth of eighteen percent whilst the cement sale has witnessed an increase of forty-two percent. There has been a record sale of motorcycles and tractors whilst the sale of cars has shown an increase of eighty-five percent. He said 1100 billion rupees of additional income has gone to the farmers. He said it is the first time that our exports are witnessing an increase.

The Prime Minister said Pakistan pursued a sagacious policy of smart lockdown after the break out of Covid-19 pandemic in order to protect lives and livelihood of the people. He said our policy was appreciated at the international level, including World Health Organization and World Economic Forum. Imran Khan said our government is pursuing the mission of justice, humanity and self-esteem. He said the government has waged a struggle against the mafia in order to bring the influential people under the law as it is the only way the country can be taken forward on the path of progress and development.

The Prime Minister said our Kamyab Pakistan Program is also on the cards to uplift four million poor households. He said under this program, interest free loans will be provided to the families to start their businesses. Besides, one person from each family will be provided with technical training. These families will also be provided with health cards and easy loans to build their houses.

He said health cards have been provided to each household in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa whilst the same facility will be extended to each household in Punjab by the end of this year. He said Kissan Card scheme has also been launched to provide necessary assistance to the farmers. He said initially this scheme has been started in Punjab and it will be extended to Azad Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Urging the youth to learn from the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihe Wasallam Khatim-un-Nabiyeen, the Prime Minister said the government will introduce a course for the students of grade 8 to 10 for this purpose. The Prime Minister specially thanked and appreciated the armed forces saying their professionalism and readiness give a sense of security to the people of this country.

He said the real strength and importance of our armed forces came to the fore in the wake of Pulwama incident.

## Power of suo motu...

FROM PAGE 01

information and religious affairs on August 26. However, the next day a five-judge SC bench was constituted, headed by Acting Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, and including Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Qazi Muhammad Amin Ahmad and Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, to provide clarity with regard to the court's suo motu jurisdiction.

The new bench, on Monday, put the August 20 order in abeyance, observing that its implementation may "obscure and unsettle the practice of invoking suo motu jurisdiction".

The August 20 order now stands withdrawn, the SC said in its written judgment. According to the judgment, no bench can take a suo motu notice without explicit permission from the chief justice, and order an inquiry by any competent authority. The judgment went on to state that a bench may recommend to the chief justice to take suo motu notice but cannot do so on its own.

## Arab League, OIC call for Algeria-Morocco dialogue

Libya, which borders Algeria, said it "deeply regrets" the deterioration of relations and asked for "restraint", in a statement from the foreign ministry

DNA

RIYADH: The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Arab League and Saudi Arabia have called for "dialogue" to resolve the diplomatic dispute between Algeria and Morocco.

Algeria on Tuesday said it had cut diplomatic relations with Morocco because of "hostile actions", following months of resurgent tensions between the North African rivals. The OIC "called for dialogue to resolve any possible differences", a statement from the Jeddah-based organisation said on Wednesday.

Saudi Arabia called on the nations "to prioritise di-

alogue" to help "achieve security and stability", a foreign ministry statement read. Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit urged "both countries to exercise restraint and to avoid further escalation" in a statement late on Tuesday.

Libya, which borders Algeria, said it "deeply regrets" the deterioration of relations and asked for "restraint", in a statement from the foreign ministry. Tripoli also called for regional talks on the sidelines of the next Arab League meeting, scheduled for September 7 to 9 in Cairo.

Algeria has long been at odds with Rabat - particu-

larly over Western Sahara, a former Spanish colony Morocco sees as an integral part of its territory, but where Algiers has supported the Polisario independence movement.

Their rivalry took a new twist last year when outgoing US president Donald Trump recognised Moroccan sovereignty over the territory, in exchange for Morocco normalising ties with Israel. For Algeria, that amounted to Rabat "introducing a foreign military force into the Maghreb", in the words of Foreign Minister Ramtane Lamamra on Tuesday.

Morocco's foreign ministry hit back, saying Algiers'

move was "completely unjustified". Earlier Israel has officially opened a liaison office in Morocco on the sidelines of a visit by its foreign minister after relations with the North African country were normalised last year. In December 2020, Morocco became the fourth Arab country that year to establish ties with Israel after the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Sudan.

"Historic moment: we have inaugurated the Israeli representation in Morocco during a solemn ceremony," the Jewish state's top diplomat Yair Lapid wrote on Twitter on Thursday.

The office was opened in a low-key ceremony in the cap-

ital Rabat, in the presence of Morocco's minister for African affairs, Mohcine Jazouli. Lapid also wrote that President Isaac Herzog invited King Mohammed VI to visit Israel, in a letter delivered to his Moroccan counterpart Nasser Bourita.

At the end of 2020 Israel's former premier Benjamin Netanyahu had also invited the monarch to visit, but no official response to the invitation was forthcoming.

On Wednesday, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called Lapid's trip "significant for Israel, Morocco, and the broader region". "The United States will continue to work with Israel and Morocco to strengthen

all aspects of our partnerships and create a more peaceful, secure, and prosperous future for all the people of the Middle East," Blinken said in a statement. The American embassy in Rabat said ties between the two countries generated "real benefits" for both sides, including direct commercial flights and economic cooperation.

Lapid also tweeted on Thursday that a mezuzah - a case containing a parchment with passages from the Torah - was hung at the entrance to Israel's new diplomatic office. On Wednesday, the two countries signed accords on political consultations, aviation and culture.

## Several die in Kabul explosions

FROM PAGE 01

Kabul's Emergency Hospital said in a tweet that it has received more than 30 patients so far while six others were already dead on arrival. Thousands of people have been gathering outside the airport in recent days. Western troops are racing to evacuate foreigners and Afghans who helped Western countries during the 20-year war against the Taliban, and to get out themselves by an Aug 31 deadline. "We can confirm that the explosion at the Abbey Gate was the result of a complex attack that resulted in a number of US & civilian casualties," Kirby said on Twitter. "We can also confirm at least one other explosion at or near the Baron Hotel, a short distance from Abbey Gate."

A US official told Reuters as many as three US service members were among those hurt, and that US casualty numbers were expected to increase, according to initial information. At least one of the US personnel was seriously hurt, an official said. The US Embassy in Kabul described "a large explosion" and said there had been reports of gunfire. US and allied officials have said they had intelligence that suicide bombers were threatening to attack the airport. US President Joe Biden has been briefed on the explosion, according to a White House official. Biden was in a meeting with security officials about the situation in Afghanistan when the explosion was first reported, according to a person familiar with the matter.

## Fawad lauds PTI's performance...

FROM PAGE 01

at 3 pm on Thursday at a convention hosted by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The prime minister would also highlight three year's performance of all the ministries and their departments there, besides sharing next year's plan of action of the government.

Lashing out at the opposition alliance-Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) which was misleading the public through fake claims, he said they told the people that wheat flour was being sold at exorbitant prices, but at the same time hide the fact that the prices of wheat had also gone up from Rs 1,200 [per 40 Kilogram] to Rs 1,800 which directly benefited the farmers.

## Alvi for enhanced Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 01

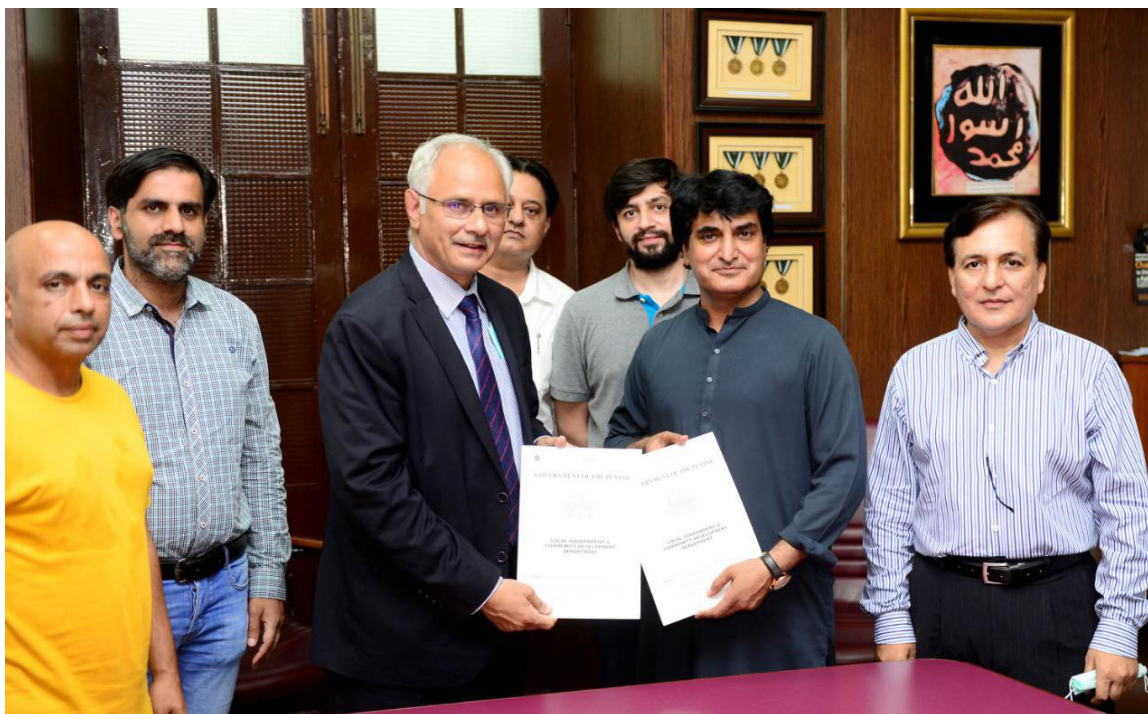
Underscoring the need for enhanced economic relations, the President urged the Ambassador-designate to encourage Swiss businessmen to make more investment in Pakistan as the environment for investment was very conducive due to the improved security situation and the investment-friendly policy of the government.

He also stressed the need for increased engagements at the political level and asked the Ambassador to work for further improving bilateral cooperation with Switzerland. The President underlined the need to actively engage the Pakistani community in Switzerland to play their role in improving the image of the country. He urged Mr Amir Shouket to work for image building of the country and highlight Pakistan success stories, particularly its role in the promotion of peace and reconstruction of Afghanistan, hosting of 3 million Afghan refugees for four decades and its successes against the war on terror.

## FM Qureshi meets Iranian...

FROM PAGE 01

Foreign Ministry in a statement said Pakistani Ambassador to Iran Rahim Hayat Qureshi and Assistant Minister and Director General of West Asia at Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Seyed Rasoul Mousavi welcomed the Foreign Minister at Mehrabad International Airport. The Foreign Minister's visit to the four countries reflects the changing situation in Afghanistan and the challenges facing the region, as well as efforts to adopt a joint strategy at the regional level.



LAHORE: MoU signing the ceremony between Mr Noor Ul Amin Mengal Ex-DG (Punjab Food Authority) and Honorary President Punjab Squash Association and Vice-Chancellor GC, Dr Professor Asghar Ziadi. - DNA

## Egypt partially reopens Rafah border crossing

CAIRO: Egypt says it has partially reopened the Rafah border crossing with the Gaza Strip, allowing one-way traffic into the besieged Palestinian enclave, as Israel eases import restrictions for the territory it has blockaded since 2007. Rafah, Gaza's only gateway to the outside world not controlled by Israel, was shuttered on Monday by Egypt, which gave no reason for the move.

But it came after Gazans on Saturday staged a protest along the separation fence with Israel, which killed one Palestinian, left dozens of others injured and an Israeli soldier in a critical condition from a gunshot wound. The border's partial reopening on Thursday comes a day after Hamas's interior ministry said Cairo would give the go-ahead for the flow of goods into the territory. It said two-way traffic would be open on Sunday. People had begun to cross after midday, an AFP news agency journalist said. Egypt, a key mediator between Israel and Hamas, which governs the coastal enclave, has previously used Rafah closures as a punitive measure against the group.

Border protests and riots on Wednesday in southern Gaza left 20 Palestinians injured following confrontations with Israeli troops, but the violence was more muted than on Saturday. Hamas police made efforts to contain Wednesday's unrest by preventing people from approaching the border fence. The Israeli military branch responsible for civil affairs in Palestinian territories (COGAT) said more goods would be allowed to enter Gaza from Thursday. They would include "equipment for international civilian projects" and new vehicles, among other measures, it said in a statement. Israel also agreed to boost by 1,000 the number of merchants allowed through its Erez crossing to Gaza. - DNA

## Azerbaijan withdraws peace mission from Afghanistan

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijan has fully withdrawn its peacekeepers from Afghanistan, the Defence Ministry reported on August 26. "On August 26, at about 0100, 120 Azerbaijani peacekeepers serving at the Kabul International Airport of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in full staff were withdrawn from the country," the ministry said.

It added that the Azerbaijani peacekeepers, their weapons, and military equipment were transported to Ankara by air and the servicemen are to return to the motherland shortly. "The Azerbaijani peacekeepers who successfully performed the assigned tasks along with the fraternal Turkish Forces ensured security in Afghanistan fulfilling their duties with high professionalism," the report added. The Azerbaijani army's 120-member peacekeeping contingent, jointly with Turkish forces, carried out official duties to

## Turkish Army leaves Afghanistan

AGENCIES

ANKARA: The Turkish Armed Forces have started leaving Afghanistan after successfully completing its 20-year-mission, Turkey's Ministry of National Defense has reported. The ministry reminded that the Turkish Army has been serving in Afghanistan since 2002 to contribute to the peace, tranquility and stability of the Afghan people within the scope of UN, NATO and bilateral agreements. Turkish soldiers have organized the protection of the Kabul airport and ensured the safe evacuation of people after the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, the ministry stressed. Following the USA and NATO's withdrawal from Afghanistan, Turkey stated that it would continue to ensure the safety of the Hamid Karzai International Airport, as it had done for 6 years. In this context, the Turkish soldiers together with other allied forces intervened in the chaos experienced at the Hamid Karzai Airport and provided stability and security at there. Moreover, 1129 civilian citizens have been evacuated with the Turkish military aircraft. The Hamid Karzai International Airport Force Protection Command was established within the Turkish Armed Forces in line with the Supreme Military Council decisions and General Gurjan Sezengoz was appointed the Force Protection Commander.

ensure the security of the Kabul International Airport.

The Azerbaijani army's peacekeeping detachment was formed in 1997. The Azerbaijani servicemen acted within the NATO/US-led peacekeeping forces in Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, and South Sudan from September 1999. Azerbaijan joined with a platoon to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) consisting of 21 soldiers in November 2002 to contribute to peace, security, and order in Afghanistan. On 9 January 2018, the number of Azerbaijani peacekeepers in Afghanistan was increased to 120 servicemen under a parliamentary decision. The Taliban armed group retook power in Afghanistan 20 years after it was toppled by the USA. The collapse of the Ashraf Ghani government in Kabul came in the wake of Taliban blitzkrieg that began on August 6 and led to the capture of more than two dozen Afghan provinces by the morning of August 15.

## Denmark appreciates Pakistan efforts in Kabul airlift operation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A sincere and heartfelt appreciation from the Government of Denmark to the Government of Pakistan was conveyed by State Secretary Steen Hommel on the occasion of his meeting with Foreign Secretary, Mr. Sohail Mahmood, in Islamabad today.

"In the situation evolving in Afghanistan, we are deeply grateful for the professional assistance and outstanding support to enable airlifts of vulnerable persons to Islamabad International Airport for their continued journey", said the Danish Envoy.

He further explained that the success of the joint op-

eration would not have been possible without Pakistan's rapid, efficient and broad assistance across numerous civilian and military authorities.

H.E. Mahmood and H.E. Hommel exchanged views on the developing situation in Afghanistan and affirmed the importance of continued focus on security, stability and inclusive political settlement.

Renewing the bilateral relationship between the Kingdom of Denmark and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the two sides agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation, including high level exchanges and collaboration in the area of renewable energy for a green transition. Pakistan and Denmark have long-standing ties, and the ongoing coordinated efforts have brought the two countries even closer.



## Mari Petroleum posts operational &amp; financial results

MPCL Board of Directors has recommended final cash dividend of Rs. 75 per share (750%) for approval of the shareholders in the upcoming AGM. With this, the total dividend for FY 2020-21 will come to a Rs. 141 per share (1410%)

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Living up to stakeholders' expectations, Mari Petroleum Company Limited (MPCL) yet again posted outstanding financial and operational results for FY 2020-21. The Company's natural gas production increased by 8% while crude oil and condensate production was up by a significant 19% which resulted in achieving highest ever production of 35.8 MBOE. Robust production

and greater financial discipline propelled the Company's net profit to highest ever of Rs. 31.44 billion, i.e. 3.6% higher than the net profit achieved last year despite a decrease in applicable oil price and socio-economic impact of Covid. In line with growth in net profit, EPS also increased to Rs. 235.7 per share from Rs. 227.23 per share from the previous year. There was a healthy growth of 23% in the share price, which closed at Rs. 1,524 on June 30, 2021. The Company contributed Rs.

62.6 billion to the Government exchequer in the form of royalty, taxes, levies and duties. Indigenous production of natural gas, crude oil and LPG by the Company helped curtail the Country's fuel import bill by approximately Rs. 311 billion during FY 2020-21. MPCL Board of Directors has recommended final cash dividend of Rs. 75 per share (750%) for approval of the shareholders in the upcoming AGM. With this, the total dividend for FY 2020-21 will come to a Rs. 141 per share (1410%).

Ongoing development projects such as HRL debottlenecking and installation of processing facilities for low BTU gas are progressing as planned and once complete will add to production along with extending the plateau and life of Mari field. The Company is currently drilling three key exploratory wells, one each in Bannu West, Karak and Kalchas Blocks. These wells from a technical point of view are challenging and God willing, success in these efforts could add significant new resources. The

seismic acquisition in block 28 is complete and seismic processing and interpretation is ongoing to mature drillable prospects. Faheem Haider, Managing Director MPCL thanked the Chairman and all the Directors on MPCL Board for their support and guidance during his first year at the helm of affairs at MPCL. He also complimented and thanked management team members and all the employees of the Company for their efforts and contributions for delivering these remarkable results.



## Briefs

## Uzbek-Polish Presidents discuss Afghanistan

AGENCIES

TASHKENT: President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev had a telephone conversation with the President of Poland Andrzej Duda. The leaders discussed topical issues on the bilateral agenda, including the development of political dialogue, expansion of trade, economic and investment cooperation, promotion of cultural and humanitarian exchange programs, as well as the continuation of fruitful interaction within the framework of international organizations.

The heads of state also exchanged views on the current situation in the region in the context of the development of the situation in Afghanistan.

The President of Poland expressed his sincere gratitude for all possible assistance in the implementation of humanitarian operations to evacuate citizens from Afghanistan to Poland in transit through the territory of our country. An agreement was reached to continue close cooperation in order to facilitate a peaceful settlement of the Afghan problem.

## Germany's daily cases highest in months

FOREIGN DESK

BERLIN: Germany on Thursday recorded more than 12,000 daily coronavirus cases for the first time since May, amid a surge in infections among teens and young adults.

The Robert Koch Institute reported 12,626 new coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, up from 8,400 registered last Thursday.

The number of active cases climbed to 95,300, the highest figure in the current fourth wave of the pandemic, driven by the highly contagious Delta variant. New cases have particularly risen among teenagers and young adults, according to the institute's weekly report.

Despite a surge in new infections, numbers of hospitalizations, severe illnesses, and deaths remained relatively low, compared to the previous waves. Health authorities confirmed 21 fatalities and 415 new coronavirus patients admitted to hospitals on Wednesday.

According to experts, Germany's high vaccination coverage among the elderly has been effective in preventing severe illnesses and deaths from the virus.

Nearly 84% of people aged 60 and older are fully vaccinated, according to the latest figures released on Thursday.

## US will speak up against China's actions

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Washington will continue to speak up against China's actions that threaten global order and the sovereignty of nations, the US vice president said as she concluded her Southeast Asia tour on Thursday.

"When it comes to Beijing, let me be very clear and the president [Joe Biden] has been very clear... On issue of South China Sea, we are going to speak up... when there are actions that Beijing takes that threaten the rules-based international order, such as actions in the South China Sea," Kamala Harris said.

She said the US "welcomes" competition but "does not seek conflict."

"Freedom of navigation is high priority for us; it not only relates to security but to commerce [as well]," Harris said at a news conference before departing from Vietnam's capital Hanoi, her last stop in the region.

"We make sure we stay committed to our partners and allies in the region... I [have] also reaffirmed the commitment that the US has to a common vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific," she added, terming Southeast Asia the "seat of the US' Indo-Pacific policy."

## Azerbaijan to build its own future: President Aliyev

"From now on, we will live as a victorious country, a victorious people, we will live with pride. We will build our own future, restore the liberated lands. We will always keep the memory of our martyrs in our hearts"

FOREIGN DESK

BAKU: President Ilham Aliyev has said that Azerbaijan will build its own future and live as a victorious country, Azeri media reported.

He made the remarks at a ceremony in Baku's Absheron district to present apartments and cars to families of martyrs, war veterans and heroes of the Patriotic War.

"From now on, we will live as a victorious country, a victorious people, we will live with pride. We will build our own future, restore the liberated lands. We will always keep the memory of our martyrs in our hearts," he said. The head of state underlined that all the restoration work in the liberated lands is carried out at the expense of Azerbaijan.

Aliyev added that, unlike the Armenians, Azerbaijan has not committed war crimes or pursued a policy of ethnic cleansing.

"This once again shows the greatness of our people, the wisdom of our policy. That's why we did everything on time, everything on time. We liberated our lands on time, stopped the war on time, and reached the historic victory," he said. He said that Armenia openly admits that it cannot ensure its own security, protect its borders and live at its own expense. Aliyev noted that in this case, there is no question of independence.

"It is completely unfounded to call Armenia an independent country. Because the absolute majority of the features of an independent country are not present in the Armenian state. The reason is their policy of



aggression. If they had obeyed my words and left our lands in time, they would not have fallen into such a disgraceful situation," he said.

Aliyev said that not only Armenia is responsible for war crimes against Azerbaijan, but also those who turned a blind eye to those crimes. He added that Azerbaijan's successful operations put an end to those crimes.

He noted that after the war, more than 9,000 people received social benefits. On average, two payments were made to each person.

Noting that the wounded and un-

healthy servicemen were provided with the most modern prostheses, the head of state said: "Such an opportunity has been created for them and the latest generation prostheses have been purchased. According to the information provided to me, more than 180 people need prostheses, 140 of them are already provided with prostheses, and these prostheses return them to normal life. They can walk normally, run, and even play football. This is an integral part of our policy."

The president stressed that country will continue to pay attention to the

most vulnerable people.

Aliyev noted that thousands of new houses are being constructed for people who lost their property during the war.

"Many of our cities were under constant fire, bombarded with artillery, banned bombs, white phosphorus bombs, and ballistic missiles. Hundreds of civilians, including women and children, were killed in the blaze, and thousands lost their property. That is why today this work is being done, thousands of houses are being built, most of them have already been

built," the head of state said.

Aliyev added that the whole world can see the Armenian savagery today. He reiterated that the Armenians have destroyed over 60 mosques in liberated lands.

"Armenians kept cows and pigs in our mosques. This is an insult to the entire Muslim world. I once again turn to the leaders of all Muslim countries and say, never forget this, do not turn a blind eye to this, do not ignore it. The entire Muslim world has been insulted by the Armenian leadership," the president said.

## Pak HC holds e-Khuli Katchehri

DNA

DHAKA: Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, High Commissioner for Pakistan in Bangladesh hosted an e-Khuli Katchehri with the members of Pakistani community living in Bangladesh and Bhutan to listen to and resolve issues faced by the community. The meeting, held electronically was attended by a representative group of the community.

The Deputy High Commissioner briefed the community on the efforts made by the High Commission in resolving the issues reported in the last e-Khuli Katchehri including registration for Covid-19 vaccination, online renewal of Machine Readable Passport and CNIC/NICOP and travel of Pakistani nationals to Pakistan during Covid-19 from Bangladesh.

The High Commissioner discussed issues faced by the community including registration of Covid-19 vaccine administered in Pakistan,



COVID-19 certification from NADRA for Pakistanis who have been vaccinated in Bangladesh and issues related to updating of NADRA record. The High Commissioner also briefed the community about cultural activities undertaken by the HC to project Pakistan in Bangladesh. He asked the community members to reach out to the High Commission at: pahidhaka@mofa.gov.pk or at the telephone numbers of the Mission for any issues faced by them. The community members expressed their gratitude to the High Commission for arranging this regular interaction with the community. The next e-Khuli Katchehri will be held in September 2021.

## Western media trying to sabotage Pak-China relations

"The people of Gwadar are very grateful for the assistance provided by the Chinese government and companies"

ISLAMABAD: The Chief of Municipal Committee of Gwadar has issued a clarification letter to condemn a report by the Guardian in which it tried to sabotage the relationship between the Chinese and Pakistani people by spreading "misleading, malicious, and misinterpreted information" that's against the will of the majority of Gwadar people.

"Your report has damaged our reputation, negatively affect the development of Gwadar and loss has occurred to us thereof. Therefore, we reserve our right to take legal action to protect our action," the government proclaimed in the letter, according to Gwadar Pro.

"The people of Gwadar are very grateful for the assistance provided by the Chi-

nese government and companies," it stated, adding that the ongoing projects, such as Gwadar Port and Gwadar Free Zone Development, New International Airport Gwadar, Gwadar Vocational Training Institute, China-Pakistan Friendship Hospital, and many others not only bring immediate employment for the local community but also will improve the poor infrastructure in Gwadar.

According to a report by Gwadar Pro, dating back to 2013, Gwadar Port was on the verge of desolation with obsolete facilities, barely surviving the seaport business. Since China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) took over the port, the infrastructural work has been complete with three 20,000-ton mul-

ti-purpose berths and a storage yard of 140,000 square meters.

Besides, the successful operation of Gwadar Port transit trade to Afghanistan lays the foundation for expanding this trade network to Central Asia and Russia. Gwadar Free Zone has also seen some significant investment and developments in this area lately. More than 40 enterprises involved in hotels, banking, logistics, overseas warehouses, grain and oil processing, and fishery processing have registered at the free zone, bringing in a total investment worth U.S. \$90 million.

The thriving port and free zone have driven the infrastructural development of Gwadar city as a whole.

For example, the East-Bay Expressway under the CPEC project, linking Gwadar Port with the Mekran Coastal Highway (N-20), will directly take cargoes from the port to M-8 for onward shipment to Karachi and the rest of the country. 94 percent of the work on the six-lane motorway has been completed and would be inaugurated in October this year. Despite major infrastructural developments, "water and electricity have been an issue due to historical reasons," the statement pinpointed, ".....and, they are not the responsibility of the Chinese at all. Chinese companies have managed to supply 100,000 to 200,000 gallons of water to the local community with their captive water plant." - APP



ISLAMABAD: Charge d'Affaires of Syrian Arab Republic Dr. Mazen Obeid called on Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser at Parliament House. - DNA

## Chinese tech favorable for rice production

BEIJING: The production of high-yielding hybrid rice prefers a notable boost in Pakistan, from the start-up of modern color sorter machines and seeds given by China to Pakistan to facilitate the sowing of this grain.

Michael Guo, sales manager of Hefei Meyer optoelectronic technology international told China Economic Net that they started to sell the color sorter in the Pakistan market in 2008, it's very hard to promote the

Chinese Brand at the very beginning, as many people prefer to buy European and Japanese Brand.

He said that in the first five years they only sold not more than 50 machines, but after 2013 rice mills owners have experienced the Chinese Brand, saying it's not only cheap but also has good quality and stability.

"Up to now, Meyer has sold more than 600 color sorter machines in the Pakistani market with a share of 40%." - APP

## Fintech and the revolution it brings!

ARJU GHAZNAVI

WITH the increasing reliance on technology the entire world seems to be evolving, all industries are taking an immense change by taking their operations on the digital platform. Financial services are no exception to this adoption of technology, where now a new term has emerged by the name of "Financial Technology" or "Fintech". The purpose of Fintech has been to enable people to enhance their businesses with the assistance of various services, from the invention of digital money to double-entry bookkeeping. Finance plays a vital role in our daily lives and with that we are dependent upon the different financial services

being offered to us, with the digitalization of these services individuals, organizations and nations have been able to improve financial performance. The concept of Fintech can be traced back to the early 1990s from where with the advancement of internet and technology it made slow growth. It was until the year 2014 the sector attracted the focus of regulators, consumers and investors.

Many new rising ideas and practices are related to Fintech in some way, development and use of crypto currencies like the Bitcoin are connected to Fintech. Blockchain being a decentralized ledger has a strong focus on cryptography, security, and privacy, this is ideal for banking applications and Fintech. With the introduction of Fintech new doors have

opened to the industry where blockchain developer, apps developer, financial analyst, product manager, compliance expert, cybersecurity analyst and many other professionals are working together to pro-



vide these services. PayPal is considered to be a financial empire throughout the globe where it's the first Fintech company throughout history. Now other companies like Apple with Apple pay, Pioneer, Ali Ex-

press with Alipay and many more are using Fintech to enhance their financial services and with that make transactions simpler and easier for their customers. Kickstarter is another com-

pany that is using Fintech to enable its startups to gather funds from different people through online mediums. Fintech is aiming to achieve a one-stop financial solution where people and organizations can execute any and all

financial activities with for efficiency.

However, the major issue with Fintech services is the security risk that it is exposed to, there are numerous cases of frauds and theft through online means of millions and billions of dollars. In the year 2019 Capital One revealed that there was data breach where data of 100 million US customers as well as six million Canadian customers was compromised. Small businesses in the UK bore the brunt of the £17bn cost of cyberattacks in 2018. The Central bank of Bangladesh was subject to a cyberattack in 2016, which saw \$101-million stolen from Bangladesh central bank's dollar account at the Federal Reserve Bank and is now considered the largest cyberheist in history. These are only a few cases

where there are many more, this puts the use of Fintech in a very questionable position. Though companies offering Fintech solutions are constantly improving their security, and here the use of blockchain is commonly found. Even with these cases the use of Fintech services is constantly rising all over the world to the increase in dependence upon these services. Pakistan is gradually accepting the different services offered by Fintech but due to the security threat customers are reluctant to use these services. In Pakistan, initial entrants included the banks set up by Telenor and Jazz offering cash transfer services like EasyPaiza by Telenor, JazzCash by Jazz. Many more companies are increasing and with that the adopting of the services by the public as well.

## Pakistan HC London to remain closed on Monday

DNA

LONDON: The High Commission for Pakistan, London and its Sub-Missions at Birmingham, Bradford, Glasgow and Manchester will remain closed on Monday 30th August 2021 on the eve of Summer Bank Holiday.

The Community members, seeking consular assistance for any emergency, are requested to call on the emergency contact numbers of the Pakistan High Commission, London and the respective Consulates, available on the High Commission's website.

## More than 150 killed in Ethiopia attack

AGENCIES

ADDIS ABABA: Gunmen killed more than 150 people in an attack last week in a restive part of western Ethiopia that sparked deadly reprisals, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) said Thursday.

"The area's residents and others have told the commission more than 150 people were killed by the gunmen," the state-affiliated but independent commission said in a statement. The August 18 attack occurred after security forces withdrew from a part of Oromia, a troubled region in Ethiopia's west, the commission said.

Witnesses told the EHRC that the gunmen were affiliated with the Oromo Liberation Army (OLA), an armed group blamed for violence in western and southern Ethiopia. The killings sparked an exodus of residents, mainly women and children, to neighbouring areas and "ethnic-based reprisal attacks" that left more than 60 people dead in the days afterward, the commission said.

The OLA, believed to number in the low thousands, broke off from the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), an opposition party that spent years in exile but was allowed to return to Ethiopia after Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed took office in 2018. Abiy's government has blamed the OLA for a number of recent massacres targeting ethnic Amharas, the country's second-largest group, though the militants have denied responsibility.

## Amnesty International slams Tunisia travel bans

TUNIS: Rights group Amnesty International on Thursday condemned travel bans imposed after Tunisian President Kais Saied dismissed parliament and assumed sweeping powers last month.

His move on July 25, which he said was to prevent the crisis-hit country from collapse, was slammed as "a coup d'etat" by the Islamist-inspired Ennahdha, the main party in Tunisia's latest fractious ruling coalition.

Saied later imposed restrictions on many leading figures in the North African country, with some banned from travelling abroad or put under house arrest without warning. Amnesty said in a statement Thursday it had identified at least 50 travel bans targeting judges, civil servants, businessmen and a parliamentarian. "The total number facing travel bans since 25 July is likely to be far greater," the statement said.

Saied, a retired professor of constitutional law, was elected president in 2019. He invoked the constitution to grant himself full executive powers, sacking the premier and suspending parliament for an initial period of 30 days. On Monday, he announced that these measures would remain in force indefinitely.

"President Kais Saied's indefinite suspension of parliament cannot be a justification for violating rights and freedoms in the country or undermining the judiciary," said Heba Morayef, Amnesty's deputy director for the Middle East and North Africa.

"Tunisian authorities have imposed unlawful and arbitrary travel bans against people in recent weeks without justification and in the absence of any judicial order, in a blatant violation of their right to freedom of movement." - APP



**Briefs**

**30 injured in Kazakhstan arms depot blast**

DNA

**NURSULTAN:** More than 30 people were injured in Kazakhstan on Thursday in an explosion at an armaments depot, as authorities evacuated residents of nearby villages. The blast took place at a defence ministry arms depot in the southern Jambyl region, the local government said in a statement. It said that 32 people had been admitted to a hospital in the city of Taraz with various injuries. The defence ministry said in a statement a fire "resulted in an explosion of unidentified objects". It added that fire services were working on extinguishing the blaze and that a commission had been set up to determine the cause. Residents of four villages, including one of 250 people less than a kilometre from the site of the blast, were being evacuated, the statement said. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said on Twitter that the injured were emergency services workers and soldiers. A video shared on the Telegram messaging app that could not be verified immediately showed a column of smoke billowing from a fire before a powerful explosion sent the flames shooting out.

**Pak Army to participate in Common Destiny Exercise**

DNA

**BEIJING:** Pakistan Army will participate in the "Common Destiny 2021" International Peacekeeping Exercise to be held at PLA 90Queshan Tactical Training Base in China from September 6-15, Spokesperson of China's Ministry of National Defense, Senior Col Tan Kefei said on Thursday. China, Pakistan, Mongolia, Thailand and other countries will send more than 1,000 troops to participate in the 10-day exercise hosted by the Chinese military, covering infantry, rapid response, security, helicopters, engineers, transport, medical and other major peacekeeping forces, he said during his monthly briefing held here. The spokesperson said that the topic of the exercise is joint operations of multinational peacekeeping forces. The exercise will be based on the real scene and set up in accordance with international, professional and actual combat standards. He informed that the main exercises include battlefield reconnaissance, patrol, armed escort, protection of civilians, response to violent terrorist attacks, temporary operation base construction, battlefield rescue and epidemic situation management.

**Canada completes evacuation process**

AGENCIES

**TORONTO:** Canada has ended its evacuation efforts in Afghanistan, Canada's acting chief of Defense Staff Gen. Wayne Eyre said in a news conference Thursday. Eyre says the United States told him this was "the largest military evacuation in history." The US and other NATO nations are still racing to evacuate their citizens from the country. President Biden has said he is so far sticking to his Tuesday deadline for the final exit of US troops. The latest 24-hour period evacuation numbers from the White House show a slowing pace as the airlift effort enters what is expected to be its final days.

**European Council, ADB laud Pak role in evacuation process**

Prime Minister Imran Khan also acknowledged the cooperation of the ADB with Pakistan in mitigating the negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic



STAFF REPORT

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistani efforts in the evacuation process from Kabul are being acknowledged internationally. Prime Minister Imran Khan received a telephone call from President of the Asian Development Bank Mr. Masatsugu Asakawa. President Asian Development Bank appreciated Pakistan's role in facilitating evacuation of the ADB personnel stranded at the Kabul Airport. Prime Minister Imran Khan also acknowledged the cooperation of the ADB with Pakistan in mitigating the negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic, including supporting procurement of COVID Vaccines. Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Imran Khan also received a telephone

call from the President European Council Charles Michel. Views were exchanged on the unfolding situation in Afghanistan. The Prime Minister highlighted the positive role of Pakistan in facilitating evacuation of diplomatic personnel and staff of international organizations and others from Afghanistan. The President of European Council Charles Michel thanked the Prime Minister for hosting evacuees in transit. The Prime Minister shared Pakistan's perspective, stressing that a stable and peaceful Afghanistan was in the vital interest of Pakistan and the region. The Prime Minister underscored the importance of ensuring safety and security as well as protection of the rights of all Afghans. The Prime Minister underlined that an inclusive political settlement was the best course forward. He expressed the hope that the Afghan leaders would continue to work together to achieve that end. The Prime Minister reaffirmed that Pakistan will steadfastly support all efforts in this direction.

The Prime Minister underscored that stabilizing the security situation in Afghanistan was essential to preserve peace, effectively respond to any humanitarian challenges, and ensure economic well-being of the Afghan people in their country. Prime Minister Imran Khan added that the current situation in Afghanistan required sustained engagement of the international community. It was vitally important to remain in solidarity with the people of Afghanistan and to extend support to them to ward off any humanitarian challenges and ensure economic sustenance. The Prime Minister added that Pakistan would continue to remain in close contact with regional and international partners to promote shared objectives of peace, stability and development in Afghanistan, which would benefit the region and beyond. The Prime Minister and President European Council agreed that both sides remain in contact and coordinate closely on the situation in Afghanistan. The Prime Minister also extended an invitation to the President European Council to visit Pakistan.

**PM meets ED of World Food Programme**



**ISLAMABAD:** The Executive Director of the Rome-based United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), Mr. David M. Beasley, called on Prime Minister Imran Khan. The Prime Minister appreciated the role of WFP as the leading international humanitarian organization for delivering food assistance in emergencies and for working with nations worldwide to improve nutrition and build resilience. The Prime Minister underlined that Pakistan has been a beneficiary of various WFP projects that are being implemented in the country, and values its partnership with the Organisation. Views were also exchanged on the evolving situation in Afghanistan. The Prime Minister reiterated that formation of an inclusive government and positive engagement of international community with Afghanistan, is the way forward to avert any humanitarian crisis and secure peace and stability in Afghanistan. Executive Director Beasley expressed gratitude for Pakistan's role in facilitating the work of the United Nations World Food Programme in providing food assistance to Afghans. He also discussed with the PM the ways of facilitating the continued provision of humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people. - DNA

**Taliban leader rubbishes Indian concern**

WEB DESK

**KABUL:** Prominent Taliban leader Shahabuddin Dilwar, in response to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement casting doubt on the sustainability of a new regime in Afghanistan, said India will soon know that the Taliban can run the country's affairs smoothly. The statement from the Taliban leader comes a week after Modi commented on the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan saying "an empire on the basis of terror may dominate for some time but its existence is never permanent". The Indian premier, in a veiled criticism of Taliban, had on Aug 20 tweeted: "The destroying powers, the thinking that builds an empire on the basis of terror, may dominate for some time in a period of time, but, its existence is never permanent, it cannot suppress humanity for a long time." Reacting to the Indian premier's statement in an exclusive conversation with Radio Pakistan correspondent Bilal Khan Mehsud in Kabul on Thursday, Dilwar warned India not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. He said Pakistan was a neighbour of Afghanistan and a friendly country. Dilwar thanked Pakistan for hosting over three million Afghan refugees.

**EU says NATO have 'duty' to take in Afghans**

**BRUSSELS:** Countries that were involved in the NATO mission in Afghanistan have a "duty of care" to Afghans in danger under Taliban rule and should take them in as refugees, the EU executive said on Thursday. The message from the European Union is that "we have a duty to help those who are particularly at risk in Afghanistan, be it before or after the deadline" on Tuesday, ahead of which evacuations will have been halted, a European Commission spokesman said. In a sign of Europe's concerns about an outflow of fleeing Afghans, the Slovenian presidency of the EU announced an emergency meeting of EU interior ministers will be held in Brussels on Tuesday to focus on the fall-out from Afghanistan. The EU is "working on a comprehensive approach on Afghanistan," one Commission spokesman, Christian Wigid, told reporters. It includes using an existing EU-US-Canada-UN resettlement forum to secure promises to take in quotas of Afghan refugees. Another spokesman, Eric Mamer, said "specific pledges for quotas" were expected up to a cut-off date of mid-September. Vulnerable Afghans should be given "safe pathways" to Europe and should "expect that member states or countries that participated in particular in the NATO mission would have a duty of care" towards them, he said. - APP

**Russia to supply weapons to CA states**

AGENCIES

**MOSCOW:** Russia said on Thursday it has received new orders for arms and helicopters from Central Asian republics bordering Afghanistan following the Taliban's takeover of the country. The orders come as countries in the ex-Soviet region, where Moscow holds military bases, have raised concerns after the Taliban swept to power. "We are already working on a number of orders from countries in the region for the supply of Russian helicopters, fire arms and modern border protection systems," Alexander Mikheev, the head of Russia's state arms exporter Rosoboronexport, told the RIA Novosti news agency.



TEHRAN: Iran President Ebrahim Raisi receives Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi. - DNA

**'Pak, Iran role crucial to resolve Afghan crisis'**

DNA

**ISLAMABAD:** Chief of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan says Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan have a significant role to play in resolving the crisis in Afghanistan. Senator Siraj ul-Haq expressed these views during a meeting with the Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan in Islamabad, Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini. The JI chief stressed the importance of close cooperation between the two countries to address regional issues, including Afghanistan.

He added fortunately, Iran and Pakistan have a close view and a coordinated approach towards the Afghanistan issue, and it is expected that joint efforts for peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region will continue. Siraj-ul-Haq said the Taliban's approach in Afghanistan is positive at the moment and I hope this approach will continue in the future. He stressed resolving the issue of Afghanistan is important not only for Iran and Pakistan, but the whole region needs it, so it is expected that the Iran and Pakistan will spare no effort to help Afghan people.

**Pakistan keen to further expand ties with Qatar**

KHAYAM ABBASI

**ISLAMABAD:** Ambassador of Qatar Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman bin Faisal Al-Thani called on the Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at the Parliament House on Thursday. Matters of bilateral significance, regional and international importance were discussed during the meeting. The Chairman Senate, while welcoming the Ambassador of Qatar, observed that Pakistan attaches high importance to its friendly relations with Qatar. The two countries have stood by each other in difficult times, he said. Sanjrani added that Corona Pandemic has created an extraordinary situation globally and regionally and a concerted effort is needed to control the Pandemic. The government of Pakistan is making every effort to control the virus. The Chairman Senate highlighted the importance of adopting a joint strategy to sustain economic activities during the Pandemic. He said

that the two countries have enjoyed an exemplary cooperation in the IPU, Asian Parliamentary Assembly and other important fora. "Bilateral cooperation at such forums shows mutual trust" he maintained. Chairman Senate stressed that Pakistan provides conducive environment for investment and there are vast investment opportunities especially in Gwadar. He emphasized Qatari investors can take advantage of investment opportunities in Pakistan. The Chairman Senate advised that investment in energy, infrastructure, mining and other sectors can boost economic activity. Sanjrani urged that the ongoing atrocities and human rights violations by the Indian forces in occupied Kashmir have put the peace of the region at stake. The Chairman Senate said that Pakistan wants the Kashmir issue to be resolved in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiri people and the resolutions of the United Nations.

**US provides 3.7mn doses of pfizer vaccine to pakistan**

SAIFULLAH

**ISLAMABAD:** The United States donated 3.7 million doses of the life-saving Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to the Government of Pakistan for distribution to the Pakistani people through the COVAX facility. Today's donation of 3.7 million vaccines is in

addition to the 5.5 million Moderna vaccine doses that the U.S. government donated to Pakistan in July, bringing the total number of doses sent from the United States to Pakistan to over 9.2 million. This donation is part of the 500 million Pfizer doses the United States purchased this summer to deliver to

92 countries and economies worldwide, including Pakistan, to fulfill President Joe Biden's commitment to provide safe and effective vaccines around the world and supercharge the global fight against the pandemic. "There is an urgency, now more than ever, to put an end to this devastating pandemic, and Pakistan and the

United States are continuing to work together to achieve that goal," said U.S. Embassy Chargé d'affaires Angela P. Aggeler. "The United States is proud to partner with the Pakistani people to defeat COVID-19. Together, we will continue to build a world that is safer and more secure against the threat of infectious disease."



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani exchanging views with Sheikh Saoud Bin Abdul-Rahman Al Thani, Ambassador of Qatar to Pakistan. - DNA

**NAB's anti corruption strategy lauded worldwide**

ZUBAIR AHMAD

**ISLAMABAD:** Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB chaired a meeting to review the performance of NAB Sukkur especially conviction made under Section 10 of National Accountability Ordinance (NAO)-1999 and under Section 25 (B) of NAO-1999 during the tenure of the present management of NAB at NAB Headquarter. Hussain Asghar, Deputy Chairman NAB, Syed Asghar Haider, Prosecutor General Accountability (PGA), Zahir Shah, DG Operations NAB and other senior officers of NAB attended at the meeting, Mirza Muhammad Irfan Baig, DG NAB Sukkur also participated in the meeting via video link. During the meeting Mirza Muhammad Irfan Baig, DG NAB Sukkur informed that under the dynamic leadership of Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB, NAB Sukkur also identified theft/embezzlement of 253,551.7 Metric Ton wheat amounting to Rs. 27.8

Billion out of which an amount of Rs. 19.2 Billion has been recovered and handed over to the Govt of Sindh. This recovery of embezzled wheat was done when there was acute shortage of wheat due to less production in 2019-2020. The Chief Secretary Sindh has also issued a letter of appreciation addressed to Honorable Chairman NAB in this regard. DG NAB Sukkur informed that there are total 109x RO / UF water plants in Sukkur city which were not operational but now all of them are functioning due to the efforts made by NAB Sukkur in coordination with Public Health Engineering Department Sukkur under its preveDuring the meeting, it was informed that Accountability Court Sukkur on 25 th August, 2021 announced its judgment in reference No. 01/2020, titled "State Vs Parshotam Lal" whereby the accused Parshotam Lal, Lessee of M/s Shikarpur Flour Mill, Industrial Area, District Shikarpur was convicted/sentenced for 7 years of rigorous

imprisonment alongwith fine of Rs. 109.820 million. The accused Parshotam Lal, Lessee of M/s Shikarpur Flour Mill, Industrial Area, District Shikarpur got issued 25,000 wheat bags against (9) nine postdated cheques on one month credit basis. The accused malaofidely submitted nine cheques with the Food Department without any balance in his bank accounts. These cheques were dishonored. Instead of paying the amount outstanding against Parshotam Lal for 25,000

wheat bags issued to him, he absconded and avoided the process of Law. Accused Parshotam Lal was arrested after the due process of Law and reference was filed against him in the learned Accountability Court Sukkur. DG NAB Sukkur further informed that NAB Sukkur in pursuance of mission of Worthy Chairman NAB regarding zero tolerance against corruption is committed to make corruption free Pakistan on the principles of merit and transparency as per law. During the period from 2018 to 2020, NAB Sukkur filed 67x References in the Accountability Court Sukkur. During the said period, 32x accused persons were convicted u/s 10 of NAO, 1999 and also fine to the tune of Rs. 880 million imposed upon them. Whereas, 242x accused persons were convicted u/s 25(B) of NAO, 1999 who returned Rs. 2.77 Billion through Plea Bargain after approval by the Learned Accountability Court Sukkur. He also informed that the Hon'ble Sindh High Court Bench at Sukkur

CP No. 1115/2009 in its judgement ordered for recovery of forest land in the entire Sindh province from illegal occupants / encroachers. Consequently, out of land measuring 1,051,326 acres, an area of 874,163 acres has been mutated by the Revenue Department in favour of the Sindh Forest Department. Whereas, the forest land more than 250,000 acres has so far been recovered from encroachers by NAB Sukkur. He further informed that the menace of electricity theft has also been addressed with joint efforts of SEPCO & NAB Sukkur and an amount of Rs. 7.9 Billion in the year 2020 and Rs. 1.810 Billion in the year 2021 has so far been recovered. During the meeting Mirza Muhammad Irfan Baig, DG NAB Sukkur informed that under the dynamic leadership of Honorable Mr. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB, NAB Sukkur in all above NAB operations, made Rs. 28 billion recovery directly and indirectly in convictions u/s 10 & 25(B) of NAO, 1999, in wheat scam and electricity theft etc.

