



Islamabad POST

Saturday, August 28, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

Turkey assessing Taliban's offer to assist at Kabul airport

Detailed News On Page-08

Malaysia's PM unveils the new cabinet

Detailed News On Page-07



Ronaldo joins Manchester United

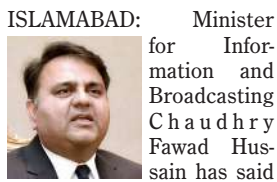
Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Pak desires peace in Afghanistan

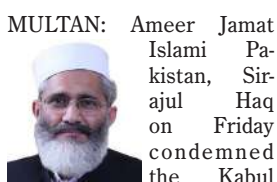
STAFF REPORT



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain has said Pakistan desires peace and stability in Afghanistan. He was talking to office-bearers of Badin Press Club along with Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination Dr Fahmida Mirza in Islamabad today (Friday). The Information Minister said Pakistan wishes to connect China-Pakistan Economic Corridor with European Union and it is only possible if there is peace in Afghanistan. He said by connecting CPEC with EU, economic activity in the region will boost. The Minister said Prime Minister Imran Khan had earlier suggested former Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to form an inclusive government. He said we will now suggest Taliban to form a coalition government.

Peaceful Afghanistan necessary

DNA



MULTAN: Ameer Jamat Islami Pakistan, Sirajul Haq on Friday condemned the Kabul airport blast and said peace in Afghanistan was vital not only for Pakistan but the whole region. Addressing a press conference at Jamt Islami Multan office, Siraj said Pakistan and neighboring countries would have to play an important role for Afghan peace. To a question, Jamat Islami chief said Pakistan Democratic Movement has lost its vigor and was now merely a composition of a few parties. He urged the people to support Jamat Islami for establishment of Islamic system in the country and to get their problems resolved. He condemned the killing of a worker of Islami Jamiat Tulaba Kaleemullah Sahu at Bahauddin Zakariya University.

China 'shocked' at Kabul attack

NEWS DESK



BEIJING: China on Friday expressed shock and strongly condemned explosions near the Kabul airport which caused massive casualties. "China is shocked by the explosions near the Kabul airport which caused massive casualties. We also strongly condemn that," Chinese Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing held here. He said that this incident showed that the security situation in Afghanistan remains complicated and severe. "We hope relevant parties can take effective measures to ensure smooth transition of the situation there and ensure safety of the Afghan people and foreign nationals" he added.

Measures in place to keep border stable

DG ISPR Maj Gen Babar Iftikhar says Pakistan Army fully capable of thwarting any threat; Taliban assured TTP won't be allowed to act against any country



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

RAWALPINDI: Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General (DG) Major General Babar Iftikhar Friday said the situation along Pakistan-Afghanistan Border was stable and required measures were placed to control mobility and contain unwanted movement. He was briefing media over evolving situation in Afghanistan and implied national security risks to be faced by the country. The ISPR DG said the military situation in Afghanistan felled rather rapidly post United States forces withdrawal when the Ashraf Ghani regime knocked down on August 15. He said Pakistan took appropriate measures to protect its side of the border which was stable

"Watan Ki Matti Gawah Rehna" defence day slogan

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The ISPR DG has announced that this year 'Defence Day' on September would be marked with national zeal and fervour but with a new theme of "Watan Ki Matti Gawah Rehna" (the soil of the country be a witness—to our endeavours of nation building and protection). He told that some 1,030 development projects were initiated in Balochistan and Tribal districts at a cost of over Rs900 billion where the armed forces were assisting the provincial and federal governments in executing those projects.

and had controlled movement, adding, "It will have positive impact on the other side and will try to reciprocate it on the other side." He informed that the notified crossings along Pak-Afghan Border was closed due to fluctuating situation in Afghanistan whereas the Afghan National Army soldiers on two occasions sought refuge on Pakistani side.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese visited NHQ, Islamabad & called on CNS Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi. During the Call-on, the dignitaries discussed matters of mutual interest, bilateral collaborations & maritime security in the region. – DNA

17 factory workers burned to death

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: At least 17 factory workers and rescue workers lost their lives while three others sustained critical injuries on Friday when B.M Luggage Industry (factory) in Mehran Town Korangi caught fire. Police informed that 16 factory workers including two brothers were trapped in the factory and lost their lives while three rescue workers of Edhi and Chhina were also injured during

Continued on Page 06

Corruption root cause of all our ills: PM Imran

STAFF REPORT/DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Friday said that overseas Pakistanis are "the biggest asset for the country." "Unfortunately, we [Pakistan] couldn't benefit from this asset," said PM Imran Khan. The premier, while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the Apna Ghar programme as the chief guest, said that he has witnessed overseas Pakistanis progressing.



grabbers operating in Pakistan "illegally occupied plots that overseas Pakistanis had bought in the country." He further stated that corruption is the "biggest hurdle in the way of investments in Pakistan" because the people who are used to a corruption-free environment cannot work in a country having a racket of corrupt individuals. "Nonetheless, we will try to provide safety to the

Continued on Page 06

PML-N decides to issue two white papers

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has decided to issue two separate white papers on three-year performance of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. Sources told that one paper will focus on the poor performance of the government while the other one will disclose the corruption of the federation. The decision came after PTI presented report on three-year performance, highlighting the key achievements marking a journey of stable

Continued on Page 06

Bilawal for addressing Chinese reservations

NAZIR SIYAL

THATTA: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Friday demanded the government to remove the reservation of the Chinese government over the CPEC and the recent terror events. Addressing a press conference in Thatta on Friday, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has urged the government to implement the National Action Plan to stop terrorism in the country. Bilawal said Pakistan would not allow anyone to use the soil of Pakistan for terror activities.



Continued on Page 06

US acknowledges Pak support COAS says Pakistan has no favourites in Afghanistan

ANSAR M BHATTI

RAWALPINDI: Angela Ager, US Charge d' Affairs to Pakistan has appreciated Pakistan's efforts in promoting regional peace and stability and thanked the COAS for the special assistance in the evacuation operations from Kabul. According to ISPR, US Charge d' Affairs called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ, on Friday. Matters of mutual interest, regional security and recent situation in Afghanistan were discussed in detail during the meeting.

COAS said that Pakistan has no favourites in Afghanistan and our sole aim is helping achieve peaceful, sovereign stable and prosperous Afghanistan. COAS strongly condemned the terrorist attacks at Kabul airport and expressed sorrow over the loss of precious lives. He also reiterated the combined resolve to fight terrorism and extremism to the core.

Transit stay for Afghans, foreigners

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has decided to provide transit stay to thousands of Afghan nationals and foreigners being evacuated from Afghanistan, where twin bombings on Thursday killed more than 70 people including 13 American soldiers. The Pakistani authorities on Friday got vacated hotels and hostels in three different cities. However, the faculty members and students at the country's three largest universities which were ordered to make room for the short stay of Afghans and foreigners resisted the idea. Since Kabul fell to the Taliban, a large number of Afghan people wanted to flee from the country through air or land.



RAWALPINDI: Angela Ager, US Charge d' Affairs to Pakistan called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS). – DNA

انصاف، انسانیت، خودداری کے 3 سال

تبدیلی بے مثال - ترقی باکمال

ترقیاتی منصوبے

50 سال بعد 10 بڑے ڈیموں کی تعمیر

تاریخ میں پہلی بار ایم ایل ون ریلوے ٹریک کو دو روے کرنے کا آغاز

اسلام آباد کے بعد پہلی بار راولی تارے سے شہر کی تعمیر

کراچی کے ساحل پر بننے والی اینڈرگراؤنڈ

زرعی ترقی

تین سالوں میں 5 پھر کراہیں کا حصول

کسان کی آمدنی میں 1100 ارب روپے کا اضافہ

احساس پروگرام

سماجی تحفظ کا سب سے بڑا پروگرام

تقریباً نصف آبادی مستند

ڈیڑھ لاکھ نوجوانوں کو احساس انڈرگریڈ

سکالرشپس کی فراہمی

میرا پاکستان میرا گھر

اپنا گھر بنانے کیلئے لاکھوں روپے کے آسان قرضہ جات

کامیاب جوان پروگرام

نوجوانوں کو 17.5 ارب روپے کے کاروباری قرضہ جات کی فراہمی

پاکستان کے وقت کی عالمی سطح پر پزیرائی

سیاحت کا فروغ اور ماحولیات کا تحفظ

سمندر پار پاکستانیوں کی جانب سے تاریخی تزیینات اور

پائیدار ترقی کا یہ سفر جاری رہے گا۔ انشاء اللہ

حکومت پاکستان

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

Briefs

2 more die of coronavirus in Faisalabad

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Another two patients died of COVID-19 while 88 people tested positive during the last 24 hours in Faisalabad. A spokesperson for the Health department said on Friday that 391 coronavirus tests were conducted in public and private sector labs during the period. He said that total active cases in Faisalabad reached 1,189 while 21,563 patients had so far recovered from the disease. He said that 339 beds were allocated at the Allied Hospital, 133 at the DHQ Hospital and 150 at Government General Hospital Ghulam Muhammad Abad for COVID-19 patients. At present, 209 patients were under treatment at the Allied Hospital, 53 at DHQ Hospital and 2 at General Hospital. He further said that 548 confirmed patients were isolated at their homes in the district.

DG FIA visits Zonal Directorate FIA

NEWS DESK

QUETTA: Director General (DG) of Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Dr. Sanullah Abbasi on Friday visited Zonal Directorate FIA Balochistan Zone. He also conducted a zoom meeting and reviewed the progress of drive carried out over smuggling of Currency/Hundi Hawala dealers taken by FIA especially at Borders, said a press released issue here. He directed to speed up the action and to ensure covert pending STRs enquiries into cases. The DG also held Crime Meeting with Director FIA Balochistan Zone and with Circles Heads and appraised the overall performance of FIA Balochistan Zone and awarded CC I certificates to the deserving officers. Abbasi also visited the premises where the fire incident was taken place. Later, he paid a visit to FIA Cyber Crime Reporting Centre Quetta and deeply monitored their working and directed them to dispose of minor complaints speedily and emphasized to improve their performance.

Indus Motor declares Rs 12.8 bn profit

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Indus Motor posts net sales revenue of Rs 179.2 billion showing 108% increase compared to Rs 86.2 billion last year, while profit after tax increased by 151% to Rs 12.8 billion from Rs 5.1 billion posted last year. Board of Directors of Indus Motor Company Limited met on Aug. 26, 2021 to review the company's financial and operating performance for the year ending on June 30, 2021, said release on Friday. Profit before tax increased by 150 percent from Rs 7.3 billion last year to Rs 18.2 billion as at the fiscal year end. During the year, sales volume of CKD and CBU vehicles increased by 100%, to 57,731 units as against 28,837 units sold last year. Consequential to increased demand, the Company produced 59,187 units for the year, as compared to 28,519 units produced in the same period last year. The increase in turnover and profitability for the year was mainly due to higher CKD and CBU volumes, primarily due to improved economic conditions and healthy demand generated on account of launch of the facelift models of Corolla, Hilux and Fortuner along with wider acceptance of Toyota Yaris, the best-selling sedan for the year. The profitability also increased on account of increase in other income mainly due to return on placements on account of improved fund position of the Company.

New record of planting 100,000 saplings set for Faisalabad

The Deputy Commissioner said that he was happy to set a record on the last day of duty in Faisalabad

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Under the Prime Minister's Ten Billion Tree Project, a world record has been set by planting 100,000 saplings simultaneously in Faisalabad district under the District Administration. In Tehsil City and Saddar 20 thousand, in Tehsil Samundri, Tandlianwala, Jaranwala and Chak Jhumra 16 thousand each plants were spalled. The City and Sadar ceremony was held at Kaleem Shaheed Park, Narwala Road where Punjab Minister for Colonies & Culture Mian Khayal Ahmad Kastro, Divisional Commissioner Saqib Manan, Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali, Parliamentarians Sh. Khurram Shahzad and Latif Nazir along with officers and Students Spalled the plants at same time. ADCs Muhammad Khalid, Afifa Sajia, Assistant Commissioners Syed Ayub Bukhari, Umar Maqbool, CEO Education Ali Ahmas Sian, Educationist Akhtar Butt, Incharge Control Room Muhammad Sadiq were present while Assistant Commissioners Faisal Sultan, Numan Ali, M. Zubair and Haider Ali also planted trees with the students at



the same time and their activity was shown live on SMD at Kaleem Shaheed Park. The Provincial Minister appreciated the efforts of the district administration in planting 0.1 million saplings at a time under the Clean Green Program of the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan and said that tree planting was the most urgent need of

the hour. Divisional Commissioner said that Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali has also set a record on the last day of his posting in Faisalabad and made the name of the district bright. He said that planting trees is necessary to meet the challenges facing. The Deputy Commissioner said that he was happy to set a record on the last day of duty in Faisalabad today. He said that Faisalabad is the first district where tree planting was started in all the tehsils at the same time and set a world record. He appreciated the efforts of Assistant Commissioners, Education Authority and other supporting departments in the campaign and in planting one lakh trees at a time and said that the Clean Green program should be continued with the same spirit. He said that during his service at Faisalabad he learned more and tried to highlight the Govt. policies. He said that challenges like Corona and Dengue was tough but tried his level best to prevent public from diseases. He thanked the Commissioner, Officers and Media man for supporting him during posting. During the ceremonies National Anthem was blown and Students seed the plants with enthusiasm.

Zartaj Gul inaugurates Coca-Cola Beverages' 'Clean and Green' drive

The tree saplings consisting of Malta, Arjun, and Olive fruit varieties were handed over to the Ministry of Climate Change for plantation in Faisalabad by the senior members of CCI Pakistan team

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: In the presence of Minister of State for Climate Change, Zartaj Gul, Coca-Cola Beverages Pakistan Limited (CCI Pakistan) inaugurated its 'Clean and Green' drive 2021 at its production facility in Faisalabad. As per a MoU signed earlier in the year between both entities, CCI Pakistan had pledged to plant 50,000 tree saplings across the major cities of Pakistan, out of which more than 10,000 saplings were donated during this first drive event. The event was attended by other high ranking government officials and senior members of CCI Pakistan's team. The tree saplings consisting of Malta, Arjun, and Olive fruit varieties were handed over to the Ministry of Climate



Change for plantation in Faisalabad by the senior members of CCI Pakistan team. Appreciating the initiative, Zartaj Gul, Minister of State for Climate

Change stated, "The 'Clean and Green' drive initiated by CCI Pakistan is an extension of Prime Minister

Imran Khan's vision of a greener Pakistan. In order to achieve this vision, every citizen of Pakistan must play its role. By hon-

oring its commitment to plant 50,000 trees across Pakistan, CCI Pakistan has proved itself to be a responsible corporate citizen." Speaking about the occasion, Ahmet Kursad Ertin, General Manager at CCI Pakistan said, "CCI Pakistan is a socially responsible and environmentally conscious corporate citizen of Pakistan. We feel it our social responsibility to help restore the natural biodiversity, as this is the only way to counter the catastrophic challenges of climate change faced by Pakistan." The event concluded with a tour of CCT's state-of-the-art production facility, and the reiteration by the company to fulfill its social pledge of protecting the environment through contribution to the government's efforts of building a clean and green Pakistan.

Solar Pak: country's only dedicated solar energy

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: FAKT Exhibitions (Pvt.) Ltd., the leading exhibitions organizing company in Pakistan, brings back 9th edition of SOLAR PAKISTAN - International Renewable Energy Exhibition to Lahore. The one of its kind event will mark its presence at PC Hotel, Lahore (Grand Ballroom A&B) from 2nd to 4th September 2021. The exhibition will attract key industry leaders, government officials, manufacturers, suppliers, traders and distributors. It will showcase the latest innovations in the solar and sustainable energy field by offering a unique platform to forge partnerships between public and private sectors to develop solutions for industrial and consumer needs. SOLAR PAKISTAN has established as the leading renewable energy event of the country with its scale setting records year by year. The three-day exhibition is expected to have more than 100 exhibiting companies with a number of versatile technologies to be debuted at the event that offers turnkey solutions to contemporary energy requirements.

Two accused sent to jail for identification parade

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: A local court on Friday sent two accused, involved in rickshaw girl harassment case, to jail on judicial remand for identification parade. The CIA police produced both the accused before a judicial magistrate at district courts here. The investigation officer submitted before the court that the accused were arrested in connection with the rickshaw girl harassment case. He submitted that it was necessary to hold an identification parade of the accused to proceed further in the matter. He pleaded with the court to send them to jail for identification parade. At this, the court sent the accused to jail on 6-day judicial remand and directed for producing them on expiry of the remand term. The Lorry Adda police had registered a case against the accused over sexually harassing a girl riding a rickshaw during the Independence Day celebrations on August 14. The issue of harassment of the girl by youngsters was highlighted when video clips of the incident surfaced.

Covid claims 25 more lives in KP

DNA

PESHAWAR: Covid-19 claimed 25 more lives in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 605 new cases reported during last 24 hours. According to provincial health department here on Friday, Nine deaths were reported from Peshawar Division, seven from Mardan Division, four from Malakand Division, one from Hazara Division, two from Kohat Division while two deaths were reported from D I Khan Division. The number of total corona cases reported so far from the province is 160088. The tally of recoveries during last 24 hours is 265 while the total number of recoveries are 147317 till date. As many as 11662 corona diagnostic tests were performed during this time span raising the tally of infected cases to 2615549 in the province so far.

IHC serves notice in Noor case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday served notices to Therapy Works' employees seeking their comments in the Noor Mukadam murder case after the deceased woman's father appealed for cancellation of their bail pleas. IHC's Justice Aamer Farooq heard the case filed by Noor's father, Shaukat Mukadam. The court has also sought case records from additional district and session courts. Petitioner's lawyer Barrister Qasim Nawaz Abbasi told IHC the suspect had hidden facts from the lower court, as he mentioned his client had also named Therapy Works' chief executive Tahir Zahoor and other employees as suspects in his supplementary statement. A court has already dismissed the bail of Zahir Jaffar's parents, he said, adding that the decision to grant bail to Therapy Works' employees was announced by another court.

After hearing the arguments, Justice Farooq sought comments from the respondents along with the case records and adjourned the hearing. Shaukat on Thursday had moved the IHC, seeking cancellation of the bail granted to the Therapy Works' CEO and five other employees in the case. A sessions court in Islamabad on Monday granted bail to six officials of Therapy Works, including its chief executive Zahoor, in the murder case. In his petition, Shaukat had said that the officials of Therapy Works were present when the gruesome murder occurred. The sessions court avoided the rules laid down by the SC when granting bail to the suspects, read the petition. Noor's father said that the Therapy Works' CEO and its other employees had been "threatening him." He argued that the suspects concealed evidence and pleaded with the court to nullify the sessions court's orders and repeal the bail granted to the suspects.

Nigerian HC urges business community to participate in AITF

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Africa has become a new emerging global market and Pakistan must explore its untapped potential by participating in the Abuja International Trade Fair (AITF) scheduled to be held in Lagos during the month of November this year, said Nigerian High Commissioner Mr. Mohammad Bello Abioye. He was addressing the business community of Faisalabad in the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here today. He said that Pakistan and Nigeria have best relations but these relations could not be translated into economic terms. He appreciated Pakistan's policy of issuing "On Arrival Visas" and said that Nigeria was also considering providing such a facility to the international buyers. About the scheduled Trade Fair, he said



that it will provide a unique facility to showcase exportable surplus of Pakistan and other countries. Terming Nigeria as a gateway to Africa, he said that through Nigeria, the business community could also develop their links with other neighboring African countries. Earlier Chaudhary Talat Mahmood Senior Vice President FCCI welcomed the Nigerian High Commissioner and introduced Faisalabad and FCCI. He

said that the corona had crippled the global economy last year but in Pakistan the economy made tremendous progress due to the smart lockdown policy of the present Government. He said that textile is the iconic identity of Faisalabad but other sectors including chemicals, soap, detergent and pharmaceutical etc. are also growing at much faster pace. Quoting statistics of bilateral trade, he said that the total volume of trade is

very low as compared to the potential of Pakistan and Nigeria. He said that at present trade balance is in favor of Nigeria. He further said that Faisalabad is a global player in the textile sector but our textile export to Nigeria is not up to the mark. He said that a member of FCCI has very recently dispatched a sample of medical equipment to Nigeria and hopefully this sector will also start exports to Nigeria very soon.

Drosh people celebrate completion of Polo ground

PESHAWAR: People of Drosh on Friday organized massive celebrations on the announcement of polo ground completion, an initiative under Prime Minister 1000 Project, with a big bang and dancing on their traditional tunes and instruments - drum (Doll) and Pipe (Surma). The PMU team was headed by Murad Ali Mohmand while Deputy Director Ameer Rehman, Deputy Director Geographical Information System (GIS), Engr. Paras Ahmad and Engr. Umer Shehzad were also part of the team. People of the area garlanded the PMU team for their quick work and thanked Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan, who extended special love to the people of Chitral by approving more than 18 polo grounds all across Upper and Lower Chitral districts. Drosh, also called drosh, is situated in khowar is a town within the Chitral District of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. People organized entertaining dancing session when the PMU team of Prime Minister 1000 Play facilities joined the local people, expressing their love toward the traditional Polo ground. Project Management Unit 1000 Developing Facilities (PMUDF) visited Sweer Playground Lower Chitral where it was in progress. Funds have been released this year for its early completion in October 2021, three months before the date line of completion in January 2022. The levelling dressing and stage is in pending while the work on the boundary wall is 90 percent completed. Football poles with cricket pitches would be developed for the local community as well as facilitating the students of the Sweer Govt School. - APP

Shahram inaugurates the nova city premier schools

Nova City School Promotes No-Homework Environment with a great focus while being in tandem with Prime Minister of Pakistan's vision of single nation single curriculum

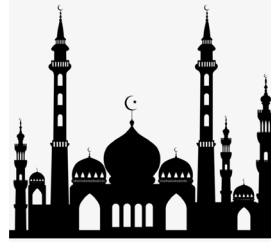
ZUBAIR AHMAD

RAWALPINDI: Education Minister KPK Shahram Khan Inaugurated the Nova City Premier Schools a Project of Nova City Islamabad in Islamabad on August 27, 2021. Also present at the inauguration were officials from Ministry of Education and members of parliament. Nova City School Promotes No-Homework Environment with a great focus while being in tandem with Prime Minister of Pakistan's vision of single nation single curriculum. It'll be overwhelming to see how do NOVA premier school prepares our children with Islam at one hand & science on the other. Being the only school equally emphasizing upon the futuristic



education like Robotics, Entrepreneurship & Critical thinking while seeking help & guidance from Quran Kareem & life & preaching of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) & for character Building of the students. NOVA is investing in Essential Education Infrastructure, & contributing and helping the nation to improve the prosperity of each & every child. The goal of Nova City School is to promote culture of self-learning & critical thinking where they can make the future generations capable to excel in all facets of life, also such state of the art schools helps improving the quality of education & strengthen the accountability & transparency between parents & academia and to help communities.

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	04:11 am
Zohr.....	12:09 pm
Asr.....	04:48 pm
Maghrib.....	06:45 pm
Isha.....	08:07 pm



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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Emergency

Rescue (Police).....	15
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MH.....	5611116
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RGH.....	9290301-7
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PIMS.....	9261170-79
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TMA.....	5770886
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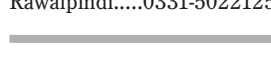
Complaints

Water Tanker Service	
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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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Alvi for strengthening ties with the Saudi Arabia

Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi briefed the President about the new strategic plan of the university aiming to improve governance and quality of education

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan attaches utmost significance to its relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which are based on common faith and mutual respect. He stated that both brotherly countries had long standing and deep-rooted fraternal relations which needed to be further strengthened for the mutual benefit of the two countries. He made these remarks while talking to the Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to Pakistan, Mr. Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki, and President of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Welcoming the Ambassador and the President of IIUI, President Dr. Arif Alvi said that both brotherly coun-



tries enjoyed excellent relations and there existed great potential between the two countries to further enhance economic and cultural relations. He emphasized the need for bilateral ex-

changes at high levels that would bring the two countries further closer. He expressed the hope that the visit of Prime Minister of Pakistan to KSA in May 2021 and the Saudi Foreign

Minister's visit to Pakistan in July 2021 would further boost bilateral cooperation. The President thanked KSA for providing financial support to Pakistan that helped rescue the country from fi-

nanacial problems. Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi briefed the President about the new strategic plan of the University aiming to improve governance and quality of education. He

informed that the University was establishing a new department to provide distance learning to students. The President also discussed the recently formulated policy by HEC focusing on prevention of Drug and Tobacco abuse in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs). He said that the policy would help prevent drug abuse in universities and provide healthy and enabling environment to students. Appreciating the policy to facilitate the Students with Disabilities (SwDs), the President mentioned that it provided waiver to SwDs from all institutional charges, including tuition fee, hostel fee and utilities bills. He expressed that hope that the initiative taken by the HEC would help encourage the students with disabilities to continue their higher studies as well as eradicate the menace of drug abuse from the HEIs.

PMC to ensure merit-based examination

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) will ensure to produce quality doctors through a standardized, merit-based examination via a computer-based testing system to ensure transparency, meritocracy, and competency for admission in medical and dental colleges. Talking to a delegation of medical students, the members of the PMC's Medical and Dental Council headed by its President Dr. Arshad Taqi said that the commission will fulfil its responsibility of the availability of competent doctors for providing quality healthcare. At the request of the Council, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services, Dr. Faisal Sultan and the Chairman National Medical and Dental Academic Board also attended the discussion. The students at the outset agreed in principle with the concept of the National Licensing Examination (NLE) and acknowledged the need for such an examination to improve the quality of healthcare services and its requirement as part of the upcoming global WFME requirements.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation comprising Women Parliamentarians calls on PM Imran Khan. – DNA

CDA asked to develop Aabpara Market

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), called on the CDA to intensify efforts for developing Aabpara Market as a model market of the federal capital, which would boost trade activities.

He said that Aabpara market is one of the primary markets of Islamabad so there is a need to develop it on modern lines to give it the status of model market. He expressed these views while addressing a reception held in ICCI in honor of the newly elected Office Bearers of Traders Welfare Association of Aabpara Market. Aabpara Market's newly elected President Ajmal Baloch, Secretary General Akhtar Abbasi, Senior Vice President Shafiq Abbasi, Vice President Abbas, Chair-

man Ali Asghar alias Mani Butt, Vice Chairman Musab Khan, Additional Secretary General Chaudhry Siddique, Joint Secretary Tariq Mahmood Awan, Secretary Information Abu Bakar Chaudhry, Secretary Finance Sardar Shaikat Mahmood Awan and others were in the delegation. Former Senior Vice President ICCI Khalid Chaudhry performed the

role of Stage Secretary. Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that the establishment of an expo center in Islamabad was urgently needed for better promotion of trade and exports in the region, so the government should build an expo center in Islamabad on priority basis. He said that the decision to close businesses two days a week due to coronavirus should be reconsidered and

more attention should be paid to vaccination while the business community would extend full cooperation in this regard. He said that lease issues of traders are still unresolved and CDA should focus on resolving them. He said that construction of additional storey should be allowed in markets, which is necessary for better promotion of business activities.



Crackdown against criminals in full swing

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have arrested 11 outlaws and recovered weapons and stolen valuable from their possession, a police spokesman said Friday. Following directions of SSP (Operations) Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanweer, crackdown against criminals is in full swing. According to the details, during this crackdown Korla police arrested an accused Ghulam Shabbir and recovered one 30 bore pistol along with ammunition from him. Sihala police arrested accused Ghulam Ali and recovered one 30 bore pistol from him. Banigala police arrested accused Anwer and recovered one 30 bore pistol from him. Shams colony police arrested accused Aman involved in theft case. Secretariat police arrested accused Muhammad Gul and recovered stolen valuable from him. Bhara Kahu police arrested accused Shahzad involved in theft. Lohibher police arrested accused sikander involved in careless driving.

Court awards death sentence in murder case

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The Additional Session Judge Rawalpindi on Friday awarded death sentence to an accused of a murder and dacoity case. The accused Rameez alias bila was found guilty of killing a man in the area of Police station Ganjmandi. After recording evidence of the witnesses and final arguments by the defence and prosecution, the court also imposed a fine of Rs 7, 00,000 on him besides awarding death sentence.

RCCI ink MOU with MCCI, Bloemfontein S.A



SHAHEEN HANIF

RAWALPINDI: RCCI signed a memorandum of understanding with Mangaung Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bloemfontein South Africa. President RCCI Nasir Mirza and President MCCI Ms. Nancy De Souza was present at the signing ceremony which was held at Chamber house Rawalpindi on a virtual platform. Pakistan Ambassador to South Africa Mazhar Javed marked his presence as a

Chief Guest at the MoU signing ceremony. Commercial Secretary Ms. Humaira Israr also marked her presence on the occasion and acknowledged the activities of RCCI. Trade and Investment Attaché Humaira Israr said that all kinds of assistance was being provided to exporters to promote trade. The diplomatic mission is working hard to remove obstacles related to banking channels and NOCs. She welcomed Chamber's suggestions and efforts to promote trade and improve networking.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

GEPCO invites the proposals on Single Stage-Two envelopes Procedure from PEGregistered engineering consultancy firms for Rural Electrification, System Augmentation Program (ELR/DOP) and deposit works/projects under its control.

- The scope of work will be as under;
 - Technical and Financial Review and vetting of the estimates prepared by GEPCO.
 - Monitoring of material utilization as per approved estimates.
 - Verification of the material drawn and installed at site and preparation of reconciliation statement.
 - Monitoring Rural Electrification, SAP (ELR/DOP) and Deposit Works for adherence to quality standards.
 - Preparation and submission of monthly progress reports.
 - To assist client in acceptance of the completed works.
 - Preparation of completion reports (A-90).
- The duration of consultancy services will be two years.
- The required documents to be submitted along with the proposals are as under;
 - Certification of registration with PEC along with latest renewal.
 - List of professional staff along with their CVs showing project wise experience with exact time of duration of each project.
 - List of similar services provided by the firms during the last 5-years and works in hand indicating total cost of such works and cost of consultancy and expected date of completion.
 - A certificate/affidavit that the firm is not Black Listed by Government/Authority and is not involved in Litigation with any Govt. Department/Authority.
 - Financial statements of the firm (at-least for the last 03-years) along with Bank Balance, detail of credit lines (duly attested by the Sr. Manager of the Bank).
- The RFP will be available from the office of Operation Director GEPCO on the payment of the non-refundable fee of Rs. 5000/- .Pre-bid meeting will held on 13.09.2021 at 2.00(PM) in this office.
- The Technical and Financial proposals must be submitted in the office of Operation Director GEPCO H/Q, 565/A Model Town Gujranwala on 15TH September 2021 up to 11.00 AM and the same will be opened on the same day at 11:30 AM in the presence of authorized representatives of the firms.
- The Technical and financial proposals should be valid for 120 days from the date of opening of technical proposal and should be sealed in separate envelopes clearly mentioning the category of the proposal and both these envelopes should be enclosed in another envelope clearly mentioning the name of the consulting firm/company. The bid security Rs.10,000,00/- (One million) in the shape of CDR/Bank guarantee should be enclosed in the Technical proposal's envelope.
- GEPCO reserves the right to reject/accept any or all proposals as per PPR Rules. Any further query can be had from the office of Chief Engineer/Operation Director GEPCO Contact No.055-9200510, Fax No. 055-9200122.

(IHSAN ELAHI)
GENERAL MANAGER/OP. DIRECTOR
565/A, Model Town, Gujranwala

PIDL 524

PRCS provides sanitizer machines and handwashing stations to ITP

Abrar ul Haq urged people to strictly follow Covid-19 safety guidelines, saying that bringing this "very dangerous situation" under control is impossible without public support

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) on Friday installed 2 handwashing stations and 2 hand sanitizer machines at Islamabad Traffic Police office, Islamabad for the ITP staff and visitors. PRCS Secretary General Dr. Adeel Nawaz handed over the sanitizers, handwashing stations and antiseptic to SSP Syed Krar Hussain at ITP office in Islamabad where ITP senior officers, staff and PRCS volunteers were also present. Krar Hussain said there is a historical connection between PRCS and ITP. He thanked PRCS on the initiative aimed to promote precautionary measures in

public places and government offices to defeat the coronavirus. Under this initiative, PRCS has installed 262 hand sanitizer machines and 250 handwashing stations at

different public places, government offices and educational institutions across the country. In his statement, Chairman PRCS Abrar ul Haq said the coronavirus

cases are on rise once again and the efforts of PRCS to help the vulnerable segments will continue with utmost commitment and unflinching resolve until the monster is completely defeated. He hailed the cooperation of Movement Partners, especially ICRC, IFRC and ECHO for providing funding support during Covid-19 operations. Abrar ul Haq said the PRCS has rendered remarkable services in containing the Covid-19 pandemic in the country. He said Muhafiz Force set up by the PRCS helped vulnerable segments of the society through provision of food as well as awareness about adherence to safety and security SOPs devised by the government.



Briefs

IHC serves notices to therapy works' employees

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday sought comments from respondents in a case seeking cancellation of bail of therapy works' employees in Noor Mukadam murder case. The court also sought the case record from additional district and session court.

Justice Aamer Farooq of IHC heard the case filed by Shaikat Mukadam, the father of the slain Noor Mukadam.

Petitioner's lawyer Barrister Qasim Nawaz Abbasi said the accused had hid facts from the lower court. He said the plaintiff had also named therapy works' Chief Executive Officer Tahir Zahoor and other employees as accused in his supplementary statement.

A court had already dismissed the bail of Zahir Jaffar's parents, he said adding that the above decision was announced by another court. After listening arguments, the court sought comments from respondent along with the case record and adjourned hearing of the case.

NHMP DLA remains open for public on weekends

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General National Highway and Motorway Police (NHMP) Dr. Syed Kaleem Imam on Friday said that NHMP is only Drivers Licensing Authority (DLA) which is remained open for the public on weekends from 08:00 am to 8:00 pm to facilitate the public.

He stated this while addressing a E-Khuli Kachehri at FM-95 Radio and official Face book Page, said a press release.

He said that NHMP is a unique organization that adheres to the basic principles of honesty, courtesy and prompt assistance with motorways and national highway users, adding that NHMP believes in equal and fair application of law, strict enforcement on National Highways and Motorways to regulate the flow of traffic. Dr. Syed Kaleem Imam also answered to the questions asked by the radio listeners all over the country/abroad. He requested the commuters to maintain safe following distance between vehicles to avoid accidents and avoid overtaking where prohibited.

He added, never ride motorcycle without helmet, rider and pillion rider must wear safety helmets. He said that make sure you have a first aid box and fire extinguishers in your vehicle, fasten your seat belt before driving, and don't use mobile while driving, adding that accidents are caused due to overloading and over speeding, so never do over speeding, and overloading. He said that NHMP working day and night to make your journey safe on roads. - APP

Arrest warrants issued against accused

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Friday issued non bailable arrest warrants against a co-accused in rental power reference against former secretary water and power Shahid Rafi and others. AC-1 Judge Muhammad Bashir heard the reference filed by National Accountability Bureau (NAB). The court issued warrants against the accused over continuous disappearance. NAB prosecutor Sohail Arif, defence lawyer Arshad Tabraiz and accused named in the case appeared before the court. The court marked the attendance of accused and issued arrest warrants against a co-accused Ghulam Rasool over continuous absence from proceeding. The defence lawyer also conducted its cross examination with the witness Ahmed Ali after which hearing was adjourned till September 6.

Enhanced co-op between Pak-Qatar beneficial: Fakhar

The ambassador on behalf of Ministry of Municipality and Environment Qatar extended an invitation to Fakhar Imam to attend the "Horticulture Expo 2023 Doha"

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food and Security Syed Fakhar Imam Friday said bilateral cooperation between Qatar and Pakistan would further strengthened in different fields, which would be mutually beneficial for the people of both the countries.

Talking to Qatar Ambassador Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, he said Pakistan had immense agricultural capacity which could allow to increase its exports. Both the sides also discussed scope of agricultural trade between the two countries.

Fakhar Imam said cooperation amongst countries at every level needed to be increased if the world wanted to move towards sustainable and nature friendly development.

He further stressed that the future was in the hands of the youth and hence their quality of education needed to be at par excellence.



Fakhar welcomed and appreciated 10 fully covered scholarships offered by Qatar to the Pakistani students. The ambassador on behalf of Ministry of Municipality and Environment Qatar extended an invitation to Fakhar Imam

to attend the "Horticulture Expo 2023 Doha".

He said the motto of the summit was "Green Desert, Better Environment". He said the aim of the exhibition was to inspire, encourage and benefit participating countries with innovative solutions to reduce desertification.

Later, Shaikat Tarin, presided over a Press Conference regarding formation of short, medium and long term plans across different sectors of the economy under the umbrella of the Economic Advisory Council (EAC).

Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research Fakhar Imam, Federal Minister for Industries and Production Khuro Bakhtiar, Adviser to the PM on Commerce Abdul Razaq Dawood, Adviser to the PM on Institutional reforms Dr. Ishrat Hussain, Mr. Sultan Ali Allana, Mr. Arif Habib, Mr. Salim Raza, M. Ali Tabba and other distinguished members of the EAC from respective fields in the private sector also participated in the Press Conference.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Azad Jammu And Kashmir Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi called on Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser. - APP

Police arrest an absconder

RAWALPINDI: Police on Friday claimed to have arrested one absconder who was wanted in a cheque bounce case. According to Rawalpindi police spokesman, Ganjmandi police rounded up Nauman Mehmood Laiqat wanted in a cheque dishonor case.

He said, the CPO had directed the police to launch a crackdown against absconders and stern action in accordance with the law should be taken against criminals particularly most wanted. - Staff Report

CDA conducts survey of 126 Agro farms for verification



CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY ISLAMABAD

DNA

ISLAMABAD: During the first phase of survey against non-conforming use of agro farms, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) conducted survey of 126 Agro Farms for verification of conformity and development. These farms are located in various Agro-Farming areas of Islamabad including Park Road Chak Shahzad, Kahuta Road, Murree Road, Tarlai Kalan and Sehana. After detailed survey, it was found that 25 of the surveyed agro farms have building violations.

The allottees of these farms were communicated through notices regarding non-conformity of land use. Out of these, 15 have submitted their documents which are being examined by Building Control Section of Capital Development Authority while remaining 10 have failed to submit their relevant documents.

The violators have been served with Final Show Cause Notices prior to cancellation along with directions to submit their documents within seven days, otherwise action would be initiated according to Building Bye-laws and regulations of Capital Development Authority (CDA).

This swift action of Capital Development Authority impacted those who instead of producing agricultural products have built palatial houses on the land in violation of Building Regulations and they have either requested time to bring their properties in conformity or have complied with. The CDA Survey Teams will continue conducting survey of remaining Agro-Farms and will be completed within fifteen (15) days.

414 fresh COVID-19 cases reported in capital

NHS says that the govt had taken appropriate measures and tightened restrictions to curb the COVID-19 disease as the virus was continuing to spread fast in the country

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) on Friday said that 414 new cases of Coronavirus were reported from the federal capital during the last 24 hours.

According to an official of NCOC, as many as 562 cases were reported on Thursday while 209 cases were reported on Wednesday.

He said so far 97,956 cases were reported from the federal capital while 860 deaths were reported from Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). He added 91,203 patients had been recovered completely.

Commenting on the present Corona situation across the country, an official of the Ministry of National Health Services said that the government had taken appropriate measures and tightened restrictions to curb the COVID-19 disease as the virus was continuing to spread fast in the country.

He said the government was closely monitoring this wave and it may lock down more areas if other interventions did not work in the next few

days. He said the government had also adopted other measures to ensure that standard operating procedures (SOPs) were being followed in locked-down areas that had a high positivity ratio.

He said the NCOC had access to data from all districts and reviewed it on a daily basis. Its decisions are based on the spread of the virus, the success of SOPs enforcement, and the capacity of the health care system, he added.

Meanwhile, on the direction of the Ministry of National

Health Services, the district administration of Islamabad had continued surveillance of different areas of the capital to reduce transmission of the infection in the selected streets and other sectors.

They also started taking action on a violation of standard operating procedures (SOPs) related to the Coronavirus while visiting marriage halls, markets, and petrol pumps by its inspection teams. The administration has been asked to take action on the violation of SOPs at shops, workshops,

and restaurants.

The inspection teams had been directed to issue notices to marriage halls besides imposing fines on owners of different shops in case of violation of SOPs. The official said that several local-level administrative decisions were made to control the disease. He advised the citizens to continue to follow the social distancing, use of mask and other precautionary measures to stop increasing transmission of COVID-19 in the city.



HSHM joins hands with Lahore Consultancy Services

HSHM is Pakistan's first premier hospitality and tourism management school in collaboration with Sheffield Hallam University, UK, and in partnership with Construction Technology Training Institute (CTTI)

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Hashoo School of Hospitality Management (HSHM) has collaborated Lahore Consultancy Services (LCS) a sister company of BlueSky Students Consultancy Services to promote Pakistan's first premier hospitality and tourism management institute.

In this connection, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Maj (Retd) Faisal Naeem Khan, Director Education, Hashoo School of Hospitality Management and Ms Aroosha Qamar Director Operations and Mr. Muhammad Aslam Khan Lohdi, Director Marketing and Development from Lahore Consultancy Services in PC Hotel, Lahore.

HSHM is Pakistan's first premier hospitality and tourism management school in collaboration with Sheffield Hallam University, UK, and in partnership with Construction Technology Training Institute (CTTI). HSHM's first campus is located on IJP Road Islamabad

and is now accepting admissions for fall semester 2021. Lahore Consultancy Services is a leading consultancy firm providing educational guidance and

dedicated to skill development of students. LCS is also providing guidance to students for their career development as well.

After having studied for two years

at HSHM, qualifying students will have the option to study the third academic year at Sheffield Hallam University in the UK to complete their BSc Hons degree. This is a

golden opportunity for students who want to save a substantial cost while obtaining an international hospitality degree that is recognised worldwide along with landing a confirmed job as soon as they graduate. HSHM which also plans to expand and have its campuses at Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar very soon.

MS. Aroosha Qamar added, "HSHM is offering a golden opportunity for students who can't afford to study three years from UK but can afford the final years study at a prestigious university like Sheffield Hallam University and secure a assured job placement. Mr. Muhammad Aslam Khan Lohdi while speaking on the occasion also added that LCS is very glad to join hands with HSHM and assured of his all-out support to HSHM in future".

LCS is also holding a free introductory seminar for all potential students interested in the field of hospitality and tourism management in collaboration with HSHM on 7 August at 4 pm at 32 Civic Center, Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore.



Free medical camp set up for traffic cops

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A medical camp has been set up at traffic police headquarters for hepatitis related tests of cops and to have their complete checkup and treatment after it.

Three-day camp has been arranged by a private laboratory of Islamabad and competent doctors are conducting medical check-up of policemen. The camp has been arranged following the directions of IGP Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman.

The SSP (Traffic) Syed Karar Hussain has said that purpose of this camp is to ensure health of policemen so that they can accomplish their responsibilities in an effective manner.

Such camps ensure welfare of the policemen and are arranged to improve performance after boosting their morale. Medical tests of all policemen are being conducted in this camp. The doctors at this camp are ensuring best treatment facilities to the personnel in case of any health problem to them.

The police officials have also thanked SSP (Traffic) Syed Karar Hussain for arranging such camp to ensure good health for them. The SSP (Traffic) also lauded this cooperation with ITP by the private laboratory and said policemen would have feelings after such welfare programs as how much society care for them and they would try to give better output.

He said traffic policemen would be further facilitated for maintaining good health because it is imperative for better performance in field.

Govt notifies transfer, posting of officers

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Friday notified the transfer and posting of high ranking officers.

According to a notification issued by the Establishment Division, Muhammad Haroon Joya, a BS-19 Officer of Police Service of Pakistan, presently posted in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, under Interior Division, is transferred and directed to report to Establishment Division with immediate effect and until further orders.

While, Ms. Rabia Mohsin, has assumed the charge of the post of Officer on Special Duty (BS-18/OMG) in this Division with effect from 09.08.2021.

Academia to play role for energy transition

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The gap between policy makers, academia and industry needs to be bridged for smooth and efficient energy transition in Pakistan.

The experts from academia and research institutions said this while sharing their views with the participants at the webinar "Road to COP26: Role of Academia in Energy Transition of Pakistan" organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). Dean of Energy Department, Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Dr. Fiaz Chaudhry said what is missing in existing policies pertaining to energy sector is the right planning to meet needs of day. He said that we need to modernize grids and develop human resource to respond to the new challenges in the sector.

Prof Nadeem Ahmed Shaikh, Dean, Department of Mechanical Engineering, International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI), highlighted the importance of broader collaboration amongst the stakeholders in energy sector and said that sustainability of the natural resources should also be evaluated. Besides, the local challenges in energy sector are also imperative to be considered to develop rational policies, he added.

Elaborating the importance of data regarding Energy Sector in Pakistan, Dr Abdul Sattar Nizami, Associate Prof. Government College University, Lahore, opined that to reduce knowledge gap in the sector, the academia and policy makers should work together to simplify the knowledge.

High fatality rate

MORE than 46 million people in the country have received at least one dose of the vaccine. The government-run vaccination drive, which kickstarted in February, initially saw a slow response but picked speed later and was commended for availability and ease of service. However, alarmingly, after an initial drop in the spread and fatality of the virus, the infection and death rate because of COVID has shot up again. Pakistan this week records the highest number of casualties since May 3. According to data from the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC), 141 people lost their battle against the deadly virus and 4,199 more got infected during the last 24 hours. This is the highest number of fatalities per day since May when 161 lives were lost to the virus in one day. The situation is supremely dangerous, even with the vaccine drive at full tilt. A spike in infection and particularly critical cases have a large impact on healthcare facilities and infrastructure, which in turn worsens the pandemic. With the number of critical COVID patients rising, the government is considering alternatives to Actemra, a drug used to treat critically ill COVID patients. Actemra, a life-saving drug, an interleukin-6 inhibitor that goes by the generic name of tocilizumab, is also facing a global shortage, reaching unaffordable price levels. The price of each dose of the drug (injection) was determined to be Rs60,000, to be given twice to patients under treatment in a life-threatening condition; however, it is said to be sold at exorbitant prices in the black market. All these factors, along with the increased risk to healthcare workers, can culminate into a disaster situation. The government has to expedite efforts for every aspect of the pandemic to deal with the dangerous delta variant. This includes expanding the vaccine drive even more, as well as putting in place more precautions and measures. This includes sensible halts on tourism, as well as ensuring workplaces that can survive work-from-home are operating at minimum capacity.

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Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



Kabul bleeds

IT was a horrific end to a story that began 20 years ago. In the last few days of its military presence in Afghanistan, the US suffered its second biggest single-day loss of life since it invaded the country in 2001. Thirteen American troops – and at least 72 Afghans – were killed in the criminal atrocities carried out by Daesh's Afghan affiliate. The two suicide bombings, minutes apart, were indiscriminate, and aimed at causing maximum devastation among an already devastated people. Daesh is trying to capitalise on the security vacuum that has been created with the scandalously quick collapse of the Afghan army and government, and more attacks could follow. Hundreds of thousands of Afghans want to leave the country, many of them out of fear for their safety under the new Taliban regime. Given the past record of the group, most Afghans trying to get on the last planes leaving Kabul airport don't feel safe anymore. The US seems to have had an understanding with the Taliban that after the withdrawal, terrorist groups like Al Qaida and Daesh would not be allowed to use Afghan soil to attack US interests. But this horrific attack flies in the face of such an understanding. It is clear that despite years of US drone strikes, Daesh retains the ability to launch horrific attacks that lead to mass slaughter. American forces are in a race against time to complete their withdrawal from Afghanistan by an August 31 deadline agreed by President Joe Biden. The Taliban have threatened that they cannot allow coalition forces to extend that deadline. Biden has said that the initial objectives of the Afghan mission have been achieved – Al Qaida militants have mostly been destroyed, and no large scale attack on the US has happened since 9/11. The Taliban have said they will not let the country be used by terrorists, but that assertion is likely to be tested. Meanwhile, spare a thought for the thousands of Afghans whose lives have so abruptly been turned upside down since the sudden US withdrawal.

COVID-19 origin tracing and cowboy diplomacy

Shakeel Ahmad Ramay



President Bush took it new heights by using the phares of “you are with us, or against us”. It means there is no talk, only carry the stick. It was a sheer sentence of arrogance, which led the disturbance of global order. It resulted in the economic crises and ultimately withdrawal of USA from Iraq and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, USA did not learn from the mistakes and failure of cowboy diplomacy. Rather they are trying to find new avenues of implementation of cowboy diplomacy and China is new victim

COWBOY diplomacy originated from USA and has prominent place in American global engagements. It has adopted an instrument to pursue and secure its interest at any cost or by any mean. The term was first coined by American press in 1902 to describe the diplomacy of Theodore Roosevelt Jr. President of USA. He introduced the phares of “speak soft and carry a big stick”. He applied it to tackle the diplomatic issues of his time. He was criticized by independent minds and peace-loving persons. Howbeit, the successive administrations happily adopted it and make it prominent part of their strategies. They refined the phares according to their needs and preferences. President Reagan redefined the terminology and said, “talk tough and carry a big stick”. The declaration of USSR as Evil Empire was first sign of his talk tough policy and adaptation of cowboy diplomacy. USSR's invasion of Afghanistan provided him opportunity to apply it. The success of Afghanistan and fall of USSR strengthened the hands of proponents of cowboy diplomacy. President Bush took it new heights by using the phares of “you are with us, or against us”. It means there is no talk, only carry the stick. It was a sheer sentence of arrogance, which led the disturbance of global order. It resulted in the economic crises and ultimately withdrawal of USA from Iraq and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, USA did not learn from the mistakes and failure of cowboy diplomacy. Rather they are trying to find new avenues of implementation of cowboy diplomacy and China is new victim. They are not sparing any area of international relation and working really hard to implement the cowboy diplomacy against China. They even did not spare the human life-threatening virus of COVID-19. Although, COVID-19 requires cooperation but USA is moving in other direction. Since the outbreak of virus USA has launched a comprehensive campaign to malign China. It is happening at the highest level of government of USA. First, President Trump and Mike Pompeo were steering the campaign. Now President Biden and his administration have taken over the job. President Trump and Pompeo started to call it China virus and also engaged some countries to support USA. The campaign even continued during the most sever attack of COVID-19 on USA. Trump administration spent more time in criticizing China than putting efforts to control the COVID-19 in country. USA achieved nothing except the devastating results in the form of infection

and deaths in USA due to COVID-19.

It was expected that Mr. Biden will change the practices of Mr. Trump and bring some sense in American policies to fight COVID-19. It did not happen. It seems it was just change of hands; the policy is same. Rather it seems Biden Administration has accelerated efforts to blame China. They mobilized resources to create the confusion and undermine efforts to counter the COVID-19. Although, Biden administration is reversing many policy initiatives of Trump administration, but China is constant factor of both administrations. Rather new administration is showing more enthusiasm to spread fake news on COVID-19 to blame China. President Biden is portraying himself as the champion of anti-China rhetoric and campaign. President has found new battle ground in the form origin tracing of COVID-19. USA has adopted all tools of smear campaign to pinpoint China. President Biden has ordered the intelligence community to come up with evidence of origin of COVID-19 by focusing China. So, administration wants evidence from intelligence community not from the science community. It clearly indicates that the USA has some other motives, instead of finding the truth. There is consensus among the many experts that the whole campaign is to contain the China and COVID-19 is only smoke screen. It is open secret that prior to COVID-19, USA launched many initiatives to contain China including QUAD, Pivot of Asia, etc. USA also launched trade war, banned Chinese companies and restricted American companies to work with China in modern technology. President Trump even said that USA will not allow any country to surpass USA in modern technologies by referring the progress of China in technology. It is part of USA policy that USA will not tolerate any peer competitor and will do anything and everything to eliminate the peer competitor. It is perfect example of cowboy diplomacy in contemporary world. COVID-19 is new instrument of cowboy diplomacy. Despite repeated warnings of possible disastrous results, USA is sticking to its policy. World Health Organization (WHO) in 2021 concluded that it is extremely unlikely that the virus comes out of laboratory. It was in response to propaganda that virus leaked from the Wuhan laboratory. Further, WHO report highlighted that the safety mechanisms and record of Wuhan lab is very comprehensive, and execution of safety measures are also very strict. There is no evidence of leak of virus of from laboratory. Ideally speaking the debate on

the subject should stop with this conclusion. Unfortunately, it did not happen rather USA accelerated the campaign against China. Now USA is compelling the international community to accept the USA version and blame China. USA is again asking WHO to study the Wuhan laboratory. However, USA does not like the idea to inspect and study the USA laboratories. It is quite astonishing, a country which is asking for a comprehensive study of origin does not allow the inspection of its laboratories. China has asked many times to USA to open the Fort Detrick Laboratory for inspection and probe, but USA is not listening to this. China also offered if USA open Fort Detrick laboratory then China will also open Wuhan Institute of Virology. It is fair proposition, but USA is not giving any head to this proposal. Therefore, many scientists and experts believe that the demand of USA is politically motivated. It does not have any substance. The purpose is only to malign China. This is another example of cowboy diplomacy. It is more dangerous option, as it directly relates to human life. Despite all this negativity and smear campaign China is cooperating with the world to combat the challenge of pandemic. China has already provided more than 900 million doses of vaccine to world, especially to developing and poor countries. China is also aiming to provide 2 billion doses this year. China has also provided billions of masks to world. China is also providing oxygen generators, cylinders, protective suits etc. to world. President Xi at global health summit of WHO, in May 2021, also promised to provide US\$ 3 billion to help countries to counter the health and economic impacts of COVID-19. However, it is pertinent to mention here that no single country can handle this pandemic alone. There is need of cooperation. Thus, it is suggested that USA should come out of this mind set of witch hunting and working to strengthen the cooperation. There is no second opinion that USA is the most advanced country and has the technology to assist world in fight against COVID-19. USA can deploy these resources to help the poor and developing countries. It will be a win-win scenario. As, on one hand it will help to eliminate COVID-19 and on other hand it will improve the image of USA as global power. In conclusion, cowboy diplomacy will not work against China, as China is powerful country. China also does not have fault lines; which USA can exploit. Thus, there is need to come out of this mind set of cowboy diplomacy.

Torkham to Qunduz – Pakistan is relevant

Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi

Yaseen suddenly applied the break and said, oh now we can't reach Qunduz during office hours. On my enquiry he said, “We are not allowed to overtake any armoured vehicles”. After a few moments he said, “No, we can overtake this armoured vehicle”. I replied, are you insane? How do you know that you can overtake this vehicle? He said, “Look, there is a German flag. Germans don't prohibit overtaking. However, it is completely prohibited to overtake US armoured vehicles”. I resisted overtaking the vehicle with an argument that who knows today German's don't appreciate overtaking and open fire on us

WE were scheduled to fly from Peshawar to Kabul in December 2006 when airport authorities announced that flight has been cancelled due to bad weather in Kabul. It was quite disturbing because we had to catch a flight next morning from Kabul to Dushanbe where I was based those days and it was not a connecting flight. I called one of my colleagues, Mr. Shahnoor Rahim, in Peshawar who was based in Kabul. He came to the airport to facilitate and suggested to travel by road. I had a discussion with Amna, my wife, and we instantly agreed due to the expected adventure and curiosity linked with proposed trip, which sufficiently fulfilled during the journey. We crossed the border after immigration formalities but there was not enough checks and balances on the other side of the boarder. We had to ask about immigration desk to get our passports stamped for the entry. We entered the room, showed our passports with visa and the official marked 'entry' on our passport. The next step was to get the taxi; we were surrounded by number of taxi drivers but I asked them that I will travel with a person who can speak Urdu. A young man stepped forward and started talking to me in Urdu. After bargain on fare, we were on the road to Kabul. The driver told me that he studied high school in Peshawar; his parents were still living there however he was in Afghanistan due to good earning opportunities. We both felt relieved after a few minutes' drive because of all familiar environments around us, same kind of dress, same manners, same body language as we observe whenever we are in Peshawar. After half an hour I received a call from our host in Kabul, he talked to the driver through my cell phone and told me that driver seems reliable; he will bring you to our contact point in Kabul. We stopped for Maghrib after Jalalabad and got opportunity to interact with local residents, they were quite happy to facilitate, offered to stay and have food with them, which we politely refused due to a long journey ahead. We had smooth drive to Kabul except a little delay due to traffic jam near the capital city. We checked in the hotel and had to decline, due to the tiredness, a warm invitation by our host

for the dinner. Next morning he came to drop us to the airport. We were subject to utter surprise when we approached the immigration counter, a young official came and said you don't have valid visa to enter in Afghanistan. I showed him 'entry' stamp on our passports from Torkham. He said it was the mistake of Torkham immigration; visa suggests 'raft obergasht' which concluded when you came last time from Tajikistan and left for Islamabad, we can't allow you to board the plane. I tried to convince him that Afghanistan Embassy in Dushanbe categorically told me that I can travel to and back from Pakistan through Kabul on this visa, but all in vain. Finally, I called my host, after talking to the relevant official he told me to leave the airport. We came back and applied for renewal of the visa, which we got within two working days. Now, instead of waiting another four days for next flight we decided to travel by road from Kabul to Qunduz, a border city of Afghanistan with Tajikistan. Next day we started our journey quite early to ensure that we reach Qunduz during office hours to cross the border. This time Yaseen was our companion as a driver provided by our host in Kabul Mr. Nabi Muhammad, who belonged to Hazara tribe with good command on Urdu and lots of love for Pakistan. We will remember his facilitation for whole of our life during those tough circumstances. Yaseen was quite groomed; he was fluent in Urdu with reasonable command on English. His life story also suggested deep connections with Pakistan. He lived for years in central Punjab and had very good poultry business before repatriation to Afghanistan. Still some of his family members were in Pakistan. He also appreciated educational institutions of Pakistan and gave credit of his language expertise to his school which he attended in Pakistan. Yaseen suddenly applied the break and said, oh now we can't reach Qunduz during office hours. On my enquiry he said, “We are not allowed to overtake any armoured vehicles”. After a few moments he said, “No, we can overtake this armoured vehicle”. I replied, are you insane? How do you know that you can overtake

this vehicle? He said, “Look, there is a German flag. Germans don't prohibit overtaking. However, it is completely prohibited to overtake US armoured vehicles”. I resisted overtaking the vehicle with an argument that who knows today German's don't appreciate overtaking and open fire on us. He replied, I am also sitting with you, be patient, I can't risk my own life for nothing. Then I allowed him to overtake, but I remained breathless during those moments. Finally we reached Qunduz and found that immigration office is closed due to official holiday in Tajikistan. We had no other option except staying in Qunduz. Yaseen helped us to find a guest house being operated by a German citizen. It was a good experience, nice interaction with the owner, good food and a peaceful night. Next day, when we approached immigration officer on our turn, he objected on our entry from Torkum. Despite my explanation that we have already rectified the problem and now we have valid visa from Ministry of Interior Afghanistan, he did not agree to stamp our passport for exit. He said, “Now you need to go to Takhar for clearance. We will allow you only when our authorities in Takhar will issue a letter of clearance for you”. I agreed, got address of relevant authorities and turned back. A young gentleman in the queue, started talking in Urdu, and stopped me from travelling to Takhar, he suggested waiting for him outside the office. After his clearance, he came to me and recommended to request immigration officer once again to allow us to leave Afghanistan. He was fluent in Dari, a language of on duty immigration staff. He accompanied me talked with immigration staff for more than fifteen minutes and finally convinced them to stamp our passport for exit. I thanked young gentleman, he briefly told his roots in Peshawar, I don't remember his name but I will always admire his support on that very difficult day. We left Afghanistan with an impression that from Torkham to Qunduz Pakistan is relevant and will remain relevant for decades to come (In Sha Allah) as long as we have likes of Nabi Muhammad, Yaseen and that young gentleman!

Briefs

Measures in place to keep border stable

FROM PAGE 01
"Pakistan Army has responded to their request and provided them shelter, food and safe passage to their country," he added. The ISPR DG noted that there was chance of instability on Afghan Border, therefore, regular troops of Pakistan Army were deployed to ensure well-managed border security. He said other than Afghanistan and its people Pakistanis were the biggest victim during the Russian War and Afghan conflict where the latter bore maximum brunt during the decades' long conflicts.

"Over 86,000 innocent lives have been lost in Pakistan during the war on terror and more than \$102 billion economic losses faced by the country that are still counting," he added. Pakistan Army, he said, was engaged on three different fronts including Western, Eastern Borders and internal security to combat the menace of terrorism. There were three major escalations on the eastern border when the Pakistan Army was engaged on the Afghan Border during the past two decades, he added. Major General Babar said since 2014 over 12,000 ceasefire violations occurred on the line of control (LoC) where the security forces conducted 2,237 major operations leading to area clearance of 46,000 square kilometers from the terrorists. "We have lost politicians, soldiers, artists, doctors, journalists, students, teachers and people from all strata of society that made the number of martyrs over 86,000," he said, adding, "With the support of our great nation and the armed forces, we have turned the tide and brought normalcy to our nation."

While shedding light on the efforts of made by the highest military leadership to extend assistance to the Afghan National Army in capacity building and combating terrorism, he said the Pakistan Army engaged with the Afghan Army on military to military basis and developed several mechanisms including tripartite, bipartite, army working group and intelligence sharing effort since 2014 but none of it worked except the one that was established in 2018.

He added that there were five senior Pakistani military leadership's visits to Afghanistan among four of them made by the army chief. During these visits, Afghans were offered intelligence sharing and training of Afghan soldiers whereas only six Afghan army cadets came to Pakistan for training where hundreds of them went to India for training. The ISPR DG also informed the media about the massive security build up launched to secure the 2,611 kilometers long Pak-Afghan Border. He said, "There has been a massive capacity enhancement initiative launched by the Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa in 2018."

The capacity beef up included induction of 60 new wings of Frontier Corps in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan who were responsible to guard the western border, upgraded technology and biometrics at border terminals with further enhancement, new forts raised along the border, he added. He briefed that almost 90 percent fencing along Pak-Afghan border was completed where many soldiers rendered sacrifices of their lives to make it a success and 50 percent fencing along Pak-Iran Border was completed. "We fought this war with a whole of nation approach where operations Sherdil, Khyber-1 and Khyber-2, Zarb-e-Azb, Radd-ul-Fasaad etcetera are an epitome of insurmountable courage and resolve," he added.

Corruption root cause of all our ills: PM

FROM PAGE 01
investors by bringing improvements in the system," the premier promised. Sharing his views on the difference between import and export, PM Khan said that this difference can be removed with similar short-term schemes.

Pakistani embassy organizes Mango Festival in Minsk

The event attracted huge response from general public as record number of visitors hovering around 5000 visited the booth during the festival which continued for almost five hours



DNA

MINSK: The Embassy of Pakistan, Minsk in collaboration with Trade Development Authority of Pakistan and Ministry of Commerce organized a Pakistani Mango Festival at one of the largest Shopping Malls in Minsk on 26 August 2021.

The event attracted huge response from general public as record number of visitors hovering around 5000 visited the booth during the festival which continued for almost five hours. Several items including Mango cube tasting, Mango Ice Cream and Mango Milk Shake were served the guests. Additionally, Mango samples were also provided to few fruit importers and



grocery chain representatives.

It is pertinent to mention here that the ministry of Foreign Affairs has sent boxes of mangoes to leaders and officials in more than 32 countries, including the US and China. Others on the list include India, Iran, the Gulf states, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Russia. Most of the boxes contained Chauns,

Sindhri and Anwar Ratoool varites of mango. Pakistan has been sending boxes of mangoes to India since the late 1980s, but in 2015, it formally launched mango-diplomacy by sending similar boxes to other countries as well. In doing so, it copied Pakistani mango growers who often send boxes of their produce to important people to win favours.

Captain Babar Azam pads up for Noon Academy



DNA

KARACHI: Pakistani cricket team captain Babar Azam join hands with the social learning platform Noon Academy as its brand ambassador and as an investor to help promote the company's mission of providing free education in Pakistan. He joins a list of growing cricketers and non-cricketers stars and teachers who have invested in the start-up. With these investments, Noon becomes the most funded start-up from Pakistani investors. Noon Academy is one of the

largest EdTech firms in the MENAP region offering local curriculum for grades K-12 and entrance exams. It has served more than 13 million students across the Middle East, North Africa, and Pakistan. In Pakistan they offer classes for all leading boards including Punjab, Sindh, KPK and Cambridge (O&A levels). Since its Pakistan launch in September 2020, the organization has registered over 2 million local students in less than a year. This is something that caught the attention and interest of Pakistani skipper, Babar Azam; "I am absolutely hon-

oured and delighted to be associating with an Education Technology company which has students' needs at the core of what they do. Noon's mission and resolve matches with my personal vision to work for the betterment of the future generations." Access to quality education is one of the areas in Pakistan that requires major focus from all sides. According to UNICEF 22.8 million of Pakistan's over 70 million children are out of school. "Noon's focus on providing free quality education by creating holistic learning solutions that go beyond traditional forms of edu-

cation has helped the organization to radically change the way people learn." He further added that, "My core reason for partnering with Noon is the values that the brand has been built on. Their belief on putting the students' needs at the forefront of their strategy is what differentiates them from other players in the industry." In his message to fellow countrymen, the skipper said, "Cricket in Pakistan is a medium that unifies the entire nation but also gives us cricketers invaluable lessons which can help individuals in any walk of life. Given the right platform I would love to share my experiences of the game with students to inspire them to be the best versions of themselves."

Sharing his thoughts, Umair Babar Chishti, General Manager Noon Pakistan, said, "Babar's formidable rise to success backed by his work ethic, grit and determination makes him the perfect role model for kids across Pakistan. With him on board, we are confident of strengthening the engagement with our consumers and building greater visibility for Noon across Pakistan. Having Babar Azam as Noon's brand ambassador and now, an investor elevates the brand proposition and shows students that through hard work, mentorship and right set of work only the sky is the limit."

Inzamam hopes Ramiz to live up to expectations

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Former Pakistan captain Inzamam-ul-Haq has applauded Prime Minister Imran Khan's decision to appoint Ramiz Raja as the next chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). "It is a very good sign because it will be for the first time that a proper cricketer will become the PCB chairman. My good wishes for Ramiz Raja. He understands cricket very well."

"He has been attached to the cricket [even] after he left it. It never happened that he was away from the game," Inzamam said on his YouTube channel 'The Match Winner'. According to Inzamam, Ramiz was well aware of the modern cricket and all the people attached with the game. "He will definitely have a good idea as how to improve Pakistan cricket and which people can be helpful for that purpose." Inzamam, however, said that the new assignment would be a big challenge for Ramiz as being a former cricketer people would expect a lot from him. "People will have high expectations from him just like they had hopes from Imran Khan that he is prime minister and cricket should get better now." He expressed the hope that Ramiz would live up to the billing stating, "I hope good people come into the board and a system is developed."

WAPDA defeats Pak Navy in 13th PPFL

MULTAN: Pakistan WAPDA defeated Pakistan Navy by 2-0 goals in the 13th Pakistan Premier Football League at Qasim Bagh Football Stadium, here on Friday. Pakistan WAPDA took 1-0 lead at the end of the first half. In the 39th minutes of the first half, Ahmed Faheem open the account for Pakistan WAPDA. In the 86th minutes of the games, Pakistan WAPDA received the penalty kick against Pakistan Navy, Ahmad Faheem kick the ball and doubled the margin 2-0. The match was locked 2-0 at the end of the scheduled times. Players of Pakistan Navy tried to reduce the margin but they could not succeed and missing the several chances in their ways. Four corners were missed by Pakistan Navy and two wasted by Pakistan WAPDA. - DNA

Leicester face Napoli, tough draw for Celtic in UEL

ISTANBUL: Leicester City will face Napoli in this season's Europa League, while Celtic found themselves in a tough section alongside Bayer Leverkusen and Real Betis in Friday's draw for the group stage. As well as Napoli, Leicester will play Spartak Moscow and Legia Warsaw in Group C as they look to do better than their run to the last 32 of last season's competition. The Foxes narrowly missed out on qualification for the Champions League last season, finishing fifth in the Premier League but winning the FA Cup. Napoli, who won the UEFA Cup with Diego Maradona in their ranks in 1989, came fifth in Serie A last season. They have since appointed Luciano Spalletti as coach. Spartak came second in the Russian Premier League last season and lost to Benfica in the Champions League third qualifying round. Polish champions Legia also lost in the Champions League third qualifying round, going out to Dinamo Zagreb. Celtic too failed to make it through Champions League qualifying under new coach Ange Postecoglou but they scraped past AZ Alkmaar in the Netherlands on Thursday to make the Europa League group stage. - APP

Cristiano Ronaldo joins Manchester United

SPORTS DESK

MANCHESTER: Manchester United have confirmed they have reached an agreement to re-sign Cristiano Ronaldo from Juventus. United have agreed to pay £12.8m for the 36-year-old five-time Ballon d'Or winner, with the deal subject to personal terms, visa and a medical. Ronaldo scored 118 goals in 292 games in his first spell at Old Trafford before leaving for Real Madrid in 2009. "Everyone at the club looks forward to welcoming Cristiano back to Manchester," said a United statement. United's announcement came after a dramatic 24 hours. Neighbours Manchester City had looked to be one of the favourites to land the former Real Madrid player and some reports suggested personal terms had



already been agreed between the two. However, Ronaldo has opted to return to United where he spent six years and won three Premier League titles, one Champions League, two League Cups and one FA Cup - as well as the FIFA Club World Cup and Community Shield - under Sir Alex Ferguson. Initially, Ronaldo thought there was no chance of a deal with his former club, but United have decided to make it happen, while City have missed out on another striker option after main target Harry Kane committed to Tottenham. Speaking before City face Arsenal in the Premier League on Saturday, manager Pep Guardiola said: "Cristiano is a Juventus player. I cannot add anything else. "In these three or four days left until the transfer window shuts, anything can happen but, in my view, there are few players - Cristiano Ronaldo included.

17 factory workers burned to death

FROM PAGE 01
the rescue operation. The rescue workers shifted victims to Jinnah Post-graduate Medical Centre (JPMC). The workers, who lost their lives included Ali son of Munir, Hassan son of M. Saleem, Rashid Hussain son of Nisar Hussain, M. Kashif son of Zulfiqar Ali, Shoab son of M. Khalid, Irfan son of M. Ahsan, Farhan son of M. Ahsan, Sabir son of Islamuddin, Waseem son of Imdad Hussain, Syed M. Javed son of Syed M. Hasnain Zaidi, Farman son of M. Ahsan, Zahid son of Allah Dino, Usman son of Naimat Khan, Farman son of Saleem Ahmed, Adnan son of M Yaqoob and an unknown person. The cause of the fire was yet to be ascertained till filing of this report.

PML-N decides to issue...

FROM PAGE 01
economy and several development projects. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry presented the report to the prime minister at a ceremony held at the Convention Centre. The Performance Report gave an insight into the efforts of each ministry and division in facilitating the common man in line with the vision of Naya Pakistan. On assumption of power in August 2018, the government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government faced numerous 'inherited challenges' including financial instability, poverty, and inadequate education and health facilities. However, in three years, the journey of development added several feathers in the cap of the government, particularly sustaining the COVID-19 situation by opting for the 'smart lockdown strategy'. Pakistan was recently ranked by The Economist as the 'third best performing country' for handling the pandemic. Administration of 30 million vaccine doses across the country and self-sufficiency in manufacturing of Personal Protection Equipment were key achievements.

Bilawal for addressing Chinese..

FROM PAGE 01
Discussing the Afghan situation, the PPP Chairman strongly condemned the recent bomb blasts at Kabul airport. The PPP chairman said water deficiency in Sindh province was increasing speedily and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government should not force them to hold a protest for the share of water. He warned the federal government of Imran Khan that they could stage a protest again if the gas and water would not be provided them as per the right of the province. Bilawal Bhatto Zardari has said that people want to get rid of this incompetent and failed government. He said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had promised to construct five million homes for the poor people, instead Imran Khan snatched their homes. Bilawal said that PPP is the only political party in the country which gives relief to the people, adding on the other hand PTI has provided relief to the rich and tortured the poor.

UK record 38,281 Covid cases

LONDON: Another 38,281 people in Britain have tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the total number of coronavirus cases in the country to 6,628,709, according to official figures released Thursday. The country also reported another 140 corona-virus-related deaths. The total number of corona-virus-related deaths in Britain now stands at 132,143. These figures only include the deaths of people who died within 28 days of their first positive test. Meanwhile, the latest data from a COVID study app showed that coronavirus cases in Britain have risen by nearly a fifth in a week. According to ZOE COVID Study, which tracks positive cases in millions of users, on average there are currently 51,961 new daily cases, up 19 percent from 43,693 new cases recorded last week. - APP

Russian journalists want end to media crackdown

"We, journalists and editors of Russian and Russian-language media, demand an immediate end to the state campaign against the independent press," the open letter said. It added that these labels "directly violate" the constitution, media laws and freedom of speech

MONITORING DESK

MOSCOW: Several Russian media outlets on Friday published an open letter to President Vladimir Putin and other top officials demanding an end to the "state campaign" against independent journalism. The outcry comes after Russia slapped several media outlets and individual journalists with the "foreign agent" label that requires them to carry out tedious administrative procedures and clearly indicate their status on everything

they publish. Independent journalism in Russia is facing mounting pressure, especially in the run-up to parliamentary polls in September. The letter was signed by the Meduza news website, Dozhd TV channel - both of which have been declared foreign agents this year - Forbes Russia and around half a dozen local media outlets. "We, journalists and editors of Russian and Russian-language media, demand an immediate end to the state campaign against the independent press," the open letter said. It added that these

labels "directly violate" the constitution, media laws and freedom of speech. The status either leads to the media's closure or creates "discriminatory conditions" that restrict the work of journalists, the letter said. But the Kremlin on Friday swiftly rejected the letter's demands, saying authorities were simply applying the law. "The law should exist and will exist," Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. That was because "NGOS and journalists are often used" by foreign states interfering in "the

affairs of our country," he said. He did say, however, that how the law is being enforced "should be discussed". Organisations or individuals declared "foreign agents" must disclose sources of funding and label all their publications, including social media posts, with the tag or face fines. The status is a deterrent for advertisers, a key source of revenue for many independent media. In July, the investigative outlet Proekt, which reported on the wealth of Russia's elites, was declared an "undesirable or-

ganisation", de-facto banning its work in the country under the threat of fines or jail time. Russia has also blocked the websites of two media outlets and one human rights group linked to self-exiled Kremlin critic Mikhail Khodorkovsky. Legislation behind the term "foreign agent", which has Soviet-era undertones, was originally passed in 2012 to cover NGOs. It was expanded to include media organisations in 2017 after Kremlin-funded RT (formerly Russia Today) was declared a "foreign agent" in the United States.

Briefs

Spain ends evacuations from Kabul

WEB DESK

MADRID: Spain said Friday that it has ended its evacuation operations out of Kabul following the arrival of "the last two Spanish flights" in Dubai, just over a week after it began airlifting its citizens in the wake of the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan. "A military A400 plane arrived in Dubai from Kabul at 7:20 am. A second is due to land at 8:20 am. With these two flights, the Spanish evacuation of its Afghan collaborators and their families has been completed," the government said in a statement.

Iran FM heads to Iraq regional summit

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian left for Iraq Friday to participate in a regional summit, the ministry said. Foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh announced the departure to the "meeting to support Iraq" in a short statement. The Islamic republic's new President Ebrahim Raisi has also been invited to the Baghdad summit, but it is not clear if he will attend. The Saturday meeting seeks to give Iraq a "unifying role" to tackle the crises shaking the region, according to sources close to Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Jordan's King Abdullah II have said they will attend, as has French President Emmanuel Macron, the only official expected from outside the region. Leaders from Saudi Arabia and Turkey have also been invited. Iraq is seeking to establish itself as a mediator between Arab countries and Iran. Baghdad has been brokering talks since April between regional heavyweights Riyadh and Tehran on mending ties severed in 2016. Raisi, who took office last week, has said he sees "no obstacles" to restoring ties with Riyadh. He has made improving relations with regional countries one of his priorities.

Clot risk far lower from vaccines than virus: study

WEB DESK

LONDON: The risk of rare blood clotting after receiving Covid-19 jabs is far lower than from the virus, a large-scale study by researchers from the University of Oxford found Friday. Fears over rare cases of clotting conditions have prompted some countries to rule out or limit rollout of the Oxford-developed AstraZeneca jab, with the UK recommending that healthy people under 40 get alternative vaccines. The study published in the BMJ medical journal examined data on almost 30 million people in England first vaccinated between December and April. It found a very small increased risk of some clotting conditions that could lead to hospitalisation or death shortly after first doses of the AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines. But it concluded that risks of most conditions were "substantially higher and more prolonged" after Covid-19 infection. The issue came to the fore this week as a coroner on Thursday found that a 44-year-old BBC presenter, Lisa Shaw, died from a blood clot in her head as a rare complication from a first AstraZeneca dose. The study's lead scientist Julia Hippisley-Cox, professor of clinical epidemiology at the University of Oxford, told BBC Radio 4 that Shaw's death was "very sad", but "these are very rare cases and the vast majority of patients will be absolutely fine with these vaccines". Reports have focused on the AstraZeneca jab's link to cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST), or blood clots in the brain.

Comprehensive plan chalked out to achieve inclusive growth

The key focus is to generate massive employment opportunities over the period of time in order to engage our youth in productive sectors of the economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Mr. Shaukat Tarin, presided over a Press Conference regarding formation of short, medium and long term plans across different sectors of the economy under the umbrella of the Economic Advisory Council (EAC). Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research Fakhar Imam, Federal Minister for Industries and Production Khuro Bakhtiar, Adviser to the PM on Commerce Abdul Razaq Dawood, Adviser to the PM on Institutional reforms Dr. Ishrat Hussain, Mr. Sultan Ali Allana, Mr. Arif Habib, Mr. Salim Raza, M. Ali Tabba and other distinguished members of the EAC from respective fields in the private sector also participated in the Press Conference. The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, briefed the participants about the significance of a long term economic planning to achieve all-inclusive and sustained economic growth over the period of time. He apprised about the objectives being set across different sectors and strategies outlined to achieve those targets within a specific time frame. Fourteen vertical sub-groups have been generated which will present recommendations to



the Prime Minister on different sectors. The Finance Minister further said that from September onwards, performance in 14 sectors would be closely monitored and Prime Minister would be given briefing about the execution of the plans every month. Hence plans do not focus only on devising strategies but also on ensuring implementation which is a major break with the past practice. The broad objectives include accelerating the over-

all economic growth rates from 3% to 6% in the next 03 years without creating pressure on balance of payments and by keeping inflationary expectations subdued. It also includes increasing tax to GDP ratio by 1.5 to 2% annually and attaining target of \$30 billion exports by FY 2023-24 and keep up the momentum in foreign remittances. The key focus is to generate massive employment opportunities over the period of time in order to engage our

youth in productive sectors of the economy. The sectors underlined for driving growth through the platform of EAC are agriculture including small farms, micro-enterprises, SMEs, construction, tourism and information technology. This will be achieved through coherent, consistent and well-coordinated policies between the federal, Provincial Governments as well as the private sector, he added. Under EAC, the medium and long term agenda includes

a multi-pronged strategy for institutional reforms in the public sector. Provincial Governments will prioritize achieving universal access to quality education, health, access to drinking water and sanitation. Similarly, the Federal and Provincial Government would enhance focus on human development & develop physical infrastructure which is lagging behind in far-flung areas. The medium-to-long term planning also includes completion of CPEC projects especially in agricul-

ture, industrial cooperation, socio-economic development and financial inclusion. It also includes Utilization of Special Technology Zones, IT parks, Incubation and Entrepreneurship Centres that complement CPEC investments. In sphere of power and energy, the long term planning encompasses implementing renewable Energy Policy & National Power Policy to attain the goal of 60% energy generation from non-fossil fuels including hydro-power generation.

BJP leaders oppose construction of Hajj House

ISLAMABAD: The minority Muslims in India these days are facing another episode of denial of their religious rights, as the country continues with its human rights violations in line with Hindutva policies. The capital New Delhi has witnessed violent protests this week after the Hindu leaders of Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) strongly opposed the construction of Hajj House and also called for genocide of Muslims. At present, New Delhi does not have a Hajj House, even though the national capital is the largest embarkation point for the pilgrimage in the country. Nearly 15,000-20,000 Muslims from Delhi, Uttarakhnad, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, western Uttar Pradesh and Chandigarh leave for Makkah, Saudi Arabia from New Delhi every year. However, in absence of a Hajj House, the pilgrims usually stay in camps before their flights. During the recent protests, slogans were raised at Jantar Mantar in Delhi in a gathering of hundreds organised by Supreme Court lawyer and former spokesperson of the Delhi unit of Bharatiya Janata Party, Ashwini Upadhyay. Two similar incidents within a week in India's capital have reaffirmed the secondary citizenship of Muslims in the country, with the situation worsening every day. — APP

Bulgaria's socialists try to form unlikely government

DNA

SOFIA: Bulgarian President Rumen Radev asked the Socialist party on Friday to try to form a government, despite a slim chance of success, in a bid to avoid a third general election in the European Union's poorest country this year. The Socialists, the third largest political party in the fractured parliament after July 11 polls, will try to forge a majority and lead the Balkan country following the unsuccessful attempts by the election winner, the anti-elite ITN party and the centre-right GERB party to form a government. Socialist leader Kornelia Ninova said she will seek talks with ITN and two small anti-graft parties that want to keep GERB, which has dominated Bulgaria's politics in the past decade, away from power.



"We are facing two choices: either build a government to lead the people through the crises, or go to new polls," Ninova said after taking the mandate to form a government. Analysts, however, are sceptical that the Socialists will succeed as the previous election winner ITN has said it would not back a government in this parliament.

Strong public discontent with widespread corruption has boosted support for ITN as well as for two small anti-graft parties. But failure to agree over ministers derailed ITN's attempt to form a functioning government. Ninova appealed to the protest parties to agree for a cabinet that should start changes to fight high-level graft and deal efficiently with an upsurge in coronavirus infections and a potential migrant inflows from Afghanistan. The Socialists now have seven days to name a prime minister-designate. Ninova said her party will only decide how to proceed after talks with their potential allies. A failure to forge a majority for a government will prompt President Rumen Radev to dissolve parliament, appoint a new interim government and call a general election within two months. The country will also hold presidential elections in November.

Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri unveils cabinet

FOREIGN DESK

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob unveiled his cabinet on Friday, forming a lineup similar to his predecessor with no deputy prime minister being named. In a televised speech, Ismail Sabri said the ministers will have to prove themselves in a short space of time as

the country is still grappling with the COVID-19 situation and its economic fallout. "I will ensure this cabinet focuses on having a high-performance work culture. Therefore, each ministry must draft its short-term and long-term plans and achieve set goals." "Therefore, each ministry must prove their initial performance within the first 100 days," he said. Many of those named had

previously served under former Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, who resigned on Aug. 16 following the withdrawal of support by several of his political allies. Four senior ministers including International Trade and Industry Mohamed Azmin Ali, Defense Minister Hishammuddin Hussein, Works Minister Fadlillah Yusof and Education Minister Mohd Radzi Md Jidin, all of whom served in Muhyid-

din's cabinet, are mostly in the same capacity. Former Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Khairy Jamaluddin has taken over the health portfolio while former Communications and Multimedia Minister Saifuddin Abdullah has taken the Foreign Ministry, a position he held under the government of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad from 2018 to 2020.

India reports 44,658 new cases

NEW DELHI: India's COVID-19 tally rose to 32,603,188 on Friday, as 44,658 new cases were registered during the past 24 hours across the country, showed the federal health ministry's latest data. Besides, as many as 496 deaths were recorded since Thursday morning, taking the death toll to 436,861. After a decline for the past several days, single-day spikes in both the number

of new cases and deaths, have been witnessed over the past three days. Currently, there are 344,899 active cases in the country with an increase of 11,174 during the past 24 hours. A rise in the number of active cases has been witnessed over the past three days. A total of 31,821,428 people have recovered and been discharged from hospital so far, with 32,988 new recoveries. — APP

China home to over 1 bln Internet users

ISLAMABAD: China is home to over 1 billion netizens for the first time, forming the world's largest and most vibrant digital society, a CNNIC report said on Friday. The country's booming 5G development and increasing numbers of aged netizens have boosted the user base in China, already the world's No. 1 country by Internet population for many years, the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) said. Among the total 1.01 billion Internet users, 28 percent were middle-aged and elderly users over 50 years old by June, up 5.2 percent from a year ago and the fastest-growing group of all ages, Shanghai daily reported.

The Internet user report from CNNIC, a national and government-authorized agency, is the most influential in the segment. By June, the most popular apps in China included instant messaging, with 983 million users, the most popular being WeChat. Other apps included short video services with 880 million users, online shopping with 812 million users and food delivery service with 469 million users, according to CNNIC. 5G network development, which allows users to better enjoy the likes of smartphone, have boosted digital services, especially video services depending on data traffic, analysts said. By July, China's 5G user base reached 392 million, almost double the level at the end of last year, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. In rural regions, users are still facing challenges like a lack of online skills, low-level education and limited devices and networks, according to CNNIC. — APP

Italy's last flight leaves Kabul

NEWS DESK

ROME: Italy's last evacuation flight from Kabul left Afghanistan on Friday, ending the country's airlift operation, Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio said. Di Maio said "that as well as Afghan civilians, the flight will bring back to Italy our envoy Stefano Pontecorvo," the Italian diplomat serving as NATO's senior civil representative to Afghanistan. The flight, which had "just taken off", is also carrying the last Italian soldiers who were still on site, he tweeted. Di Maio had told an earlier press conference in Rome with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov that the C-130 plane would soon leave Kabul. He added that all the Italian nationals who wanted to leave had been evacuated, along with around 4,900 Afghan civilians. Italian consul Tommaso Claudi was on board the last flight as well as Pontecorvo. "Leaving Kabul with a heavy heart. My gratitude to all #NATO allies & partners for a massive evacuation effort from #Afghanistan despite all challenges," Pontecorvo tweeted.

Razak hopes mobile exports to meet target of \$1 billion

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment, Abdul Razak Dawood on Monday hoped that mobile exports should meet the target of \$1 billion in line with the incentives given by the government in current FY 2021-22. The only way forward is the "Make in Pakistan" Philosophy, Razak Dawood said. Dawood held a meeting with the members of Pakistan Mobile Phone Manufacturers Association (PMPMA) and other leading manufacturers and assemblers of the mobile phones, said a press release issued by the Ministry of Commerce here. The agenda of the meeting was to discuss the export opportunities available to the local manufacturers and assemblers of mobile phones.

While the Advisor briefed the participants about the incentives given by the Government to the local mobile manufacturers and assemblers through the Mobile Device Manufacturing Policy, 2020. It has also been highlighted that additional incentives have also been given to the mobile industry to spur localization so that much needed jobs opportunities could be created. He reiterated the importance given by the Government to the "Make in Pakistan" led economic growth. In order to achieve this end not only the tariff structure has been rationalized by creating a tariff differential between Completely Built Up Unit (CBU) and Completely Knocked Down (CKD) and Semi Knocked Down (SKD) kits. He highlighted the incentives given to the exporters through Export Facilitation Scheme, 2021.

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Briefs

9 dead after blasts at Kazakh arms depot

AGENCIES

NURSULTAN: Nine people have died following explosions at an arms depot in southern Kazakhstan and four others were feared dead, the Central Asian country's emergency ministry said Friday. The ministry's statement mentioned emergency services workers and military staff among victims of the blasts that tore through a defence ministry ammunition depot in the southern region of Jambyl on Thursday. It added that four people were missing. The blasts followed a fire at the facility, where some engineering-purpose explosives were stored, deputy defence minister Ruslan Shpekbayev said. Separately, traffic and railway authorities said they were closing off a road and a railroad passing through the area. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said in a series of tweets that at least 30 of the wounded were military servicemen or emergency workers and the incident was being investigated.

Covid crisis worsens in Kenya hospitals

NAIROBI: At the Machakos Level 5 Hospital in Eastern Kenya, a patient lies on a bed at the entrance to a coronavirus ward on Friday in the intensive care unit (ICU). He is fighting for breath and hanging on to life. Dr. Peter Ngumbi goes from bed to bed administering drugs to COVID-19 patients who require special attention in the ICU. He checks oxygen levels and moves on, repeating the process. Dozens of patients have filled the ward. Some have recovered and are waiting to be discharged. One fighting for breath wanted Anadolu Agency to send a message to those outside of the hospital. "Take care of yourselves. They should wear masks and make sure that they follow all the guidelines put in place," said the patient, who identified himself as Reuben. "I feel like I am always out of breath, my chest has a tightening and it really hurts when I try to inhale or exhale. It is pure painful." The patient who was at the entrance to the ward, died a few hours later. A medic was called to confirm the time of death while another sprayed the body with a disinfectant - everything has to be disinfected and the body moved to the morgue. - APP

PNS Zulfiqar visits port Jeddah

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ship ZULFIQAR has visited port Jeddah, Saudi Arabia as part of overseas deployment. During stay at port, RSNF Commander Western Naval Fleet Command, Rear Admiral Yahya Bin Mohammad Al Asiri and Commander Western Naval Aviation Group, Rear Admiral Mohammad Bin Saeed Al Ahmri visited onboard PN Ship and called on Mission Commander Commodore Syed Rizwan Khalid. During the interaction, matters of mutual interest were discussed. The visiting dignitary acknowledged contribution of Pakistan Navy to regional peace and maritime security. Earlier, before its visit to Jeddah port, the PNS ZULFIQAR separately conducted passage exercises with Italian Navy Ship VEGA and Turkish Navy Ship TCG GOKCEADA at Mediterranean Sea. The exercises encompassed Advanced Maritime Maneuvers including Maritime Interdiction Operations, Boarding and Force Protection drills.

Pakistan evacuates all its citizens from Afghanistan

Sheikh Rashid says that Afghanistan's land could not be used against Pakistan, while Pakistan would not allow anyone to conduct any activity against Afghanistan from Pakistan

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed Friday said that the federal government had successfully evacuated all its citizens from Afghanistan, who wanted to return to the country. However, he added, there were some Pakistanis who did not want to leave Afghanistan for their personal reasons and, therefore, they were still there. Addressing a press conference at National Database and Registration Authority here, he said that the federal government had issued transit visas to 1,500 people, while about 1,480 people were given access to Pakistan's

territories through Torkham border crossing, he added. Both Torkham and Chaman border crossings were opened for those intending to travel to Pakistan if they had valid documents, he added. Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that it had been decided to issue 21 days transit visas to all foreigners including members of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), delegates, journalists and others at the Islamabad airport and Torkham border crossing, adding that the world community had appreciated the Pakistan government efforts to evacuate its citizens besides foreigners from Afghanistan. An emergency helpline was being



set up by the interior ministry to register people's complaints pertaining to any issue and law and order situation, he said and

added that the Indian media was resorting to baseless criticism as the Indian intelligence agency, RAW, had attempted to hatch conspiracies against China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which had been foiled. CPEC was of paramount importance for progress and prosperity of Pakistan, he added. Earlier, the minister congratulated the PTI government over completion of its three years and said that significant reforms were brought during this era to provide relief to people and enhancing institutions' performance. The interior ministry had launched online visa, renewal and extension system besides issuance of Covid-19 vaccination certificates during

this period, he added. To a question, Sh Rashid said that Afghanistan's land could not be used against Pakistan, while Pakistan would not allow anyone to conduct any activity against Afghanistan from Pakistan as Prime Minister Imran Khan's statement in that regard was a clear message to the international forces. To another query, he said Pakistan had become the focal point in the context of prevailing situation in the region so that the opposition, instead of indulging in negative politics, should support the government and wait until the next general elections, if they were not satisfied with the government's performance.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs the meeting of National Export Development Board. - DNA

FM shares travel concerns with UK FM

SHUJAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has stressed the need to ensure the security of Afghans and the protection of their rights. Talking to his British counterpart Dominic Raab on Friday, he said the international community should not allow Afghanistan to be isolated and ensure their support. The Minister said at this critical juncture, we need to be wary of elements pursuing an agenda to sabotage peace efforts. The Foreign Minister raised the issue of "Red List" with the British Foreign Secretary and apprised him about the difficulties faced by British Pakistanis and students in this regard. - talks to UN Secy General Meanwhile, Foreign Minister

Shah Mahmood Qureshi received a telephone call today from the Secretary-General of the UN Antonio Guterres. The two leaders exchanged views on the situation in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Qureshi underscored that Pakistan would continue to play its constructive role in support of the efforts to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan. He appreciated the contribution of the United Nations in addressing the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. The Foreign Minister noted that it is imperative for the international community to remain engaged with Afghanistan by supporting the Afghan people's socio-economic and humanitarian needs. UNSG Antonio Guterres expressed gratitude for Pakistan's role in facilitating the work in Afghanistan.

UNSC condemns Kabul airport attack as 'especially abhorrent'

The Kabul airport attack on Thursday, which killed 13 United States troops and at least 79 Afghans, was claimed by ISIS-Khorosan

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Friday condemned, "in strongest terms", a deadly attack at Kabul's airport as "especially abhorrent" for targeting civilians trying to leave Afghanistan after the Taliban came to power and people helping with the evacuation. "The members of the Security Council condemned in the strongest terms all instances of terrorism and deliberate attacks against civilians. They recalled that all parties must respect their obligations under international humanitarian law in all circumstances, including those related to the protection of civilians," the 15-member council said in a statement. "Deliberately targeting civilians and personnel assisting in the evacuation of civilians

is especially abhorrent and must be condemned," the statement added. The Kabul airport attack on Thursday, which killed 13 United States troops and at least 79 Afghans, was claimed by ISIS-Khorosan, which has emerged as enemies of both the West and of the Taliban. Tens of thousands of people have been leaving Afghanistan since the Taliban came to power as foreign forces withdraw. The UNSC "called on all relevant parties to respect and facilitate the safe evacuation of civilians." The council also "reiterated the importance of combating terrorism in Afghanistan to ensure the territory of Afghanistan should not be used to threaten or attack any country, and that no Afghan group or individual

should support terrorists operating on the territory of any country." United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is convening a meeting on Monday on Afghanistan with the UN envoys for Britain, France, the United States, China and Russia - the council's permanent, veto-wielding members. However, when asked about what the meeting might achieve, the UN chief told reporters on Thursday: "There are normal meetings that take place in the context of the work of the UN" The US and allied forces are racing to complete evacuations of their citizens and vulnerable Afghans and to withdraw from Afghanistan by an August 31 deadline set by President Joe Biden. - APP

COVID-19 claims 95 more lives

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD, As many as 95 corona patients lost lives in the last 24 hours due to the coronavirus. The national tally of COVID-19 cases recorded 4,016 more people were tested positive and 3,235 people recovered from the disease during this time span. Ninety-five (95) of the deceased included those who were under treatment in the hospitals and in their respective quarantines or homes, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Centre (NOC). There were 5,515 Covid infected patients under treatment in critical condition with 39 infected people admitted during past 24 hours in various Covid dedicated healthcare facilities of the country. The National Covid positivity ratio during last 24 hours was recorded 6.42 percent. The Covid positivity ratio is the percentage of actual positive cases appearing in every 100 tests performed to identify infected individuals. Some 62,496 tests were conducted across the country on Thursday.

European Union holds orientation session for scholarships recipients

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A European Union delegation to Pakistan Friday held a pre-departure orientation session for the 141 Pakistani students including 77 men and 64 women who received Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree scholarships for 2021 to study in Europe, at the Higher Education Commission (HEC). The session was organized in collaboration with the HEC for providing an opportunity for networking among peers and Erasmus Alumni. During his welcome remarks, the Head of Cooperation of the European Union Delegation, Ovidiu Mic said. "Today we congratulate the young men and women who will embark on an educational and cultural journey through the Erasmus+ programme over the coming months. I am sure that they will return with strong knowledge and rich experiences, and contribute to the development of Pakistan." This year 2,756 students from 142 countries were selected for the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree scholarships. Pakistan was 3rd in the world for number of scholarships awarded and remained the top country in terms of scholarship applications. The programme was launched with an aim to support education, training, youth and sports across the world. While the first Erasmus+ Programme was launched in 1987, initially for exchanges with Europe only. It was extended beyond Europe's borders in 2004. It funds programmes, projects, scholarships and fosters cooperation both within the European Union and globally. The new Erasmus+ programme was launched in March 2021 and brings over 26.2 billion EUR to support mobility and co-operation among Higher Education Institutions worldwide. Adviser of the Higher Education Commission, Awas Ahmad, representatives from EU member states and members of the Erasmus+ Alumni Association also attended the event.

PM writes to Shehbaz, suggests names for ECP

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has written a letter to Opposition leader in National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif, recommending three names each for the vacant seats for members of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in Punjab and KP provinces. The details regarding the letter have been shared by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Friday via his personal Twitter account. He said under articles 213 and 218 of the constitution, the prime minister has written a letter to the opposition leader for vacant ECP seats in Punjab and KP provinces. Fawad Chaudhry said that the prime minister has recommended three names for the slots and an appointment on them could be made after a reply from the opposition. For Punjab, Imran Khan suggested names of Ahsan Mahboob, a retired BS-22 officer of Police Service of Pakistan, Raja Amer Khan, Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan, Dr. Syed Pervaiz Abbas, a retired BS-22 officer of Pakistan Administrative Service. For the vacant ECP seat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the prime minister recommended the names of Justice (retired) Ikramullah Khan, Faridullah Khan, a retired BS-22 officer of PAS and Muzammil Khan, Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan. The Election Commission of Pakistan, he said, would be able to make appointments after the opposition's response to the names suggested by the prime minister.

Kabul blast: death toll rises to 170

132 dead bodies still unidentified

NEWS DESK

KABUL: Evacuation flights from Afghanistan resumed with new urgency on Friday, a day after two suicide bombings targeted the thousands of desperate people fleeing the Taliban takeover and killed more than 170. As many as 132 dead bodies are still unidentified. The US says further attempted attacks are expected ahead of the Tuesday deadline for foreign troops to leave, ending America's longest war. As the call to prayer echoed through Kabul with the whine of departing planes, the anxious crowd outside the airport was as large as ever. In one location, dozens of Taliban members with heavy weapons about 500 meters from the airport were preventing anyone from venturing forward. Thursday's bombings near Kabul's international airport killed at least 95 Afghans and 13 US troops, Afghan and U. officials said, in the deadliest day for US forces in Afghanistan since August 2011. An official said Friday that the true toll will be higher because other people may have taken bodies away from the scene, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Taliban seek Turkish technical assistance to run Kabul Airport

The Turkish leader confirmed discussions were held at a military facility at the Kabul airport

NEWS DESK

ANKARA: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday said Turkey held its first talks with the Taliban in Kabul, adding Ankara was still assessing the armed group's offer to assist in operating the international airport.

The Turkish leader said discussions were held at a military facility at the Kabul airport where Turkey's embassy is temporarily stationed. "We have held our first talks with the Taliban, which lasted three and a half hours," Erdogan told reporters. "If necessary, we will have the opportunity to hold such talks again."

NATO member Turkey had hundreds of troops in Afghanistan as part of the alliance's mission, and had been responsible for the security of the airport for the past six years. Responding to domestic criticism over Turkey's engagement with the armed group, Erdogan said Ankara had "no luxury" to stand idly by in the volatile region. "You cannot know what their expectations are or what our expectations are without talking. What's diplomacy, my friend? This is diplomacy," Erdogan said. On Thursday, just days before the military withdrawal deadline and as countries were still racing to evacuate civilians, at least one Islamic State suicide bomber killed 85 people, including 13 U.S. soldiers, outside the airport gates. One senior Turkish official said the attack raised doubts about the Taliban's ability to secure the airport or to keep any Turkish operational staff safe.



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