



# Islamabad POST

Friday, October 01, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

### PM Imran Khan vows to accelerate progress on CPEC projects

Detailed News On Page-01

### FBR extends tax returns filing date

Detailed News On Page-08



### Haider Ali sparkles in Northern's win

Detailed News On Page-06



## Briefs

### Shahbaz falls off stairs

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shahbaz Sharif has suspended all political activities for two weeks reportedly after falling down on a staircase and hurting his back. PML-N Spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb confirmed on Thursday that the incident occurred when the former Punjab chief minister was leaving for a press conference a day before, on September 29. She further informed that the party president was safe from any major injury. However, on the advice of the doctors, the opposition leader has suspended all political activities for two weeks.

### Muslim world must help Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad on Thursday said that Pakistan had played unprecedented role for durable peace in Afghanistan. The Muslim countries should come forward for providing humanitarian aid to Afghan people, he said while talking to a private television channel. The Pakistan has dispatched the food items to neighboring country Afghanistan and continue this assistance in future, he said adding that other countries should also take care of Afghan people. Commenting on United States role in Afghanistan, he said NATO and American forces had introduced weapons in Afghanistan against Russian attack. - APP

### Terrorism major threat to stability

ISLAMABAD: National Security Adviser (NSA) Dr Moeed Yusuf on Thursday said terrorism was a major threat to Pakistan's stability, as Post-9/11 policies in Afghanistan had led to terrorism in the country. The NSA was addressing the special session of the Islamabad Security Dialogue held here at NUST University on the situation in Afghanistan, said a media release. NSA Dr Moeed Yusuf during his address presented a historical perspective on Afghanistan issue. - APP

## PM Khan vows to accelerate CPEC progress

### Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong says Pakistan's power grid system had now entered a new era of development and upgradation



MAHNOOR ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan assured on Thursday of expeditious progress on projects falling under the umbrella of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), despite some relevant departments having faced difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic in the past.

### - emphasizes promoting business projects in Pakistan

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has emphasized the importance of promoting smart, self-sufficient, clean and green houses and business projects in Pakistan. Chairing a review meeting in Islamabad on Thursday regarding the Ravi Urban Development Authority and Central Business District in Lahore, he also highlighted the importance of RUDA and CBD to achieve this objective. The Prime Minister was briefed on the plan to build the largest theme park in Pakistan in collaboration with IMG Dubai Theme Park. It was told that the RUDA will unveil the 2,000-kanal project on

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## 'Sharifs' corruption has nothing to do with CPEC'

### Fawad hopes that Ahsan Iqbal and PML-N would avoid such a negative attitude towards CPEC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Thursday lashed out at the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) for linking its corruption in road infrastructure projects with the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) saying "It is beyond comprehension."



hension." "As far as China Pakistan Economic Corridor is concerned, I am unable to understand as to why

the PML-N wanted to link China with its corruption. The corruption of Sharif family will be investigated at all the cost as it has nothing to do with CPEC," the minister told the launching ceremony of a book written by a Sports Analyst Dr Nauman Niazi. He said the PML-N leadership was trying to link China and

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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland Bénédicte de Cerjat handing over Nansen Refugee Award 2021 to Dr. Seema Rehman. - DNA

## KYRGYZSTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY



ISLAMABAD: Governor KPK Shah Farman, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan Ulanbek Totuiaev and others cutting cake to celebrate 30th Anniversary of the Independence of the Kyrgyz Republic. - DNA

## Covid-19 national tally continues declining trend

### During the past 24 hours, 1742 people tested positive for the virus

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The national tally of Covid-19 active cases on Thursday was recorded 47,832 with 1,742 more people tested positive for the deadly virus and 2,377 people recovered from the disease during the last 24 hours. Thirty-nine corona patients died during past 24 hours, 32 of whom were under treatment in different hospitals and seven of them perished in their respective quarantines or homes, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCO).

## Unvaccinated citizens to face strict curbs

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani authorities have announced strict restrictions on non-vaccinated people in the country, including a ban on boarding domestic and international flights. Non-vaccinated people will also not be allowed into educational institutions, shopping malls or restaurants as of Friday, said the NCO, Pakistan's anti-virus task force, urging people to get vaccinated before the Friday deadline. Asad Umar, who heads the nation's anti-virus strategy, said in a separate statement that the only way to overcome the coronavirus pandemic was to "get a high percentage of citizens vaccinated". Umar also announced that children older than 12 would be eligible for vaccination and that an initiative would be launched to administer jabs in schools.

Most of the deaths occurred in Punjab followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Out of the total 39 deaths, 11 of them died were under treatment on ventilators. There were 3,768 Covid infected patients under treatment in critical condition in various Covid dedicated healthcare facilities of the country. National Covid positivity ratio during past 24 hours was recorded 3.3 percent. Some 52,635 tests were conducted across the country during last 24 hours, including 15,709 in Sindh, 17,704 in Punjab, 12,401 in KP,

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## Draft law on cards to extend NAB chief term

### Javed may be allowed to continue till new chief is named

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Law has prepared a draft for the extension of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman Justice (ret'd) Javed Iqbal's tenure under the Presidential Ordinance, sources said Thursday.

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## UN envoy for end to Palestinian occupation

### Envoy on Middle East calls upon Israel to cease all settlement activity in Palestinian lands

ALI FURQAN

UNITED NATIONS: A UN Middle East Envoy has called for re-energizing international efforts to establish a political horizon that can end the occupation of Palestinian territory and achieve a two-State solution, as Security Council members took stock of developments following the formation of a new govern-



ment in Israel in June. Tor Wennesland, the special coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, presenting the Secretary-General's

latest report on implementation of Security Council resolution, which called on Israel to cease all settlement activity in Palestinian lands, said recent engagement between senior Israeli and Palestinian officials - including a meeting in August between Defence Minister Benny Gantz and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas - is encouraging.

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- Sarkozy given jail term over campaign spending - Page 08

## EU pledges 300m euros in aid for Afghanistan

### The EU Commission's president says "we stand by" the people of Afghanistan

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: The European Union is making available 300 million euros in humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan, President of the EU Commission Ursula von der Leyen said. The EU Commission's president said "we stand by" the people of Afghanistan, as she noted that a day earlier EU had transported critical aid to Afghanistan, and "more will come". The European commissioner for crisis management on Wednesday said that a plane carrying 32 tonnes of relief aid provided by the UN children's and health agencies landed in Afghanistan. "Today, the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge delivered over 32 tonnes of life-saving cargo to Afghanistan," the com-

missioner for crisis management, Janez Lenarcic, said in a tweet. "This EU-funded plane enables our partners UNICEF & WHO deliver critical aid to Afghans affected by conflict & cholera outbreak," Lenarcic said. Meanwhile, the United States had last week further paved the way for aid to flow to Afghanistan despite US sanctions on the Taliban, who seized control of the country last month, issuing general licenses amid concern that Washington's punitive measures could compound an unfolding humanitarian crisis. The US Treasury Department said it issued two general licenses, one allowing the US government, NGOs, and certain international organizations, including the United Nations, to engage in transactions with the Taliban or Haqqani Network -



both under sanctions - that are necessary to provide humanitarian assistance. Even before the shock of the Western-backed government's collapse, the economy was struggling, but the return of billions of dollars in foreign aid has left it in a deep crisis. A Taliban offensive, as foreign forces withdrew from Afghanistan after a 20-year war, culminated in the capture of the capital Kabul on August 15, two decades after they were driven from power by a US-led campaign in the wake of the September 11 attacks on the United States. Moreover, Pakistan, which shares a border with Afghanistan and hosts millions of Afghan refugees from decades of conflict, is concerned about the economic crisis hitting its neighbour.

## Russia urges calm between Tajikistan, Afghanistan

MOSCOW: Russia urged Tajikistan and Afghanistan to resolve any dispute in a mutually acceptable manner, saying it had heard reports they were sending troops to their common border, TASS quoted the Russian foreign ministry as saying on Thursday. "We observe with concern the growing tensions in Tajik-Afghan relations amid mutually strong statements by the leadership of the two countries," TASS quoted ministry spokesperson Alexei Zaitsev as saying. According to the Taliban's own information, tens of thousands of special forces fighters have been deployed in the Takhar province of northeastern Afghanistan, adjacent to Tajikistan, he said. Tajikistan's foreign ministry and Taliban spokesmen were not immediately available for comment on the reports. Tajik President Emomali Rakhmon has refused to recognise the Taliban-appointed cabinet in Kabul and lashed out at what he described as violations of human rights in the Taliban's siege of the Panjshir province. - Agencies

## Danish FM arrives in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: On the invitation of FM Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Jeppe Kofod, is paying an official visit to Pakistan on 30 September - 1 October 2021. The two Foreign Ministers will exchange views on the latest developments in Afghanistan and bilateral cooperation. During the visit, FM Kofod will positively contribute to cementing the multifaceted bilateral relationship and enhancing mutual understanding on regional and international issues. - DNA

# Kashmala hosts event for awareness regarding PAH

Federal Ombudsman for Protection against Harassment abbreviated as FOSPAAH has been empowered to protect and enforce women property rights

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi was the chief guest of this vibrant event, the attendance of Guest of Honor Ms. Sharmeela Rassool, Country Representative UN Women Pakistan, Guest of Honor Dr. Sania Nishtar, Senator, Special Assistant of the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Senators, Ambassadors and people from all spheres of life justified the slogan "Inclusion not Seclusion" put forward by none other than Federal Ombudsman Kashmala Tariq. The purpose behind this slogan was to amplify the importance of both genders being equally responsible for the betterment of whole society. Federal Ombudsman also

emphasized on the due share for women in the inheritance. The welcome speech was delivered by the Federal Ombudsman Kashmala Tariq wherein she put forward the slogan "Inclusion not Seclusion" and asserted the importance of collective responsibility and roles of both genders. She stressed on the plight of working women which is yet to be addressed, issues like harassment, hostile environment, discrimination and non-conducive conditions at workplace. She shared that after the enactment of the "Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act 2020", Federal Ombudsman for Protection against Harassment abbreviated as FOSPAAH has been empowered to protect and enforce women property rights. She shared that FOSPAAH has been trying to motivate women who have been

deprived of their property rights (ownership as well as possession), to come to FOSPAAH for redressal of their grievances. While addressing all the speakers, Federal Ombudsman threw light upon empowering women, rights of women and the role of society for adaptation of the basic roles enshrined in the Holy Quran and the Constitution of Pakistan. She vowed and pledged to make gender diversity real and not surreal. Guest of Sharmeela Rassool threw light on discrimination faced by the women in everyday life and the role of media. Dr. Sania Nishtar also advocated equal rights of women in every sphere of life. She also shared that in Ehsaas Program they have implemented policy to incentivize women for their responsibilities. President of Islamic Re-

public of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi delivered the closing speech and appreciated Federal Ombudsman Kashmala Tariq for her efforts in this regard. He stated that he believed that every woman be seated in this hall must have faced harassment of any form in their lifetime at least for once. He further stated that taking away the inheritance rights of women is strictly forbidden in Islam. The President said that women would remain vulnerable for physical and mental violence unless they are made financially independent. The President considers this a worrisome situation that after fourteen hundred years of Islam, our society is still unable to espouse these essential teachings of Islam.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Dr. Zarqa Suhrawardy Taimur in a meeting with Yezhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan at parliament House. – DNA

## Exhibition to understand tenacity of Pak-China ties

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Chinese Consul General Lahore Peng Zhengwu Thursday said that picture exhibition was a unique opportunity to help understand the tenacity of Pak-China relations at 70th diplomatic juncture and visualise the significance of China's National Day. He expressed these views while inaugurating a one-day picture exhibition, organised by the Institute of International Relations and Media Research (IIRMR), here at Alhama Arts Council. IIRMR Chairman Muhammad Mehdi, President Yasir Habib Khan and others were present. The Chinese consul general said that 1st October marked the 72th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, known as China National Day. He said, "This exhibition features Pakistani perspective on China that opens a window for the Pakistani people to know more about China, as well as Chinese perspective on Pakistan that reflected the friendly sentiments of Chinese people for their Pakistani brothers". The IIRMR chairman said that exhibition was an effort to open a new avenue of friendship through pictorial perspective.

## Ambassador of Kazakhstan meets Senator Dr. Zarqa

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senator Dr. Zarqa Suhrawardy Taimur said that Pakistan highly values its bilateral relations with Kazakhstan and desires to further expand friendly ties in different sectors. She expressed these views while talking to Yezhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan here at Parliament House on Thursday. "The ambassador would contribute towards further consolidating trade and economic links between the two countries and explore possibilities of enhancing

tourism" the Senator Dr. Zarqa Suhrawardy Taimur hoped while welcoming the Ambassador. She said that Kazakhstan is an important country for Pakistan and we place the mutual beneficial relationship with Kazakhstan at high esteem. She observed that there is huge scope for trade and investment and respective governments need to create a conducive environment by bringing the trade and investment conglomerates closer for exploring new vistas of co-operation. She said that despite cordial and friendly relations between the two sides, there

are no direct flights to enable the people travel conveniently and avoid longer routes to reach Nur Sultan. She also emphasized strong people to people linkages and enhanced parliamentary cooperation. She said that Islamabad and Nur Sultan share identical views on issues being faced by the region and have always enjoyed cordial and friendly cooperation at different regional and global forums. The Ambassador endorsed the views of Senator Dr. Zarqa Suhrawardy Taimur and appreciated the proposals aimed at enhancing trade, investment and people to people contacts.



ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi, Federal Ombudsman Kashmala Tariq, Sharmeela Rassool, Country Representative UN Women Pakistan, Former Minister KPK Atif Khan standing in the honor of National Anthem. – DNA

## Meeting discusses expected rains

KARACHI: An important meeting was held under the chairmanship of Sindh Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah in view of expected heavy rains in the province. Briefing the Minister for Local Government, Sindh Local Government Secretary Engineer Syed Najam Ahmad Shah said that in view of the alert issued by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority, there is a probability of heavy rains and urban flood in different districts of the province. In order to overcome any tough situation concerned district Administrations and local government institutions have been mobilized. Sindh Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah while addressing the meeting participants said that necessary measures should be taken in all areas of Karachi on emergency basis and special attention should be paid to all sensitive places of the province. All underpasses, choking points and storm drains should be kept clear and in any case provision of facilities to the public should be ensured. – DNA

## DC Ali directs officials to resolve complaints

DC listened to the problems of senior citizen, men & women

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shehzad has said that open door policy is underway on daily basis and public complaints are being resolved on the spot. He directed the heads of district departments to satisfy the grievances of the complainants in a satisfactory manner and to abandon the practice of ignoring public issues, undue and unwarranted delays would not be tolerated in this regard. Listening to the problems

of the citizens in the office, the Deputy Commissioner said that departmental action against the officers who do not listen to the public issues will not be avoided so they should increase the standard of departmental performance in relation to public relief. He asked the Assistant Commissioners to address the grievances and problems of the people at the level responsibly and keep a close watch on the performance of the tehsil offices so that the people do not face any problem in their affairs.

He said that there should be no delay in resolving issues that need to be resolved immediately. He listened to the concerns of citizens about WASA, Waste Management Company, Revenue and other departments and issued instructions to the concerned officers on the spot by calling them. He listened to the problems of senior citizen, men and women and assured them that there would be no delay in departmental action for immediate resolution of their grievances and problems.

## Adviser reviews arrangements for heavy rain

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Adviser to Chief Minister Sindh for the Rehabilitation and Relief Department Haji Rasool Bakhish Chandio on Thursday presided over a meeting of the officials concerned of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) to review the arrangement for the expected heavy monsoon rains here at PDMA office Karachi. The meeting was attended by Director PDMA Syed Shujaat Hussain and others. Haji Rasool strictly directed the concerned officials that they should stay in close liaison with the district administrations in the field to cope with the situation during heavy rains. He directed them that all necessary arrangements along with availability of machinery should be made properly to avoid any untoward situation during rain emergency.



DNA

PESHAWAR: This science-summer season, one of the most prestigious computational societies of the world: International Society of Computational Biology (ISCB) revamped one of its globally-appointed regional student groups: RSG-Pakistan. The team organized an annual symposium named RSG-Pakistan Symposium 2021 to communicate the significance of Computational Biology/Bioinformatics in Pakistan. On Sep 29, 2021 RSG-Pakistan hosted the symposium occurred at and sponsored by the CECOS University of IT and Emerging Sciences, in order to constitute a network among different national and international scientists to bring about the advent of Computational Biology/Bioinformatics in Pakistan. Precision Medicine Lab (PML), which basically, is ground zero for RSG-Pakistan development specializes in cancer-genomics and is situated at Rehman Medical Institute (RMI). It is also in collaboration with the CECOS University and provided a platform to the group for organizing the symposium. A total of 50+ participants and professional scientists attended the event, spoke about advances in science, presented their research work and took part in poster competitions. These fields are turning out to be an important part of biological sciences. Modern computational techniques have made it feasible to conduct high quality research in

a low resource setting. "We start computations in our mind to try to understand the simplest of tasks in order to solve more complex problems", Dr. Johar Ali said. By breaking down the problem in to its individual questions and then designing computational models by utilizing machine learning and coding languages like python is an efficient way to solve modern research problems that can minimize the practical hassle and errors during hands-on lab work. Also, RSG-Pakistan Symposium 2021 is the first large-scale computational event hosted by a student group in Peshawar that spread awareness among young scientists to pursue these disciplines. One of the main objectives of RSG-Pakistan is to focus on the combination of wet-lab (lab work) and dry-lab (Computational work) research; to represent in a creative term the group coined: "moist-lab". The significance of this integration is also recognized by other renowned scientists like Leonard Adleman who once said, "But biology and computer science - life and computation - are related. I am confident that at their interface great discoveries await those who seek them". RSG-Pakistan is a group of diverse young researchers having multiple research and professional interests under the advisory committee of seasoned scientists who encourage efficient communication among the members and the populace to inspire a whole new generation of Computational Biologists and Bioinformaticians.

## 131 power pilferers nabbed

STAFF REPORT

MULTAN: Multan Electric Power Company (Meeco) have caught 131 power pilferers during separate operations launched throughout the South Punjab in a day, Meeco official said on Thursday. Meeco teams accompanying task forces raided different places in Multan, Vehari, Sahiwal, Rahimyar Khan, Muzaffargarh, Bahawalnagar, Khanewal, and Dera Ghazi Khan and detected theft of over 200,000 electricity units. A sum of over Rs 3.5 million fine was imposed on them over involvement in tampering with body of meters, direct supply, installing loop in meters, slowing down meters, meter dead stop and meter screen wash.

## Ihtasham Javed efforts uplifted FCCI stature

President FCCI had a unique privilege to attend Pak-Uzbek Investment and Connectivity Conference in Uzbekistan which will open new regional market of 90 billion dollars provided peace was restored in Afghanistan

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Pandemic has negative impact on the global economy further complicating the vulnerable economies like Pakistan. It was most crucial time when Government of Pakistan and elected trade bodies join hands to revive the dwindling exports in addition to fomenting unprecedented crisis of unemployment. The Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry under the dynamic leadership of President Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed remained proactive negotiating with the Government, banks and other concerned institutions to get maximum facilitation for the export

sector which was the mainstay of national economy. It was due to his personal efforts that instead of clamping blanket lockdown, government was convinced to resolve to only smart lockdown so that economic activities could continue uninterrupted in addition to saving the jobs of industrial workers. This step was acknowledged at the global level and when our neighbouring countries were facing isolation, Faisalabad was the lucky one to get maximum export orders. Due to the policies of the Ministry of Commerce and wisdom of Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) the export sector had to start third shift which were



earlier closed down due to the lack of export orders. President Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed had continuous meetings with Prime Minister Imran Khan. He had a unique privilege to attend Pak-Uzbek Investment

and Connectivity Conference in Uzbekistan which will Inshallah open new regional market of 90 billion dollars provided peace was restored in Afghanistan. FCCI remained hub of business-related policy making

as seniors ministers and high Government officials continue to visit FCCI and discuss economic issues with tangible solutions. FCCI also despatched a trade delegation to Turkey despite of corona threat. It was very successful and hopefully FDI from this brotherly country is expected very soon. The colonization M3 and Allama Iqbal Special Economic Zone is yet another plume in the cap of Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed who made strenuous efforts to convince local and foreign investors to setup their new units in these well-developed industrial estates. On the CSR front a large number of steps were taken for the welfare and better-

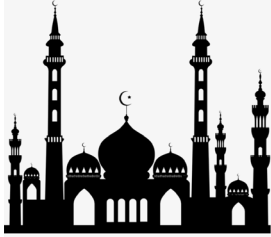
ment of local communities. A land mark step was a corona vaccination centre dedicated for the FCCI members and their families. This centre has so far given ten thousand jabs while it is still working for the local business community. On the request of Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed, PIA offered special subsidized rate to FCCI members while for the first time Faisalabad-Skardu flights were launched. Other international airlines also followed the same suit and offered many incentives to the frequent travellers from Faisalabad. New challenges are yet to be resolved by the new incumbents who are preparing to take over the charge from 1st October, 2021.

## Gunmen kill Sikh hakeem in Peshawar

The police team rushed to the site and encircled the area to nab the culprits

PEAHAWAR: A prominent Sikh hakeem Satnam Singh had been gunned down at Peshawar's Charsadda Road on Thursday. Satnam, who was practising traditional medicines in Peshawar was shot four times by unknown gunmen. Singh was running a clinic on Charsadda Road in the city. The police team rushed to the site and encircled the area to nab the culprits. The reason behind the murder was not ascertained yet. The police are investigating the matter from different angles and the possibility of terrorism is also being probed. The body was shifted for post-mortem. – DNA

## SERVICES



### Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	04:39 am
Zohr.....	11:58 pm
Asr.....	04:12 pm
Maghrib.....	05:54 pm
Isha.....	07:12 pm



### Hotels & Restaurants

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



### Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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### Emergency

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



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CAA.....	9281092



### Hospitals

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



### Departments

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



### Complaints

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

### Islamabad Metropolitan

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

### Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Australian Geoffrey Shaw witnessing an exhibition at Satrang Art Gallery, Islamabad Serena Hotel. – DNA

## Yerzhan assures support for COMSTECH capacity building

The Ambassador informed that the embassy of Kazakhstan will hold a live conference on the occasion of 30th anniversary of Pak-Kazakh relationship

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Yerzhan Kistafin, the Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, visited COMSTECH Secretariat on Thursday to discuss joint initiatives for science and technology, capacity building and higher education linkage. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTECH extended him very warm welcome. Both the dignitaries discussed the establishment of linkages between universities, re-activate OIC15 programme, and to launch proceedings of Al-Farabi Forum organized by COMSTECH last year on the occasion of 1150th anniversary of



Al-Farabi – renowned Muslim philosopher. They discussed to establish the Al-Farabi chair in the universities of Pakistan and Iqbal chair in the universities of Kazakhstan. The Ambassador agreed to the suggestion of holding Iqbal Forum in Kazakhstan next year. The Ambassador informed that the embassy of Kazakhstan will hold a live conference on the occasion of 30th anniversary of Pak-Kazakh relationship. Kistafin appreciated COMSTECH initiatives and assured full support for capacity building initiatives of COMSTECH for OIC member states, as well bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Kazakhstan.

## RCCI holds 61st Annual General Meeting

KHAYYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: The 61st Annual General Meeting of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) was held in the Chamber house. The meeting approved the annual report and accounts of the departing executive committee. The annual report covered important events and activities of the year were also presented. The house also approved and announced newly elected office bearers Nadeem Rauf President,

Asim Malik Senior Vice President and Talat Awan Vice President.

The group leader Sohail Altaf, SM Naseem, former presidents, senior vice president Osman Ashraf, vice president Shahraiz Malik, members of the new and outgoing executive committee, and a large number of chamber members were present on the occasion. The new incumbents will take office on October 1. The outgoing President of the Rawalpindi Chamber, Nasir Mirza, said that despite the challenges of

the COVID epidemic, the Rawalpindi Chamber played an active role and raised its voice for the rights of the business community. At the same time, the chamber also organized many important events to promote trade and business activities. The newly elected President of the Rawalpindi Chamber, Nadeem Rauf, said that he would strive to earn the trust of the business community and members, adding that the betterment and development of the business community in the region would be his top priority.



## Farmers can now lodge complaints on PCP

ISLAMABAD: Farmers can now register their complaints on the Pakistan Citizen's Portal (PCP) as a dedicated complaint category "Farmers/Agriculture" has been activated at the portal to facilitate the farmers and resolve their issues in a timely and effective manner. According to the PM Office, Prime Minister Imran Khan has directed that the complaints received under this category shall be given top priority and be timely resolved on merit. The premier has instructed that information about the facility shall be disseminated to farmers through social media platforms, district administrations and display of banners at the offices dealing with farmers. PM Imran Khan has also directed the Chief Secretaries and the Federal Secretary concerned to convene exclusive progress review meetings after every four months on the issues of farmers reported on Pakistan Citizen's Portal, and take necessary corrective measures. – DNA

## Daily walk prevents heart disease: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, D-Watson Lion Club, Islamabad, has said that a small change in one's life can prevent the disease of heart. Never forget the amount, consumption of Water, starch and fruits in your daily routine. Make walking your routine, make a diet schedule on the advice of your doctor and stick to it. Heart is an important part of the body that provides clean blood to the whole body. The cord of our breath is closed only by the beating of the heart. It is also important for every person to know about the problems related to the heart and to understand the sign of a heart attack so that



it can be controlled on time. Addressing a seminar on the occasion of World Heart Day, he said that small changes in life can improve the health of our heart. Heart called the pumping station of the body, the waste of unhealthy food in it blocks the blood vessels and arteries and obstructs the heartbeat, causing a heart attack. If you are a friend and sympathizer of your heart, then Keep it up, it will keep you healthy. Care is better than cure. Therefore, it is important to prevent heart problems and diseases so that people can live a healthy life with a healthy heart. World Heart Day is also a day of renewal for all of us to make positive changes in our lifestyles. Health workers, doctors, nurses and paramedics providing health services in addition to providing health care to staff, educating patients about keeping their heart healthy and strong will help overcome this problem. – DNA

## QAU clarifies position regarding protests

ISLAMABAD: Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU) Islamabad administration the other day reached an agreement with protesting students providing a meaningful reduction in fees and charges. The majority of those protesting agreed to this and QAU Registrar duly notified the outcome, a statement issued by the university on Thursday said. Deputy Commissioner Islamabad had brokered this agreement. Regrettably, some elements determined to hold the university hostage refused to accept this agreement and blocked the entrances on the morning of September 30, 2021. This made it impossible for the university to resume normal functioning and caused immense embarrassment to the district administration and the protesting students who had agreed to accept the compromise solution. Separately, on Wednesday, the QAU VC held an online Town Hall meeting with nearly 200 faculty members. The faculty voiced its concerns that many of our students, who were protesting sincerely for financial relief amidst difficult economic circumstances, had been hijacked by violent elements. – APP

## Dengue spreads across KP, Punjab

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dengue cases are on the rise in Punjab, federal capital Islamabad and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa capital Peshawar as authorities have already declared dengue a nuisance. Punjab on Thursday reported 223 dengue cases including 167 cases in the provincial capital Lahore, 35 in Rawalpindi, four in Kasur, three in Narowal and two each from Faisalabad and Khushab. Also, single cases were reported each in Sahiwal, Bahawalnagar, Khanewal, Jhang, Rajanpur, Sheikhpura, Attock, Multan, and Sialkot. Punjab Health Secretary Imran Sikandar Baloch said that 167 cases of dengue were reported in Lahore. He further informed that 1,659 cases have been reported so far in this year. Currently, 115 dengue patients are being treated at Lahore's hospitals. There are 18 dengue patients in Ganga Ram Hospital, 15 in Jinnah Hospital, 11 in Mayo Hospital, and nine in Doctor's Hospital. Eight dengue patients were admitted in Services Hospital and Shalimar Hospital each, seven in Gulab Devi and five in Farooq Hospital while four dengue patients are being treated at Ghurki Trust Hospital and University of Lahore Teaching Hospital. In the last 24 hours (Wednesday), 35 dengue cases were reported from Rawalpindi, four from Kasur and six patients were admitted to Nishtar Hospital, Multan.

## National Blind Archery to start today

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Rawalpindi District Blind Archery Association in collaboration with District Sports Department Rawalpindi was holding the All Pakistan National Blind Archery Championship 2021 at LiaquatBagh Sports Complex Rawalpindi from Friday. According to Tanveer Ahmed, Secretary, Rawalpindi District Blind Archery Association, the championship which would conclude on October 2 will feature more than 25 male and female archers from Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Gilgit, Kashmir, Peshawar, Mardan, Lahore, Gujranwala, Jhelum, Quetta and Karachi will participate in this mega event. Three Blind Archers would be shortlisted from the said tournament for the World Archery Para Ranking Championship 2022. The closing ceremony of the event would be held on October 2 in which trophies and medals would be distributed among the winners and runner ups.

## China to continue working hand in hand with Pakistan

Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director, CRSS and author of the book, commended the Chinese policy of peaceful development and the economic significance it holds

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: China is fortunate to have Pakistan as a strategic partner and puts Pakistan on priority for cooperation in all sectors. The Chinese government is overjoyed to see Pakistan's accomplishments in nation-building and looks forward to working hand in hand with Pakistan. These were the remarks made by His Excellency Nong Rong, Ambassador of China to Pakistan, while speaking at Imtiaz Gul's book launch titled "What Lies Behind the Iron Brotherhood?" organized

by the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) in Islamabad, on September 29, 2021.

While commending the author, he noted that the book comprehensively views the agelong Pakistan-China relationship from a broader perspective and serves as a guide to understand the nature of this relationship. Senator Mushahid Hussain, in his keynote speech during the event lauded China's overall progress as a nation. Highlighting the core ingredients of Chinese success; excellent leadership, ability to do course correction, learn from other's mistakes, and a peaceful foreign policy,

he suggested Pakistan to learn from the iron brother and adopt a similar development model.

**Geo-economics is the only way forward for Pakistan, the region and the world at large - Senator Mushahid Hussain** While congratulating Mr. Gul on writing a book which serves as a milestone in strengthening the ties between two countries, he said that Pakistan and China share an important strategic and substantive relationship which is not interest driven, it is an all-weather friendship. Ambassador Naghmana Hashmi, former Ambassador of Pakistan

to China, admired Mr. Gul's effort in penning down this bond to which words cannot fully do justice. She stated that it is a very unique book which doesn't only provide chronology of events but also gives the author's view of the on-ground developments. This book is a narration of Mr. Gul's unique way of looking at Chinese philosophy and the significance of our friendship with China. In her keynote speech, she added that such books help clear the global misconceptions about China. Mr. Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director, CRSS and author of the book,

commended the Chinese policy of peaceful development and the economic significance it holds. He said that in order to reach the level of success China has attained, Pakistan should learn values like accountability, integrity, people centric focus and consistent policies. China's belief in cooperation has gained it immense economic development. In his closing remarks, Senator Mushahid Hussain said that both countries should continue to cooperate on the economic front as geo-economics is the only way forward for Pakistan, the region and the world at large.

## Briefs

## AIUO extends admission deadline

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIUO) has extended admission deadline for the programs offered in autumn 2021 semester including matriculation and intermediate programs on the basis of hundreds of requests received from result awaiting students of Secondary School Certificate (Matric) of different educational boards.

According to AIUO, interested candidates can now apply for admission in these programs till October 14 with late fee charges.

While granting extension, the VC, AIUO said that it is our national responsibility to facilitate Pakistani youth who is eager to be educated to earn respectable livelihood.

Director Admission, Syed Zia Ul Husnain said that this extension is effective for continuing students as well. They can also get admission in forthcoming semester with late fee charges. However, admission can only be applied online during the extended period. Admission application form and prospectuses are available online. After completing online admission form, fee can be deposited in any branch of ABL, MCB, UBL, FCB through bank challan till the deadline. — APP

## NEPRA concludes public hearing

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) Thursday concluded public hearing into monthly fuel cost adjustment (FCA) for XW-DISCOs for August.

The hearing was presided over by NEPRA Chairman Tauseef H Farooqi while member Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Engineer Masood Anwar Khan and member Sindh Rafique Ahmed Sheikh were also present on the occasion.

The authority reserved decision after hearing and would be announced later. The Central Power Purchasing Agency Guarantee Limited (CPPA-G) sought an increase of Rs2.0719 per unit in power tariff under FCA for August 2021.

The CPPA-G maintained that actual fuel cost remained Rs6.7988 per unit against the reference fuel charges of Rs4.7334 per unit during the said period. The CPPA-G further said the total energy generated during August was 16078.09 GWh. The total cost of electricity was Rs103.097 billion. According to the CPPA-G data, net electricity delivered to Discoms was 15,590.87 GWh with the total price of Rs106.100 billion.

It was further told that the hydel power generation was recorded at 5594.30 GWh or 34.79 per cent, coal 2293.83 GWh or 14.27 per cent, High Speed Diesel 19.84 GWh (0.12 per cent), Furnace oil 1,627.56 GWh (10.12 per cent), domestic gas 1,313.21 GWh (8.17 per cent), RLNG 2895.92 GWh (18.01 per cent) and nuclear 1,630.19 GWh (10.14 per cent). — APP

## Court testify witness against Gilani, Zardari

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Thursday recorded the statement of a witness in Toshakhana vehicles reference against former president Asif Ali Zardari and ex-prime minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani.

The court adjourned hearing of the case till October 11, after testifying deputy commission inland revenue Jamshed Sheikh. AC-III Judge resumed hearing on graft reference filed by National Accountability Bureau (NAB) against the leadership of Pakistan People's Party (PPP). The court also granted one day exemption from hearing to Asif Zardari and Yousaf Raza Gilani at their lawyers' request.

The court also sought comments from NAB on acquittal plea of PPP's Co-Chairman Asif Zardari in above reference on next date of hearing. The ex-president had stated that there were no solid proofs with the anti graft body against him and prayed the court to acquit him from the charges. — APP

## Farrukh urges int'l community to engage with Afghan people

Peaceful Afghanistan was vital for peaceful Pakistan as unrest in neighboring countries ultimately affects neighbors. He said that Pakistan was the only country in the world that was hosting more than 4 million Afghan refugees

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Thursday urged the international community to engage with the Afghan people to avert the looming humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

Addressing a round table conference on Afghanistan's reconstruction organized by Global Peace Chain here, he said that Pakistan has been supporting Afghan people and would continue to support them.

He said peaceful Afghanistan was vital for peaceful Pakistan as unrest in neighboring countries ultimately affects neighbors. He said that Pakistan was the only country in the world that was hosting more than 4 million Afghan refugees.

He said as a neighboring country, Afghans look to Pakistan in every difficulty, including trade and medical treatment.

He said that Pakistan sacrificed over 80,000 lives in the war on terror and suffered over \$ billion economic losses, and the world must acknowledge this fact.

He said that Pakistan Armed Forces and security agencies broke the networks of terrorists, and busted terror financing nexus.

Farrukh Habib said that even before becoming the Prime Minister, Imran Khan was clear about the solution to the Afghan problem.

He said that the Prime Minister always insisted on a political solution to the Afghan problem and holding a comprehensive dialogue.



After the establishment of Taliban political offices in Qatar, all stakeholders had the opportunity to meet and positive progress was made in

the affairs. According to a United Nations report, 9 million Afghans were living below the poverty line and the world needed to pay attention to this.

He remarked that if the world leaves Afghanistan alone in this difficult time, it will have negative consequences. He said that the route to Central Asia passes through Afghanistan, so its stability was imperative for economic growth and stability of the entire region.

The minister said that Afghanistan's soil should not be used against any country and fundamental rights of all should be protected by the current political system of Afghanistan. He said that Pakistan played its role in evacuation of foreigners from Afghanistan and helped in provision of

humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

Farrukh Habib said that the world should know that Pakistan was a responsible and peace loving country. He said that the Taliban government in Afghanistan was a reality and the world should accept this reality with open heart.

He said that Pakistan has been trying for installation of a consensus government having representation of all stakeholders in Afghanistan.

He said that now Pakistan has a very clear stance that it would be a partner in peace not war and it will continue to work for peace in Afghanistan. He said in his recent address to the United Nations General Assembly, PM Imran Khan emphasized that the world should help the Afghan people. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Bulgaria to Pakistan sings as the 11th member at the EUNIC cluster in the presence of Ambassador of Austria Nicolaus Keller. — DNA

## IMCG I-8/4 remains open despite three positive covid cases

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Model College for Girls I-8/4 situated at sector I-8/2, is still functioning despite the presence of three Covid-19 infected cases in its junior section which is a violation of the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC), putting the health of kids at risk.

According to an official source, NCOC has clearly directed that a school should be closed for 14 days, if two Covid-positive cases are found but this college is still open with three COVID-19 infected teachers, even after the lapse of four days.

Children are vulnerable as the virus cannot only infect them but they can carry the virus back to their families and endanger the vulnerable. There are some teachers and students who are continuously coughing in the classrooms and if they are tested, there is a possibility of more covid positive cases, the source said.

Functioning of school with three active cases is the violation of Covid-19 standard operating procedures (SOPs), however, teachers of the college have been directed to engage their respective classes as per routine.

Talking to APP, a teacher of the college on the condition of anonymity said, "I am so stressed out because of Covid-positive cases but I have been forced to attend the school. The number of students and teachers infected are concealed to avoid the sealing of school.

"We, the teachers, are being considered super humans to not only keep our health risk safe on our own but also work like engineered machines. Who will be responsible for those who get infected?", she asked.

This situation has caused mounting concern among parents who are quite worried about their children's health. A parent said, "Things are not good at this state-run institution. My daughter told me that washrooms as well as classrooms are dirty and very smelly. Desks are not cleaned regularly. — APP

## Ashrafi calls for boycotting Indian products

ISLAMABAD: Special Representative to Prime Minister Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood



Ashrafi on Thursday urged the Ulema, religious scholars, civil society to boycott Indian products and register their anger at the persecution of Muslim community in India. Addressing a news conference, he said the ongoing campaign of boycotting Indian products being continued in various countries.

He urged religious scholars, Ulema and others to forge unity among their ranks and boycott the Indian products. India was committing gross human right violations in Assam and Muslim community should collectively raise its voice against Indian aggressions. He said the corner stone of Pakistan's foreign policy was Afghanistan. — APP

## EU assists training on journalists' safety, security concludes

"Safety, Digital Security and Psychosocial Support" for journalists an initiative of Centre for Peace and Development financially assisted by the EU

ISLAMABAD: An European Union assisted workshop that concluded here imparted practical training to the journalists how to cope with the untoward situation and tactics for ensuring digital security. The workshop discussed national and international legal frameworks for protection of journalists emphasizing Article 10, 19 and 19-A of the Constitution of Pakistan which are related to arbitrary detention, freedom of speech and right of access to information respectively.

CPDI has also launched the project "Civil Society for Independent Media and Expression (CIME)" with the financial support of the European Union in order to ensure Freedom of Expression within the ambit of the constitution and prioritize journalists' safety training for the purpose.

A participant Mah Noor said that such training sessions will prove helpful in ensuring safety and security of the journalists, especially in the risk zones.

Andleeb Khan another participant said organizing such training sessions for young journalists not only enhance their professional skills but also help them to cope with unsafe and stressful situations during the course of duty. Journalists lauded the efforts of CPDI and the European Union for organizing such training sessions and emphasized to conduct more sessions in future for the benefit of their community. — APP

Journalists lauded the efforts of CPDI and the European Union for organizing such training sessions and emphasized to conduct more sessions in future for the benefit of their community. — APP

## HEC denies association with Higher Education City

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan categorically denies any association of HEC with the so-called housing project named as 'Higher Education City'. Therefore, the impression that this is an HEC's housing project is entirely incorrect.

Launching or operating of such housing scheme has never been approved by HEC authorities or taken up with the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) for registration. Marketing and advertising of this housing project with the association of HEC or any member / employee of HEC is not authorized. HEC has nothing to do with any Agreement, if ever signed between some individuals with HEC employees, nor does it owe legal, financial or any other liabilities.

As Higher Education Commission (HEC) has no association with the 'Higher Education City', therefore the general public, investors, builders etc. are cautioned that bookings, purchases and investments in this housing project will purely be at their own risk, and HEC owes no liability. — APP

## IRSA releases 179961 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 179961 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 135969 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1511.95 feet, which was 119.95 feet higher than its dead level 1392 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded at 80000 and 110000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1187.40 feet, which was 137.4 feet higher than its dead level of 1050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 16008 and 30000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kala-bagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded at 122386, 108268 and 69227 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 13200 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 26761 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. — APP

## Royal Group of China to invest in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: While the special focus has been given to agriculture and livestock during the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the Royal Group of China is all set to establish buffalo milk farming units in Pakistan.

According to Gwadar Pro, Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Asad Umar held a meeting with the Chief Executive Royal Group of China in Islamabad and discussed different aspects of buffalo farming in Pakistan. The meeting was also attended by other senior officials.

Chief Executive Royal Group of China Kith Meng informed Asad Umar of six labs in different cities of Pakistan for the production of buffalo's embryos through high-quality genetic In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) process, adding they would also establish a Semen Production Unit (SPU) for buffalo where they will care for and manage the breeding of bulls.

The Royal Group would also establish a big buffalo farm that will be FMD free, and from there they will produce high-quality buffalo milk, and then process it into powdered milk and mozzarella cheese. "The government of Pakistan has no bureaucratic red-tapism, and the Ministry of Planning and the CPFC Authority are committed to promoting investment from China," Asad Umar told Mr. Meng. He also informed that the Investor Facilitation Center under the CPEC Authority would soon be operational, which will help resolve all the issues faced by the investors. Pakistan can lift its people out of poverty if it increases the productivity of its agriculture and livestock. In March 2020, China and Pakistan signed an MoU to set up the Agriculture Joint Working Group under CPEC. — APP

## ICCI newly elected office bearers take oath

After taking oath, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, newly elected President ICCI said that he would make all possible efforts to get resolved the key issues of business community and facilitate them in business development

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The newly elected Office Bearers and Executive Members of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry were administered oath in the 37th Annual General Meeting of ICCI. Muhammad Shakeel Munir was sworn in as President, Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan as Vice President, ICCI for the year 2021-22. Mian Akram Farid, Chairman, Founder Group administered oath to the newly elected Office Bearers and Executive Members. Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, former President ICCI performed the role of Stage Secretary. A large number of members attended the AGM.



business development. He said that the Founder Group and ICCI members have placed an important responsibility on his shoulders and he would try his best to deliver up to their expectations. He lauded the achievements

of the outgoing team and said that he would try to exceed their performance.

He thanked the Founder Group and members of ICCI for electing him with majority vote and assured that he would justify his

election through his performance. The outgoing President Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan congratulated the new Office Bearers and Executive Members of ICCI and hoped that they would play a more effective role in promoting the interests of

the business community.

He highlighted the major achievements of his tenure for the betterment of the business community and hoped that his successor would make ICCI further stronger to serve the cause of the business community in an effective manner.

Mian Akram Farid, Chairman, Founder Group congratulated the new Office Bearers and Executive Members of ICCI and was optimistic that the new team, which was a blend of new and experienced talent, would perform up to the expectations of the business community. He lauded the achievements of the outgoing team and also thanked all members of ICCI for voting Founder Group candidates into power with majority vote.

The newly elected Senior Vice President Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh, Vice President Muhammad Faheem Khan, outgoing Senior Vice President Fatma Azim and Vice President Abdul Rehman Khan also spoke at the occasion.

## Neglecting quotas

**T**HE suo-moto case in the Supreme Court of Pakistan regarding the Rahim Yar Khan temple attack, is unveiling several unfortunate realities of the country, which need to be corrected immediately. One of the issues the Supreme Court has raised as it conducts hearings is that of the government's neglect towards ensuring that the quotas for minorities and others are being sufficiently filled. A three-member SC bench, headed by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed, directed the federal government and the provincial chief secretaries to cooperate with the one-man commission appointed to investigate the matter. The commission has found that currently, a whopping 30,000 posts for minorities are lying vacant across the country. The results of the commission are not surprising if one has been keeping up to date with statistics regarding this issue over the years. This is not a sudden lapse—in 2018, it was uncovered by the Establishment Division that of the total 649,176 sanctioned posts in the federal government, only 5.48 percent are currently occupied by women and just 2.82 percent by non-Muslims. In fact, it has been remarked on in previous years how often the actual number of women and minorities employed by the government is short of the vacancies posted, which reflects how bad the situation is. The fact that such disparities exist is shameful, considering that it was in 2009—eleven years ago—when the Punjab government issued a notification of reserving a 5 percent quota of the total number of posts in government departments for minorities in the province. It is an indictment then, that in subsequent years, no government has paid attention to this matter. Posts are in place to uplift and make all social groups a part of society with equal opportunities. There needs to be a mechanism in place for systematic evaluation in the public sector to see how the quota regime for minorities was functioning.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 126

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

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## Urban flooding

**P**AKISTAN'S Meteorological Department issued warnings of high-intensity rainfall and destructive thunderstorms to Sindh and Balochistan. It is expected that the remnants of cyclone Gulab will wreak havoc and cause urban flooding and damage to vulnerable infrastructure in both the provinces from September 28 to October 2. The only matter of concern right now is, will each government be able to make sufficient arrangements to counteract the potential harm that may be done to the land? More often than not, climate change is cited as the primary cause behind why urban flooding is a frequent phenomenon in our cities. While there is some truth to this fact, the majority of the fault lies with the dilapidated sewerage and drainage structures particularly in Sindh and Balochistan. Roads often transform into rivers, cars can be seen floating away, people lose their lives by drowning or getting electrocuted through the fallen lines in the water, the transmission of diseases amplifies due to still-standing water and infrastructure is especially damaged beyond repair. All this is a regular occurrence in a city like Karachi whenever it gets a slight taste of rain even. In the rough terrains of Balochistan, landslides which cut areas off from civilisation and can crush individuals under it are triggered almost immediately after heavy downpour. These are problems that are easily avoidable so long as the government shows initiative and commits to it for the long-term. Many development plans have been introduced—like the Karachi Urban Development Programme—but none have proved to be successful in alleviating the pressure off of the already stressed drainage system. Furthermore, with the Meteorological Department issuing warnings the night before an expected storm, there is little time for any preventative action to be taken. It seems unlikely that the government will be able to install the necessary equipment needed to prevent flooding, or at the very least minimise it. This is an issue that we deal with on a yearly basis but still, a permanent solution has not been employed. Every season that we brush the matter under the rug, we risk countless lives and livelihoods of citizens.

## America's litany of lethal lies

Andrew Mitrovica

“Clearly, our intelligence was wrong on this particular white Toyota Corolla,” a US General said. “We thought this was a good lead. We were wrong.” But US soldiers and spies know that being “wrong” rarely results in being arrested. Just like all the other soldiers and spies who have made lethal “mistake” after lethal “mistake” in Afghanistan and beyond, none of the architects and perpetrators of this latest US-engineered bloodbath will be held to account in or out of court. Instead, America may offer the surviving family members a wad of cash as a fleeting and meaningless act of penance to absolve itself of the responsibility for the horror it unleashed via an “errant” missile on still more Afghans trying to survive, as best they can, the deprivations, struggles and indignities of war

**B**Y now, they have been forgotten by everyone but the people who admired, cared for and loved them. Zemari Ahmadi – a father, brother and son – was running his usual errands on August 29. For years, the veteran aid worker had spent much of his time and energy delivering food and canisters of water to make the grinding hardship so many Afghans endure less taxing. That morning, like most days, Ahmadi, an electrical engineer by training, left the compound near Kabul airport where he lived with his four children, two brothers and a slew of nieces and nephews. Ahmadi carpooled. So, driving a white Toyota Corolla, he picked up a few colleagues on route to the headquarters of Nutrition and Education International – the California-based humanitarian group – where they unloaded some bags and containers. At noon, he made a brief visit to a police station. Later that day, Ahmadi used a hose to fill several jugs with water to ferry home. He arrived a few minutes before 5pm. Then, in a happy family ritual, Ahmadi let one of his children hop into the driver's seat to finish parking in the gated courtyard. A gaggle of excited children rushed to greet him and pack into the car. Meanwhile, a cousin helped unload the jugs of water. Within moments, a “Hellfire” missile fired from a “Reaper” drone obliterated the Corolla and anyone nearby. The 10 dead included Ahmadi and three of his children, Zamir, 20, Faisal, 16, and Farzad, 13, as well as his cousin, Ahmad 30, and three of Ahmadi's nephews, Arwin, seven, Benjamin, six, and Hayat, two and two three-year-old girls, Malika and Somaya. At first, the US military insisted, with typical bravado, that its carefully planned attack – triggered by unimpeachable “intelligence” that warned of impending mayhem – was “a righteous” reply that rid the world of a terrorist implicated in the murderous assault days earlier on Afghans and American soldiers milling outside Kabul's airport, waiting for flight out and far from the Taliban's tentacles. **It was the first of a litany of lies.** The US had not avenged the barbarity committed by terrorists. It had, once again, massacred innocents. Of course, after its lie had been exposed by the grieving family, other witnesses and sceptical reporters, a US soldier was compelled to apologise for America's “horrible mistake”. And the cable TV personalities and their stable of serious-sounding

pundits who had instantly applauded their country's “righteous” retaliation, were now quick to agree that an “errant missile” launched by the US military had dismembered and incinerated 10 Afghan girls, boys and men in a tragic error. **That was a lie, too.** The slaughter of Ahmadi and the other Afghans in that tiny courtyard was not a “mistake”. Misspelling the word “mistake” is a mistake. What US soldiers and spies conspired to do to Ahmadi and his extended family was a heinous crime. It was a crime that the US military has – the incriminating record shows – committed often in Afghanistan and beyond. Only this time, America was forced, grudgingly, to acknowledge its guilt. “Clearly, our intelligence was wrong on this particular white Toyota Corolla,” a US General said. “We thought this was a good lead. We were wrong.” But US soldiers and spies know that being “wrong” rarely results in being arrested. Just like all the other soldiers and spies who have made lethal “mistake” after lethal “mistake” in Afghanistan and beyond, none of the architects and perpetrators of this latest US-engineered bloodbath will be held to account in or out of court. Instead, America may offer the surviving family members a wad of cash as a fleeting and meaningless act of penance to absolve itself of the responsibility for the horror it unleashed via an “errant” missile on still more Afghans trying to survive, as best they can, the deprivations, struggles and indignities of war. On predictable cue, Congress, the military and the “intelligence community” have promised to launch investigations and so-called “lessons learned” inquiries to try to find out what went wrong and prevent the carnage from happening again. Sure, they will. “We need to understand exactly what went wrong and what that means in terms of the limits of what we are able to do,” a US congressman said. **This is yet another feeble lie.** US politicians, soldiers and spies have not “learned” and will never learn. America's sordid, relentless history of killing civilians – many of them children – while waging its imperial wars is proof of that. Otherwise, America would have stopped making its calamitous catalogue of “horrible mistakes” long before another “Hellfire” missile destroyed another

Afghan family in late August. Here is the truth: the sprawling espionage-industrial complex that set its technological cross-hairs on Ahmadi – and tracked his movements before deciding that he was a “terrorist” who had to be summarily executed – is populated, for the most part, by plodding, pedestrian bureaucrats. The spies also know they enjoy immunity from the inhumane consequences of their manifest archive of negligence and ineptness. The overarching conclusion I arrived at after devoting years studying and reporting on the secret, subterranean world of spies is that the popular impression of intelligence agencies as housing dogged people with impressive credentials, dedicated – with missionary zeal – to protecting America from “bad actors” is largely a myth. It is, however, a stubborn, reassuring myth promoted by the television-savvy former spies and their close friends in academia and a bevy of “think-tanks” hired as “consultants” by agreeable US news networks who invariably defend the interests and reputations of the powerful institutions they have faithfully worked for and with in a variety of lucrative capacities. What the herd of cable-news-anointed “experts” are loath to share with their amenable hosts, let alone the networks' fast-evaporating audiences, is that, like any bureaucracy, the vast, cob-web-like army of America's spies is infected by myopia, boredom, laziness, careerism, petty, corrosive jealousies and an engrained inertia that have resulted in intelligence “debacle” after intelligence “debacle”. Rather than finally address and confront this awkward, but demonstrable fact, the ubiquitous “experts” traffic in the easy, palpable lie that the killing of Zemari Ahmadi and seven children was an understandable, albeit sad, “mistake.” When America's soldiers and spies commit their next atrocity, the “experts” will offer up the same flippant excuses and the television hosts will nod in studied solemnity before moving on to the latest manufactured outrage like flitting butterflies. The rest of us would do well to remember how and why Zamir, Faisal, Farzad, Ahmad, Arwin, Benjamin, Hayat, Malika, Somaya and Zemari were annihilated and the American soldiers and spies who, as always, got away with it.

– Courtesy: Al Jazeera

## Unilateralism and international dispute

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Tension between Iran and US is another example of United States unilateral decision when US pulled out from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. JCPOA is an agreement between Iran and five annexes on July 14, 2015. The agreement was endorsed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 on July 20, 2015

**U**NILATERALISM is an approach of international relations in which states act without the consideration of other states and their interests. It is usually contrasted with multilateralism which acts cooperatively with other states. However, unilateralism is often used in negative ways, therefore, scholars criticize on unilateral actions. One common criticism is that it will lead other states to form an opposing alliance and it will spark counterbalancing by other major powers. The arguments are derived from the balance of power theory which is long stapled with realist thinking. Since the last few years, new trends are being observed in the geopolitics such as China's growing confidence in both trade and investment, Iran's aggressive but calculative behavior and rise of Turkey as a new power pole in West Asia. The most important of them all is a decline of United States which is perceived through the number of crises during the last few years. The end of cold war had provided U.S. opportunity to pursue unilateral decision making policy that can be observed in many issues but most important at the time of withdrawal from the Afghan war, JCPOA and Paris climate agreement. But the stories of withdrawal from the Afghan war and JCPOA agreement reflect the consequences of United States unilateral decisions. Post disintegration of Soviet Union, the United States has remained a super power of the world and been a center of the world order. The U.S. dominance was on its peak during 1990s and multilateral intuitions were overshadowed by its supremacy. In 2001, United States attacked Afghanistan and got international support. During 2003, it went ahead with the plan of bombing on Iraq despite the opposition of United Nations. However, the global situation

of present is more complex than the past. After twenty years war, the United State was eager to break the dead lock and agreed to have a dialogue with Taliban. The negotiation between the two parties resolved the conflict and the United States agreed to withdraw from Afghanistan in exchange of guarantee from the Taliban that they should never use Afghanistan to produce terrorist. However the peace agreement was not signed due to Donald Trump's unilateral decision then, it was resumed after few weeks. The whole Afghan war exposes that United States has botched the war. Winning war is not just toppling a hostile regime but it is to stabilize the country after toppling. The American history shows, it is good at the earlier but fares poorly later. In Afghanistan, United States have no other choice but to sign peace agreement with Taliban. Washington left Taliban in Kabul just like Soviet Union who had left Najeebullah in Afghanistan in 1989. Then after few months Najeebullah government collapsed and Soviet Union disintegrated within two years. Let's see whether the history repeats itself or not? Tension between Iran and United States is another example of United States unilateral decision when US pulled out from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. JCPOA is an agreement between Iran and five annexes on July 14, 2015. The agreement was endorsed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 on July 20, 2015. Despite of Iran's compliance of the deal Washington unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA on May 8, 2018 and imposed all sanctions which were lifted by the agreement. The United States did not cite any evidence of Iranian non-compliance with the accord when it drew and according to Arm Control Association, Iran remained in full compliance with the deal after US

withdrawal. Then within the two years Washington terminated all of the waivers for cooperative nuclear projects. There was an immediate reaction by the international leadership including EU, France, Germany, UK, Turkey, China, Russia, Japan and Australia. Alldisliked the unilateral decision of the United States administration and believed and agreed having deal is a better option than no deal at all, and they believed that dialogue is better than confrontation. The unilateral decision of the United States has empowered Iran and weakens the diplomatic efforts as well as it put Middle East at great risk. The decision is an attempt to throw away nonproliferation verification measures and drag the world back to the brink it faced a few years ago. JCPOA was in America's interest but the withdrawal from the deal is not in America interest. In future, U.S. interest will be severely undermined. These events do not mean American domination of the world is over. These events also show that America has failed to shape its world order and is affecting its status in the world. It is happening when china is boosting as an economic power and Russia is making a comeback to its former military powers. Such decline of United States and rise of new and old powers is due to unilateral approach of Washington. Consequently, the new disputes and confrontation all over the world are happening among the major powers in order to maintain their sovereignty and influence around the globe. In summing up, unilateral policies and decision always put the region and world in to risk. Unilateralism is an illegitimate and selfish conduct that damages the soft power of the nation especially if it has large sponsor. It also damages alliances and mutual relationship between nations which leads to unfixable disputes.

## Briefs

PM Khan  
vows to  
accelerate...

FROM PAGE 01

The prime minister, who was addressing a ceremony held in Islamabad to mark the inauguration of a 600 kilovolt (kV) transmission line running between Matiari and Lahore, pointed out that the pandemic had stalled communications in many areas, led to travel bans and affected supply chains across the world. Consequently, difficulties were also faced in the execution of CPEC projects, PM Imran explained, adding that the setback, however, was "temporary". He expressed the hope that with vaccinations against the coronavirus picking up pace across the world, the coming waves of the pandemic would not be as intense as earlier ones and in turn, the work on CPEC projects would not be affected but expedited instead.

Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong termed the operationalization of 660 KV HVDC project a milestone and said Pakistan's power grid system had now entered a new era of development and up-gradation. He said low cost electricity was key to socio-economic development of Pakistan and vowed that China would continue to extend its support in this regard.

He mentioned that the 886 km transmission line would go along 510 km of motorway and create around 70,000 jobs in the country. The HVDC transmission line project will evacuate power from the upcoming coal-based thermal power plants located at Port Qasim, Hub and Thar. The National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC) carried out a study through an international consultant which proposed HVDC technology for transfer of bulk power for its cost-effectiveness and lower line losses. Moreover, the requirement of 'right of way' for HVDC is less than High-Voltage Alternate Current (HVAC) lines.

emphasizes  
promoting  
business...

FROM PAGE 01

The Ravi River front at the Dubai Expo 2020 starting next month to attract investors. Imran Khan directed the concerned authorities to address the issues by adopting a proactive strategy so that Pakistan could reap maximum benefits from these innovative and sustainable real estate projects by attracting Foreign Direct Investment.

RUEDA's various projects include the installation of a solar-powered renewable power plant, the establishment of Special Economic Zones and Special Technology Zones, the launch of ferry operations, the establishment of a Knowledge Park and the Rakh Jhok Farms. All of these projects will be independent of their financial needs so that their sustainability can be ensured.

UN envoy  
for end to  
Palestinian..

FROM PAGE 01

However, efforts must continue to address the ever-worrying situation on the ground, including reversing negative trends in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and stabilizing the fragile situation in Gaza, he told the 15-member Council in a briefing delivered via video-teleconference.

"I once again urge Israelis, Palestinians, regional states and the broader international community to take practical steps that will enable the parties to re-engage on the path to peace," he said, adding that he will continue to engage with the Middle East Quartet, key regional partners and Israeli and Palestinian leaders in that regard.

Wennesland reported that during the June 12 to September 27 period covered in the Secretary-General's report, no new Israeli settlement housing plans were advanced or approved. However, the seizure and demolition of Palestinian-owned structures continued in the West Bank, while daily violence left 24 Palestinians and one Israeli soldier dead.

President Alvi directs GSV for  
revival of Football in Pakistan

President said "plans are very exciting and more importantly realistic. GSV is what Pakistan needs and they will work without any affiliation to any PFF faction and with no interference from the FIFA NC - this is about football in Pakistan"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi held top table talks with board members of Global Soccer Ventures (GSV) Yasir Mehmood, Chairman Zabe Khan, Chief Executive Officer and Saqib Rafiq Chaudhry, Chief Operating Officer to become the custodians of football through its private football enterprise forging a strategic alliance between UK and Pakistan.

With former England and Liverpool star Michael Owen unveiled last week as The PFL Ambassador, Owen sent a public message on twitter to meet President ArifAlvi in Pakistan soon. The hopes of millions across the nation have been rekindled and the world's most popular game's next



destination is Pakistan.

Pakistan's President ArifAlvi said "plans are very exciting and more importantly realistic. GSV is what Pakistan needs and they will work without any affiliation to any PFF faction

and with no interference from the FIFA NC - this is about football in Pakistan. Football needs experts like GSV to create a new sports economy in Pakistan which never existed or understood in Pakistan and put

simply even I do now". Zabe Khan CEO of GSV said "My remit is to recalibrate our nation with a future proof football ecosystem. The UK and Pakistan partnership in football is all set to flourish in a sus-

tainable development plan to finally give Pakistan a level playing field to meet international standards". Yasir Mehmood, Chairman of GSV said "Football all over the world belongs to the private sector - so why

should Pakistan be any different. It is about time we revive 70 years of football that has been lost in translation and misinterpreted by many so it is time a UK join forces.

GSV is investing and creating a new sports economy in Pakistan worth \$60 million over the next 5 years and will prioritise on the crippled football infrastructure in Pakistan. The stadium design and schedule was disclosed to President Arif Alvi in this high level meeting. More than the league, the state of the art stadium has created a sense of excitement amongst senior government officials in Pakistan. The public speculation over the design of the stadium is also gathering momentum with plans to unveil it from the home of football in England next

Israeli forces kill  
three Palestinians in  
separate incidents

FOREIGN DESK

OCCUPIED WEST BANK: Israeli occupation forces have shot and killed three Palestinians in separate incidents in the occupied West Bank village of Burqin, in the Old City of Jerusalem, and in the Gaza Strip. The first of those killed early on Thursday was identified as 22-year-old Alaa Nasser Mohammed Zayyoud from the village of al-Silah al-Harithiya, northwest Jenin, in the occupied West Bank. According to local media reports, Zayyoud was shot overnight in the nearby village of Burqin during an armed confrontation with the Israeli army after it raided the town with dozens of military jeeps and special forces at dawn to carry out arrests. The Palestinian Ministry of Health said Zayyoud was shot with four bullets; two in his chest, one in his neck and one in his right thigh. Witnesses told local media that an Israeli sniper shot him at close range, before "they ran towards him and continued liquidating him from point-blank range". "The jeeps and the army then surrounded him. They blocked the ambulance from reaching him [...] they allowed the ambulance to come after they made sure he was dead," the witnesses said. Two Palestinian men were reportedly injured in Burqin and were taken to hospital for treatment, while two others were arrested, according to local media. The second Palestinian killed by Israeli forces on Thursday was identified as 30-year-old Israa Khuzaima, a mother of three, from the village of Qabatiya south of Jenin. Israeli forces announced they shot dead Khuzaima at Bab al-Silsila, also known as Chain Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem, claiming she had tried to stab an officer.



TEHRAN: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Iran Ali Alizada presented a copy of credentials to Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian. - DNA

Ronaldo late show gives  
United win over Villarreal

MANCHESTER: Cristiano Ronaldo grabbed a stoppage-time winner as Manchester United came from behind to secure a fortunate 2-1 Champions League Group F win over Villarreal at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

On the night he set the new record for the most appearances in the competition, the 36-year-old Portuguese delivered the killer blow to save his manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer from another disappointing result and the inevitable inequities. "When you've got Cristiano on the pitch, you've always got a chance," the Norwegian said. "Seriously, he's so good in front of goal. Its a massive result for the team and for the spirit of the team," he added. United had fallen a goal behind to Paco Alcacer's 53rd-minute opener be-

fore drawing level with a brilliant volley from Alex Telles but failing to make the most of the momentum shift. After three defeats in their last four games, including the loss in Bern to Young Boys in the group opener, United could ill-afford another slip-up. But for long stretches of the game an upset looked very much on the cards and had the visitors been sharper in front of goal, the contest might have been over by the break.

Villarreal had beaten Solskjaer's team on penalties in last season's Europa League final and Unai Emery's side's excellent organisation and ability on the break again posed problems for a disjointed United. With Harry Maguire, Aaron Wan Bissaka and Luke Shaw all missing from the defence, United

were easily opened up in the first half with Diogo Dalot enduring a particularly difficult 45 minutes. Arnaut Danjuma tormented the United right back and tested David De Gea twice after cutting in from the left flank. Alcacer had a header from a Danjuma cross tipped over by the United keeper and, after a slip-up by Raphael Varane, found himself one-on-one with De Gea but fired wide.

After squandering those chances, however, Villarreal took a deserved lead when a counter-attack was finished off by Alcacer who turned in Danjuma's low cross. United struck back seven minutes later with a cleverly worked free kick as Bruno Fernandes chipped the ball deep to Telles on the left and the Brazilian fired home a perfect volley. - Agencies

Haider Ali sparkles  
in Northern's victory

RAWALPINDI:

Haider Ali remained not out for 91 runs as Northern chased 201 runs against Central Punjab (CP) with six wickets in hand in National T20 Cup. Haider was unbeatable throughout the second inning and single-handedly took his team to chase a huge total on the board. Earlier, it was CP's skipper Babar Azam who scored unbeaten 105 runs to help his team raise 200-2 in the 11th match of the tournament. Babar stood out with flying colors, smashing the ball all around the park with ease and brilliance. His sixth T20 hundred accounted for 11 boundaries and three sixes, making him the highest individual run-scorer this season so far. After deciding to bat first, Babar led CP with the help of openers scored 61 runs in the powerplay. Ahmed supported his skipper Babar at the crease and gave full entertainment followed by five boundaries to Sohail Tanvir in a powerplay over.

Ahmed fell when CP was at 67 and he scored 37 off 20 balls with smoking eight boundaries overall. Mohammad Akhlaq made 21 off 17 with two boundaries but couldn't continue for long, bringing Shoaib Malik at the other end of Babar. They both scored 92 runs with Malik's contribution of 31 runs off 21 balls laced with four boundaries. It wasn't a good day for Northern's bowlers as only Shadab Khan and Mohammad Nawaz managed to take a wicket each. In reply, Northern lost their openers Nasir Nawaz (6) and Sarmad Hameed (19) for 56 runs. But, Haider alongside Nawaz added 84 runs to the team's total. Nawaz fell after scoring 41 laced with two boundaries and four sixes but Haider kept going. Haider smashed 91 runs off 53 balls including six boundaries and as many sixes. Asif Ali anchored worthy 28 runs off 14 balls with the help of two boundaries and four sixes. For CP, Hasan Ali, EhsanAdil, and WahabRiaz bagged a wicket each. - DNA

Covid-19  
national  
tally...

FROM PAGE 01

4,038 in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), 1,524 in Balochistan, 513 Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and 746 in AJK. Around 1,169,566 people have recovered from the disease so far across the country making it a significant count with over 90 per cent recovery ratio of the affected patients. Since the pandemic broke out, a total of 1,245,127 cases were detected that also included the perished, recovered and under treatment Covid-19 patients so far, including AJK 34,127, Balochistan 32,916, GB 10,321, ICT 105,417, KP 173,796, Punjab 431,092 and Sindh 457,458.

About 27,729 deaths were recorded in country since the eruption of the contagion. Around 7,382 people perished in Sindh, three of them died in the hospitals during last 24 hours. 12,617 people died in Punjab with 22 deaths occurred during past 24 hours. 17 of the deceased died in the hospitals and five out of the hospitals. As many as 5,537 people expired in KP, 10 of them died in hospitals and two out of the hospitals, 923 individuals died in ICT, one of them died in the hospital, 348 people died in Balochistan, 184 infected people perished in GB, and 738 people died in AJK.

Draft law  
on cards...

FROM PAGE 01

Sources privy to the matter said that the draft will be presented to President Arif Alvi after its approval from Prime Minister Imran Khan. Sources said that Iqbal will keep serving the post of NAB chairman till a new chairman is appointed, adding that the tenure of a NAB chairman cannot be extended under Section 6 (b) of the NAB Ordinance 1999.



## US will not normalise diplomatic ties with Syria

Trump administration last June imposed its most sweeping sanctions ever - hitting al-Assad and his inner circle to choke off revenue for his government in a bid to force it back to United Nations-led negotiations and broker an end to the country's 10-year war

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The United States has no plans to "normalise or upgrade" diplomatic relations with the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and also does not encourage others to do so, a US State Department spokesperson has said.

The comments came in response to questions from the Reuters news agency on whether Washington was encouraging and supporting a rapprochement between Jordan and Syria after Jordan fully reopened its main border crossing

with Syria on Wednesday. The move was to boost the countries' struggling economies and reinforce a push by Arab states to reintegrate Syria after it was shunned during the civil war. "The United States will not normalise or upgrade our diplomatic relations with the Assad regime nor do we encourage others to do so, given the atrocities inflicted by the Assad regime on the Syrian people," a State Department spokesperson said in an email on Wednesday. "Assad has regained no legitimacy in our eyes, and there is no question of the US normalising relations with his government at this

time." It was among the strongest comments to date on Syria from the Biden administration, whose Syria policy has largely focused on ensuring the permanent defeat of ISIL (ISIS) group and providing humanitarian aid to the Syrian people. The US has not had a diplomatic presence in Syria since 2012. The Trump administration last June imposed its most sweeping sanctions ever - hitting al-Assad and his inner circle to choke off revenue for his government in a bid to force it back to United Nations-led negotiations and broker an end to the country's 10-year war. Arab states cut ties with

Syria during the civil war, which the United Nations says killed at least 350,000 people, and US-ally Arab states, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates backed opposition groups fighting al-Assad. The UAE and Syria restored diplomatic ties in 2018. The Egyptian and Syrian foreign ministers met on Friday on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York, in what Egyptian media said was the first meeting at that level for about 10 years. Officials in Jordan, a US ally, and Lebanon have urged Washington to ease sanctions on Syria.

"We believe that stability in Syria, and the greater region, can only be achieved through a political process that represents the will of all Syrians and we are committed to working with allies, partners, and the UN to ensure that a durable political solution remains within reach," the State Department spokesperson said.

Al-Assad has recovered most of Syria but some areas remain outside his control. Turkish forces are deployed in much of the north and northwest, the last rebel stronghold, and US forces are stationed in the Kurdish-controlled east and northeast.

## Briefs

## Prominent Rohingya leader shot dead in Bangladesh

AGENCIES

DHAKA: A prominent Rohingya Muslim leader has been shot dead in a refugee camp in southern Bangladesh. Mohibullah, who was in his late 40s, led one of the largest of several community groups to emerge since more than 730,000 mostly Muslim Rohingyas fled Myanmar amid a brutal military crackdown in August 2017. He was talking to other refugee leaders outside his office after attending evening prayers when an unidentified gunman shot him at least three times, Mohammad Nowkhim, a spokesman of Ullah's Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights (ARPSH), said. "He was shot dead at point-blank," he told AFP news agency from a hideout, as the killing sent many Rohingyas into hiding. Mohibullah was rushed to the main Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) or Doctors Without Borders hospital in the camp. "He was brought in dead," a medical source confirmed to AFP.

## Armenia detains ex-defence minister

YEREVAN: Armenia has detained on corruption charges the former defence minister who led the country's military during last year's deadly war with Azerbaijan, officials said on Thursday. Last autumn Armenia's armed conflict with Azerbaijan over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region claimed more than 6,500 lives and saw Yerevan cede swathes of territory it had controlled for decades. The war sparked harsh criticism of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, with opposition parties accusing him of failing to prepare the army for possible large-scale hostilities and betraying national interests by agreeing to a humiliating truce. On Thursday, Armenia's state security service announced the detention of former defence minister David Tonoyan for alleged "abuse of office, forgery, and embezzlement while procuring weapons for the country's armed forces." Tonoyan, 53, was appointed defence minister in 2018 and resigned shortly after the six-week war. He is suspected of misappropriating some \$4.7 million, the security service said, adding that "many more former and serving military officials" were being investigated for similar offences. Ethnic Armenian separatists in Nagorno-Karabakh broke away from Azerbaijan as the Soviet Union collapsed, and an ensuing conflict claimed around 30,000 lives. At the time, Armenians took control of the enclave as well as seven nearby districts of Azerbaijan - some 20 per cent of the country's national territory.

## Bulgaria's COVID-19 cases exceed 500,000

SOFIA: The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Bulgaria reached 500,112 after 2,142 new infections were reported in the past 24 hours, official data showed Thursday. The country's death toll from the epidemic rose to 20,812 after 87 patients died in the last day, while recoveries grew by 1,306 to 435,780, according to the country's COVID-19 information portal. The data also showed that 9,014 doses of coronavirus vaccines were administered in Bulgaria in the past 24 hours, taking the total number to 2.53 million. According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, only 22.7 per cent of the adult population in Bulgaria have been fully vaccinated, ranking the last in the European Union (EU). - APP

## SCO countries call for closer co-op to tackle challenges

The organization has become an excellent and promising platform for all member states to promote pragmatic and inclusive cooperation in all fields of mutual interest including digital economy and trade

BEIJING: The ongoing Zhongguancun (ZGC) Forum in Beijing organized the First Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Countries Parallel Forum Session, calling bloc countries to cooperate closely to tackle common challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic. Rumman Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the SCO Secretariat, said the organization has become an excellent and promising platform for all member states to promote pragmatic and inclusive cooperation in all fields of mutual interest including digital economy and trade. Li Junjie, executive deputy district head of Haidian in

Beijing, said that industries of SCO members are highly complementary from the technological innovation perspective. Some members have world-leading technologies in aviation, space and nuclear energy. "We see that SCO countries are opening up new growth opportunities and fostering new growth drivers. In the era of globalization, openness and innovation are an irresistible historical trend," Li said. He said Haidian, which hosts ZGC sci-tech park, is an innovation and development hub. With cooperation among SCO members, a new model of open and innovative cooperation will



be created to foster new growth drivers. O. Tychiev, deputy minister of innovative development of the Republic of Uzbekistan, said the COVID-19

pandemic, which led to a sharp reduction in trade and economic ties, recession, rise in unemployment, has affected the dynamics of development.

"This global challenge can be overcome by preserving and enhancing our traditions of good neighborliness, equality, trust and interests of each other. Today, more than ever, it is important to strengthen the 'Shanghai Spirit' - this unique experience of multilateral cooperation," Tychiev said. According to Tychiev, the Uzbek-Chinese pharmaceutical technology park in the Tashkent region, which is among the infrastructure projects under Uzbekistan-China cooperation, creates an innovative platform and a competitive environment for scientific and innovative activities. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the estab-

lishment of SCO, which has made great achievements. At the session, firms and organizations from bloc countries inked a joint initiative vowing to support innovative enterprises in science and technology to expand to or set foot in other SCO states, and provide better conditions and an inclusive environment for collaborative work on new technology and technology transfer. The 2021 ZGC forum from Sept. 24 to 28, themed "intelligence, health, and carbon neutrality," is hosting more than 60 events, including meetings, exhibitions, research achievement releases, competitions in hi-tech fields, and technology trading. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Khazar Farhadov met with Muhammad Aamar Aftab Qureshi, Additional Secretary Afghanistan & West Asia of MOFA of Pakistan. - DNA

## Turkey rejects US criticism over S-400 systems purchase

AGENCIES

NEW YORK: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has rejected the U.S. criticism over Turkey's purchase of S-400 air defence systems from Russia, Yeni Shafak newspaper reported on September 30. The American New York Times newspaper published the S-400 part of the interview that it had conducted with Erdogan, who was on a visit to New York to participate in the 76th UN General Assembly session. In his interview with the newspaper, Erdogan rejected the criticism that the purchase of the advanced

Russian defence system will undermine NATO - the main military alliance of the West. "If the Americans had sold the Patriot missile defence system to Turkey, we wouldn't have had to buy the S-400s," Erdogan stressed. Reminding both NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg's and former US President Donald Trump's approval on Turkey's right to choose its weapon suppliers, Erdogan stressed: "We buy our own weapons." "I think it was worth it. We can strengthen our defence as we wish," said Erdogan, while answering the question of whether Turkey's purchase of the S-400 systems was worth the tension with the U.S.

## Dubai opens biggest event since pandemic

FOREIGN DESK

DUBAI: The Covid-delayed Expo 2020 kicks off in Dubai on Thursday with an extravagant opening ceremony for what is expected to be the world's biggest event since the start of the pandemic. Dubai's edition of the global fair, the first ever held in the Middle East, hopes for 25 million visitors over six months to its gleaming pavilions in the desert. Dubai's ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum is at 1640 GMT to open the event grouping more than 190 countries which he has promised will be "the most exceptional Expo in the history of the event". The Expo site in the dusty Dubai suburbs has remained strictly off-limits during its year-long postponement. Architectural marvels and a long list of technological innovations will feature among the exhibits, showcasing the ingenuity and technological innovations of the participating countries. The first world fair was held in London in 1851, when it was housed in the purpose-built Crystal Palace, and the Paris edition of 1889 featured the Eiffel Tower, at first intended as a temporary attraction.

## China's outward FDI ranks No.1 globally

AGENCIES

BEIJING: China's outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) ranks first globally for the first time, and Pakistan makes it to top 10 among BRI countries and top 20 globally in China's OFDI, the Annual Statistical Communiqué of China's Outward Foreign Direct Investment 2020 showed. According to Gwadar Pro, the Communiqué is jointly issued by the Ministry of Commerce of China, China's National Bureau of Statistics and the State Administration of Foreign Exchange. The Communiqué also highlights that China's OFDI overtakes the U.S. with an amount of \$153.71 billion in 2020, which represents a 12.3% increase year-on-year. A total of eighteen industrial sectors are covered in China's OFDI 2020. Region-wise, the largest share goes to Hong Kong, China, which accounts for 58%. According to the statistics released, China's OFDI stock amounts to \$2.58 trillion at the end of 2020, remaining the third largest in the world, following the United States (\$8.13 trillion) and the Netherlands (\$3.8 trillion). For five consecutive years, the flow of China's OFDI has been accounting for over 10 percent of the world.

## UK police officer gets life term for rape, murder

WEB DESK

LONDON: A British court has handed the police officer who kidnapped, raped and murdered Sarah Everard a whole life sentence without parole. Wayne Couzens, 48, abducted Everard on March 3 while she was walking home from a friend's house in south London. He had pleaded guilty to murder, rape and kidnap. Thursday's sentencing at London's Central Criminal Court means Couzens, who was part of the Metropolitan Police (MET) service's elite diplomatic protection unit at the time of Everard's killing, will never be eligible for release from prison. Reading the sentence, Justice Adrian Fulford described the circumstances of the murder as "grotesque" and said Couzens had demonstrated "no evidence of genuine contrition". He said the seriousness of the case was so "exceptionally high" that it warranted a whole life order, the most severe punishment available in the UK. Fulford said Couzens, who was present in court on Thursday, had gone "hunting a lone female to kidnap and rape" on the evening of Everard's abduction having plotted his crime in "unspeakably" grim detail beforehand.

## Azerbaijan, Belarus mull military co-op



DNA

BAKU: The Azerbaijani and Belarusian military officials have discussed military cooperation in Baku, the Defence Ministry reported on September 30. Under the cooperation plan between the two countries, the sides held a working meeting on the "Development of rocket and artillery forces" at the ministry's international military cooperation department, the report added. The delegations also discussed military and technical cooperation between the rocket and artillery troops and the experience exchange between the military personnel. The visitors were also briefed about the role of artillerymen in Azerbaijan's victory in the Second Karabakh war. As a part of the visit, the guests are expected to visit Azerbaijan's military units of the rocket and artillery troops. Azerbaijan and Belarus

are cooperating in various areas, including in the military sphere. Azerbaijan purchased different types of weapons, as well as the Polonez operational and tactical missile systems from Belarus. As a part of his visit on May 20, 2021, Belarusian Defence Minister Viktor Khrenin visited several military units in Azerbaijan, including the one where the Polonez operational-tactical missile systems are located. At the end of the visit, the defence ministers visited the Polonez operational-tactical missile systems storage park, combat missile storage, and a technical service centre. Khrenin expressed confidence that bilateral military ties will further develop. He stressed that Belarus always supported Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. Earlier, Azerbaijan and Belarus signed a bilateral cooperation plan between the two countries' defence ministries for 2021.

## Pakistan envoy hails diaspora role in Canadian politics

Ameer Khurram Rathore said he had set out to enhance the bilateral trade and commerce between Pakistan and Canada and increase the intake of Pakistani students

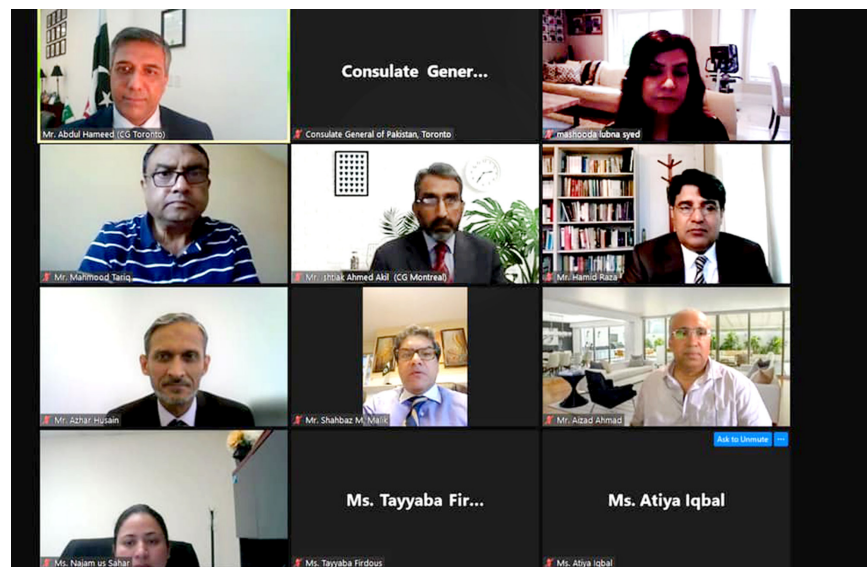
DNA

OTTAWA: Ameer Khurram Rathore hails role of Pakistani diaspora in Canadian politics, public life Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Canada Ameer Khurram Rathore has lauded the role and contribution of Pakistani diaspora in the political and public life in Canada. He said that the recent showing of the Pakistani diaspora in the electoral process in Canada, particularly the participation of nearly 30 persons in the electoral process and the election of six of them as members of Parliament, was a reflection of their laudable role and contribution to the politics and public life in Canada and he was sure the Pakistani community would further strengthen its role and identity as an engaged community in the social and political fabric of Canada in future. He made this statement while addressing an online public forum held by the Pakistan High Commission Canada along with its Consulates in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver to address the issues and concerns of Pakistani Canadians with regard to various consular and public services. Consulate General of Pakistan Toronto Abdul Hameed, Consulate General of Pakistan Vancouver Janbaz Khan and Consulate General of Pakistan

Montreal Ishtiaq Ahmed Aqil also attended the forum and answered questions of the community. During the hour-long public forum, a broad range of issues including procedure for processing of succession or legal heir certificates, suggestions for ways-on-line banking, tax and other services for overseas Pakistan, modalities for increasing intake Pakistani students in fast-track visa processing facility of Student Direct Stream (SDS), organisation of Azadi Day and other national events at large, community level, proposals for bilateral aviation businesses, issue of taxation in case of using Roshan Digital Accounts (RDAs), renewal of NICOP, opening

of NADRA facility in Toronto and updated directory of Pakistani businessmen and issue of job requirement or proof of income for opening Roshan Digital Account (RDA) were discussed. High Commissioner Ameer Khurram Rathore said he had set out to enhance the bilateral trade and commerce between Pakistan and Canada and increase the intake of Pakistani students in the Canadian universities and colleges under the fast-track visa processing scheme of Student Direct Stream (SDS) offered by the Canadian government to only seven countries, including Pakistan. He said the Pakistan High Commission Canada would arrange in November an on-

line education expo bringing together educational institutions and educational consultants from Pakistan and Canada to create synergy in efforts for creating awareness of the SDS and draw interest and attention of the prospective Pakistani students to educational opportunities in Canada available under the SDS. During the public forum, the community members were assured that the Government of Pakistan was striving to facilitate and streamline the provision of online NICOP and other services through NADRA and a NADRA facility would soon be opened in Toronto to provide on-the-spot facilitation to members of community.



## Decline in public health conditions in Afghanistan

The agency pointed out that only 17 per cent of the over 2,300 health facilities previously supported by the World Bank, are fully functional, two-thirds of which have run out of essential medicines

UNITED NATIONS: Healthcare provision is deteriorating fast in Afghanistan, the World Health Organization (WHO), a Geneva-based UN agency, has warned, with cases of measles and diarrhoea shooting up, and polio becoming a "major risk". According to WHO, the coronavirus response has also declined and almost half of the country's children are at risk of malnutrition. Moreover, the agency pointed out that only 17 per cent of the over 2,300 health facilities previously supported by the World Bank,

are fully functional, two-thirds of which have run out of essential medicines. Despite the rapidly deteriorating health situation, WHO said it is working with donors to sustain health facilities to prevent outbreaks, and rising illness. And as the coronavirus continues to be a significant challenge, the UN health agency is boosting surveillance and testing capacities within the country. "Recently, we have airlifted 50,000 COVID-19 tests that are being distributed to 32 labs across the country", WHO said,

adding that 10 more labs are also being planned. Several humanitarian partners on the ground reiterated their commitment to continue working together with the UN to support the nation's ailing health system. Speaking at a regular news briefing in New York, UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told journalists that the World Food Programme (WFP) and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) will be scaling up their work in the country, with up to 100 new mobile health and nutrition teams. He also relayed that the UN Pop-

ulation Fund (UNFPA) said that midwives throughout Afghanistan are continuing to operate, bringing critical life-saving care to women and girls in need. UNFPA's midwifery helpline has been providing uninterrupted remote support to midwives facing complicated deliveries, dangerous pregnancies and other critical concerns. A Flash Appeal launched on 7 September by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) aims to help 11 million people survive as food is running out and the country's

basic services are on the verge of collapse. Requesting \$606 million in the remaining months of this year, Mr. Dujarric reminded that the appeal is only 22 per cent funded, which according to OCHA's calculation, represents just \$135 million. "The UN is asking donors to fast-track funding to prevent avoidable deaths, prevent displacement and reduce suffering", he said. "We are also asking our donors to ensure that funding is flexible enough to adapt to the fast-changing conditions on the ground". - APP

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## Briefs

### PM directs provinces to resolve issues of farmers

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The federal government had decided to resolve issues of farmers on priority basis by allotting a special category for them on Pakistan Citizens Portal. On the instructions of the Prime Minister, special directions were issued by Prime Minister Delivery Unit, through a letter, to the provincial governments for resolution of problems of farmers.

The Prime Minister directed that government officers should resolve issues of farmers on priority basis. The farmers could register their issues and complain directly at the Citizens Portal and they would not have to visit government offices. Chief Secretaries would prepare a quarterly report of officers who would be designated to resolve issues of farmers.

About 123 officers had been given duties for resolving problems of farmers. Forty three officers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 57 in Punjab, 12 in Balochistan, four in Sindh, four at federal level, two in Kashmir and one in Gilgit Baltistan were given the duties.

The farmers could register their complaints regarding Kissan card, fertilizer, seeds, water theft, crops, pesticides and 52 other issues.

According to the letter, a campaign would also be launched for creating awareness among the farmers.

### Over 2,000 Afghan health facilities shuttered

MONITORING DESK

KABUL: Afghanistan's health system is on the verge of collapse, a top Red Cross official warned Thursday, saying more than 2,000 health facilities had been shuttered across the conflict-ravaged country.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) warned that a dire lack of funding was pushing Afghanistan's health system to the brink.

"People might agree to work without salaries for a few more weeks," Alexander Matheou, IFRC's Asia Pacific director, told a press conference in Kabul. "But once medicines run out totally, if you can't switch on the lights, if you've got nothing to offer somebody who comes to your clinic, then they'll shut the doors."

Devastated by more than four decades of war, the Afghan economy has all but ground to a halt since the Taliban's takeover last month, amid sanctions and a cutoff in foreign aid.

This has taken a particularly heavy toll on the health sector, which was primarily run by NGOs with internal funding before the Taliban came to power.

### Captain embraces martyrdom in Tank IBO

RAWALPINDI: A Captain of Pakistan Army on Thursday embraced martyrdom (shahadat) during an Intelligence Based Operation (IBO) in Tank, and a terrorist commander of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) identified as Khawaza Din alias Sher Khan got killed.

The Security Forces conducted an IBO in Tank on reported presence of terrorists, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) media release.

During intense exchange of fire, Captain Sikandar, age 27 years from Paktan embraced shahadat, it added. The Security Forces recovered weapons and ammunition from the hideout. - APP

# Sarkozy given jail term over campaign spending

## The former French president is found guilty of illegally funding his unsuccessful 2012 re-election

AGENCIES

PARIS: A French court Thursday convicted former president Nicolas Sarkozy of illegal campaign financing over massive overspending on his 2012 re-election campaign, six months after he was found guilty of corruption in a separate trial. Sarkozy, who spent nearly twice the legal limit on his failed bid for a second term in office, will find out his sentence when the judge finishes reading her verdict later in the day.

pulled out all the stops in 2012 to try fend off the ultimately victorious Socialist candidate, Francois Hollande.

A series of lavish US-style election rallies caused his costs to spiral, with the final bill coming to at least 42.8 million euros (\$49.7 million), nearly double the legal limit of 22.5 million euros. The case is known as the Bygmalion affair, after the name of the public relations firm which set up a system of fake invoices to mask the real cost of the events.

Sarkozy, who remains a hugely popular and influential figure on

the right despite being caught up in multiple investigations since losing office, was not in court for the verdict.

At his five-week trial in May and June, the prosecution portrayed him as having a "cavalier" attitude to the public money available to candidates during campaigning and said he ignored warnings from his accountants about the ballooning costs.

Sarkozy dismissed the allegations of wanton recklessness as "a fairy tale", saying he had been too busy running the country to pay attention to the finer details of his campaign finances.



He also denied any knowledge of the fake invoices.

Illegal campaign financing carries a maximum sentence of a year in prison and a fine of 3,750 euros.

Prosecutors had asked the court to give Sarkozy a one-year term, but to suspend six months of the sentence.

Thirteen other people, including Sarkozy's former campaign manager, several Bygmalion executives and a handful of former directors of Sarkozy's The Republicans party were also tried in the case. The court will deliver their verdicts on Thursday.

### Three PAF officers promoted to the rank of Air Marshal

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan has promoted 03 PAF Air officers to the rank of Air Marshal. The promoted Air Officers include Air Marshal Chaudhary Ahsan Rafiq, Air Marshal Waqas Ahmed Sulehri and Air Marshal Ahmad Hassan.

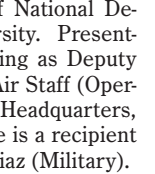
**Air Marshal Chaudhary Ahsan Rafiq** was commissioned in GD (P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in June, 1989. During his career, he has commanded JF-17 Test & Evaluation Squadron, an Operational Flying Wing and an Operational Air Base. He has also served as Commander Air Force Strategic Command at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a graduate of National Defence University. Presently, he is serving as Chief Project Director JF-17 at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).



**Air Marshal Waqas Ahmed Sulehri** was commissioned in GD (P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in June, 1989. During his career, he has commanded a Fighter Squadron, a Flying Wing and an Operational Air Base. He has served as Director General (Projects) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He has also performed his duties as Air Attaché in Washington DC, USA. He is a graduate of National Defence University. Presently, he is serving as Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (Operations) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).



**Air Marshal Ahmad Hassan** was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in June, 1989. During his career, he has commanded an Engineering Wing and served as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Aircraft Engineering) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He has also served as Managing Director Aircraft Rebuild Factory, Kamra. He is a graduate of National Defence University. Presently, he is serving as Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (Engineering) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a recipient of Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military).



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### US, Russia launch discreet new round of talks

DNA

GENEVA: Russian and US diplomats held talks behind closed doors in Geneva on Thursday, the latest round of discussions aimed at ironing out the many tensions between the world's top two nuclear powers.

US State Department number two Wendy Sherman and Russia's deputy foreign minister Sergei Ryabkov were due to meet for most of the day in what the US mission in Geneva hoped would be "productive talks."

In June, US President Joe Biden and Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin had met in a high-profile summit where they had agreed it was vital to keep talking despite the differences that divide them.

From cyber attacks on US entities and meddling in the last two US presidential elections, to human rights violations and aggression against Ukraine and other European countries, the US list of allegations against the Kremlin runs long.

Putin though insists he is just challenging US hegemony, and has denied any connection to what the US says are Russia-based hacking and ransomware gangs, or having any hand in the deaths of many opponents during two decades in power.

The Geneva talks began around 10:00 am (0800 GMT), said a member of Russia's mission to the UN.

### Japan satisfied over investor friendly policies

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Japanese Ambassador Kuninori Matsuda called on the Federal Minister for Energy Muhammad Azhar in his office Thursday. The Minister for Energy lauded the efforts of Japanese Ambassador Kuninori Matsuda for strengthening Pak-Japan economic relations during his 3-year tenure in Pakistan.

During the meeting the Federal Minister highlighted work of Japanese Ambassador for successfully implementing projects related to economic and social development including projects of water management, clean drinking water, and energy. The Minister also mentioned

the key initiatives and expeditious steps taken by the present government for the promotion of clean and green energy resources and informed that the all the future energy projects would be Renewable Energy based.

Kuninori Matsuda, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan expressed great satisfaction over the investor-friendly policy of present government which attracted foreign investors including Japanese Companies to invest in Pakistan.

The Ambassador also stressed the importance of regional connectivity with Central Asia which would yield economic opportunities in the region through enhanced trade, investment and tourism.



LAHORE: Lt. Gen Abdul Aziz giving souvenir to Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf Saeed Al Maliki during latter's visit to the corps headquarters. - DNA

### Over two-thirds of US Muslims face Islamophobia

WEB DESK

ANKARA: Some 67.5% of the Muslims living in the US have experienced Islamophobia at least once in their life, according to a study by the University of California, Berkeley.

Women reported more Islamophobic experience than men as the rates stood at 76.7% for Muslim women compared to 58.6% Muslim men, the Othring & Belonging Institute said in a press release on Wednesday.

According to the survey, two out of three Muslims were exposed to Islamophobic acts, while 33% of respondents said they had hidden their religious identities at some moments to avoid certain speeches and actions for fear of facing backlash.

An overwhelming 93.7% of the respondents stated

that Islamophobia affects their emotional and mental health. Nearly 45% of those aged between 18-29 were more likely than any other group to have hidden their religious identity.

"The survey, conducted two decades after the 9/11 attacks which led to a surge of hate crimes and prompted government policies targeting Muslims, provides insight into the experiences, lived realities, and psychological impacts of Islamophobia on millions of US residents," the press release read.

A total of 1,123 Muslims, roughly half women and half men, joined the survey. The participants live and/or work in the US and they are both citizens and non-citizens.

Among them are Muslims of various ages, national and ethnic backgrounds, and educational levels. The survey includes over 60 questions.

### Israeli FM lands in Bahrain on landmark visit

AGENCIES

MANAMA: Israel's Foreign Minister Yair Lapid began a landmark visit Thursday to Bahrain where he will open the Israeli embassy one year after the US-brokered normalisation of ties.

The Israeli top diplomat touched down at Manama airport, where a Gulf Air plane was due to take off for the first commercial flight between the two countries shortly afterwards.

Lapid is making Israel's first bilateral ministerial visit to Bahrain, part of a thaw in regional relations after the United Arab Emirates, Morocco and Sudan also established ties last year under agreements known as the Abraham Accords.

However, anger simmers in some quarters over the move, which broke with decades of Arab consensus that there would be no relations with Israel while the Palestinian question remains unresolved.

### Pakistan attends Int'l Military moot in China

#### PLAAF is upgrading its combat equipment, flight training concept and talent cultivation mode at a faster pace amid the trend of science and technology innovation

DNA

BEIJING: The representatives from 49 countries including Pakistan attended the International Military Flight Training Conference 2021 held in Zhuhai, China. Twelve Chinese and foreign guests from military and civilian circles made speeches around the theme of "Talent, Innovation, Collaboration, Development" at the conference hosted by the Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF).

An official from the PLAAF said at the conference that the air force development and future intelligentized air battles have put forward new requirements for the competence of pilots,

and the PLAAF is engaged in forward production of new-type pilots following the guideline that talent cultivation, commanding system and armaments development should proceed in coordination, according to China Military Online.

"Cultivating air force commanders for the era of intelligent air battle will be an important brand-new topic in the development of air force," said Li Xiaocheng, vice president of Chinese PLA Air Force Command College.

According to Li, the simulated training mode will be upgraded from "simulation + network" to "virtual + intelligent", and the training exercise pattern will be evolved from "life-fire confrontation" to "virtual-real combined intelligent con-

frontation", with the training assessment upgraded from "manual-based" to "intelligent-based".

Hao Jingwen, head of the training bureau under the PLAAF Staff Headquarters, said the PLAAF is upgrading its combat equipment, flight training concept and talent cultivation mode at a faster pace amid the trend of science and technology innovation.

Initiated by the PLAAF in 2010, the International Military Flight Training Conference is an international platform for exchange of views and practice on flight talent cultivation and development and collaborated innovation of flight training and aviation equipment. It is held biennially and has been held six times.

### FBR extends tax return filing date till Oct 15

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on Thursday extended the date for filing income tax returns for individuals and companies to October 15, 2021.

Earlier, the FBR had said it would not extend the deadline for people seeking to file their income tax returns. However, keeping in view the demand of the business community and the technical issues faced by tax filers due to server errors, the board has extended the last date of filing income tax returns.

According to media, Minister for Finance Shaukat Tarin decided to extend the date considering the constant demands from the business community. The tax-collection body had received several applications for the extension of the deadline of filing income tax returns.

The Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry

(KCCI) confirmed that the finance minister has given a 15-day extension to the people and businessmen to file tax returns.

The business delegation highlighted the issues faced by the tax filers and also shared their concerns regarding other taxes as well. The KCCI members called for amendments in the ineffective tax policies and raised concerns over implementation of Tax Laws (Third Amendment) Ordinance 2021.

They lamented that all such laws that impose fines always start from Karachi. The delegation suggested that the term "under-filers" should be replaced with "non-filers" in the Ordinance. Earlier, FBR officials had directed concerned commissioners to cooperate with filers seeking an extension, sources said.

"People who want a 15-day relief will have to either file an application or apply online," the FBR had said.



ISLAMABAD: The Military Staff Talks with Pakistan were successfully concluded and DDG of EU Military Staff General Manione debriefed the EU Member States Ambassadors at the residence of the EU Ambassador Androulla Kaminara. - DNA