



Islamabad POST

Friday, September 03, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

EU in Pak launches Business Forum to facilitate SMEs

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UK: Scope for dialogue with Taliban

Detailed News On Page-06

Ronaldo: The new top int'l goal scorer

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Hospital inflow at highest level

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Asad Umar on Thursday announced that Pakistan's hospitals are under a lot of pressure because of the growing number of coronavirus patients, most of whom tested positive for the Delta variant of the virus. Taking to Twitter, the minister wrote: "As seen globally, [the] impact of the Indian delta variant in Pakistan also shows that it spreads faster and increases chances of patients to need hospitalisation."

Govt to use EVMs in next elections

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Babar Awan has said that government would use technology and electronic voting machines in next elections to check rigging. This he stated during a meeting attended by Minister for Railways Senator Azam Khan Swati, Leader of the House in Senate Dr. Shehzad Waseem, Senators Waleed Iqbal and Syed Ali Zafar in Islamabad on Thursday. Babar Awan said that overseas Pakistanis would be given right to vote.

Chaman border may be closed

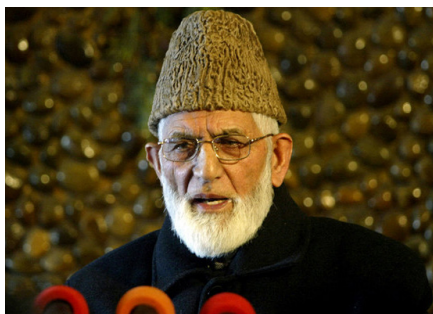
DNA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad has said that Chaman border with Afghanistan may be closed for some days due to some threats. Talking to the media persons in Islamabad on Thursday, he said our forces are present at the border. We are proud of our security institutions for the service they are rendering for the security of the country. The Interior Minister said Pakistan desires peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Geelani's Burial

Pakistan condemns Indian acts

Geelani was laid to rest in a tight military siege at Haiderpora under the close watch of the Indian security forces



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday condemned in strong words the "barbaric act" of snatching the mortal remains of the iconic Kashmiri leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, from his family by the Indian authorities. Geelani was laid to rest in a tight military siege at Haiderpora in Srinagar early Thursday morning under the close watch of the Indian security forces. Indian authorities had put strict restrictions on people's movement and the whole area was cordoned off. Foreign Office Spokesperson Asim Iftikhar in a

Continued on Page 06

Gillani's legacy to continue: FO

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office spokesperson Asim Iftikhar Ahmed has expressed the belief that the legacy of iconic Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Shah Gillani will continue to inspire all those carrying his mission forward to bring an end to illegal Indian occupation of Jammu and Kashmir. Speaking at his weekly news briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, he said nation pays rich tribute to Syed Ali Gillani's life-long struggle for justice and freedom. The spokesperson said Pakistan will continue to extend all possible support to the Kashmiri people till the realization of their legitimate right to self-determination as enshrined in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Meanwhile, funeral prayers of veteran Hurriyat leader and the icon of Kashmir Freedom Movement, Syed Ali Gilani was offered in absentia at Parliament House.

Continued on Page 06

'Taliban have right to raise voice for Kashmiri Muslims'

About Haqqani network, the spokesperson said there is "no such group"



MONITORING DESK

KABUL: Taliban spokesman for its political office in Doha, Qatar, Suhail Shaheen, has said that the group has the right to raise its voice for Muslims anywhere, including in Kashmir. In a Zoom interview with BBC Urdu, Shaheen said that the Taliban do not have a policy to raise arms

against any country.

"We have this right, being Muslims, to raise our voice for Muslims in Kashmir, India, and any other country," he said. According to Shaheen: "We will raise our voice and say that Muslims are your own people, your own citizens. They are entitled to equal rights under your laws."

Continued on Page 06

Taliban preparing to name new Cabinet

NEWS DESK

KABUL: The Taliban said Thursday they were close to forming a new government, two weeks after they seized power in Afghanistan. Local media reports suggested the announcement of a cabinet was imminent, and a member of the fundamentalist group said it was preparing a ceremony at the presidential palace, according to Reuters news agency.

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan unveils plaque for ground breaking of Sialkot-Kharian Motorway. – DNA

Qureshi, Austrian FM discuss Afghanistan



KHYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi received a telephone call from Alexander Schallenberg, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, on Thursday. During the call, the two Foreign Ministers exchanged views on the latest developments in Afghanistan as well as on bilateral relations. Sharing Pakistan's perspective, the Foreign Minister stressed the importance of peaceful and stable Afghanistan and highlighted the salience of safety and security of Afghans as well as an inclusive political settlement. The FM stressed that there was a historic opportunity for ending 40 years of conflict in Afghanistan. Engagement of the international community with positive messaging and constructive actions was much needed. The Foreign Minister called for concerted efforts to stabilize the security situation, preserve the peace, and preclude any exodus of Afghans as refugees. Foreign Minister Qureshi underlined the need for international community to show solidarity with the Afghan people to address the humanitarian needs and support economic stability. The two Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction over the current level of bilateral engagement and pledged to further establish linkages.

'London flats bought with looted money'

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Previous rulers bought flats in London from commissions illegally earned from road construction projects, said Prime Minister Imran Khan Thursday, taking a dig at the PML-N leadership.

The prime minister was speaking at the Sialkot-Kharian motorway groundbreaking ceremony. He said Pakistan needed to generate wealth to pay off its loans, adding that it was a must for the country to increase industrialisation. The premier told Fawad Chaudhry that he should

'The PM was speaking at the Sialkot-Kharian motorway groundbreaking ceremony'

highlight that "we are building three times more roads than the previous government". "And we are building them at low cost as well," he said. "Because commission from these roads are not being used to buy flats in London." Speaking to the stakeholders present at the ceremony, the prime minister urged them to tell him personally whenever they face hurdles in construction and other projects. "Our first priority is to

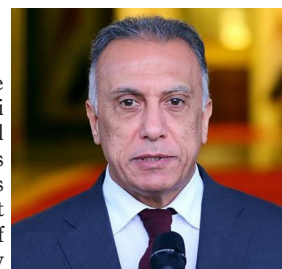
ensure ease of doing business," he explained. Explaining the benefits of the motorway, the prime minister recalled how the Swat motorway built by the PTL-led KP government had increased private investment. "At the time of Eid, 2.7mn cars travelled on the Swat motorway," revealed the prime minister. "Imagine the benefit that would have brought [to local industries]."

Continued on Page 06

Iraqi PM to visit Pakistan

ALI FURQAN

ISLAMABAD: Iraqi Prime Minister, Mustafa Al-Kadhimi is paying a three days official visit to Pakistan during this month. According to sources dates are being worked out mutually. Agenda and details of the Iraqi PM visit was already finalized by the Iraqi foreign minister Fuad Hussein during his visit to Islamabad last month. Number of agreements and MoUs are scheduled to be signed during the visit of Iraqi PM. Iraq is eager to enhance cooperation in various fields including defence, trade and security. Officials say that Iraq is also keen to export petroleum products and import food products from Pakistan. At the moment, Iraq is facing food and security problem due to lingering war like situation in the country. Both sides will also discuss to ease the visa policies for the pilgrims who travelled for Karbala, Najaf and other Holy sites in Iraq. In recent past Pakistan's CJCS Nadeem Raza, FM Qureshi, defence production minister Zubaida Jalal also visited Iraq and held rounds of talks. Iraq's defence minister also paid visit to Pakistan where he had held meeting with his Iraqi counterpart to boost ties between the countries.



Abbas, Abdullah, Sisi meet in Cairo

DNA

CAIRO: Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas met in Cairo on Thursday with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Jordan's King Abdullah II for talks on Jerusalem. Abbas condemned "the aggressions of (Jewish) settlers... under the protection of the Israeli army", in reference to the threatened expulsion of Palestinians from Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem, the Palestinian news agency Wafa reported. It said the leaders of Egypt and Jordan, the first Arab countries to establish relations with Israel, reaffirmed their support for Abbas, whose Palestinian Authority runs the Israeli-occupied West Bank while the Islamist movement Hamas runs the Gaza Strip. Israel's supreme court this week delayed ruling on the eviction of four families in east Jerusalem's Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood.

CAA warns unvaccinated people

NAZIR SYAL

KARACHI: The Civil Aviation Authority of Pakistan has Thursday rolled out new guidelines making vaccination certificates mandatory for boarding domestic flights starting September 10. All the travellers above the age of 18 years will have to be fully vaccinated before they can board any domestic flight, said the aviation regulator. Partially vaccinated people will not be entertained into the flights anymore after Sep 10, it said. All the airlines are instructed to check passenger's vaccine certificates before allowing them to board, said CAA as it rolls out a new set of instructions. The leniency for those having taken only the first jab of two-shot Covid vaccine will end starting Sep. 10 as well if they don't receive their second shot due, CAA said.

Taliban: Then and Now (Part-1)

The Taliban have won the war, but can they lead the peace?

EXCLUSIVE

ISHTIAQ AHMAD



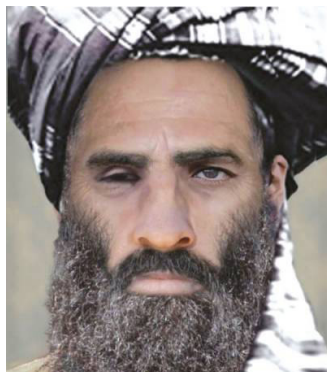
NOW that the 20-year American imperial project in Afghanistan has become a footnote of history, it is time to focus on the victors of this war: The Taliban. Two comparisons are worth making here, one, the fundamental difference between the Taliban's debut rise to power and their current conquest; and, two, their expected conduct in power this time around like or unlike the previous one. History, current and past, provides the answer. 'Who are the Taliban?' So was titled my first news story from Kandahar in mid-1990s for an English daily in Pakistan. I was then a journalist and on a reporting assignment to travel to southern Afghanistan and investigate the instant rise of this Afghan militia. The Taliban had emerged as a ragtag group of madrassa mil-

"Ultimately, the Taliban remain a militant movement, rooted in religious bigotry, seeking to impose its brand of Islam on the Afghan people and desiring that the fellow Muslim nations shall replicate the same. The legitimacy of the Afghan Taliban movement lies in its ideological purity, which the Taliban leaders will try to uphold at all cost. Otherwise, they will lose their key public support base"

itants under the leadership of Mullah Omar in response to years of Mujahideen infighting and oppressive rule. A major factor that contributed to the Taliban's rise was the support from the war weary Afghan public for their swift enforcement of justice, disarmament and rule of law in the areas under their control.

The Inside Story

However, as the following snippets from the inside story of the Taliban headquarter in Kandahar city during the month Ramadan in 1995 shall reveal, the actual tale about this religious militia was even then quite different from its public portrayal: "It's Friday afternoon (Feb.17). As we enter the exit gate of the headquarter, I see a dozen or so people standing along the driveway, as if



Mullah Omar, former Supreme leader of Taliban

waiting for some important guests to arrive. Ali, my Taliban companion from Quetta, alerts me that the Emir-ul-Azeem (as Mullah Omar was titled then) is among them. I ask Ali to request his leader for a



Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada, the current supreme leader of Taliban

short interview, introducing me as a journalist from Pakistan. The message is passed. Mullah Omar looks at me and murmurs in Pashto asking whether I am

fasting or not. Ali translates this to me. As soon as I say 'yes,' the Taliban leader utters something in Pashto, and the entire group bursts into laughter. Ali is quick to tell me: 'Emir-ul-Azeem says these Pakistanis always lie.' A chill runs down my spine, as the Qazi court is in session next door, awarding instant Islamic punishments.

Continued on Page 06

Ishtiaq Ahmad is the former Vice Chancellor of Sargodha University and Pakistan Chair at Oxford University. In his previous career as a journalist, he reported the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan in the mid-1990s. This is his exclusive write-up for The Islamabad Post

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RISJA make proposals on National Sports Policy – Page 06

Tokayev emphasises new special initiatives in address to nation – Page 07

EU Delegation starts Business Forum to facilitate Pak SMEs – Page 08

Briefs

PR carries out operation to stop trespassing

LAHORE: A grand operation has been carried out between Faisalabad to Nishatabad to stop trespassing besides ensuring safety of train operation.

According to Pakistan Railways sources here on Thursday the operation had been carried out on the direction of Divisional Superintendent Lahore Muhammad Nasir Khalili.

In Railways Employees Housing Society Sector 4 Faisalabad, 50 commercial shops facing towards railway track had been closed by placing rail sleepers, sources added.

Sources further said that 300 houses facing towards railway track had also been sealed in view of safe railway operation. DS Muhammad Nasir Khalili said that same operation would be carried out in future to stop trespassing and to ensure safety of train operation. — APP

DNA confirms gang rape of two girls in Lahore

DNA

LAHORE: The medico-legal report to ascertain sexual assault allegations in Gujarpura gang-rape case confirmed on Thursday the two girls were gang-raped.

According to police, the DNA samples of the accused that were sent to the forensic lab have matched with those collected from victims. On the other hand, the arrested factory owner named Nadeem today rejected the allegations of gang-raping two girls at his factory.

In his statement recorded to the police, he said that they hired two girls from Shahdara for the party to celebrate the birth of a son to his cousin Irfan. "The girls were booked for Rs.15,000 for the party," Nadeem said to the police.

The accused further said that the girls raised rape allegations over them after an alleged disagreement over engaging them for more time against the fixed duration. On Wednesday, it was reported that two girls were kidnapped from Lahore's Shahdara area and were moved to Gujarpura, where they were allegedly gang-raped.

Pak-Afghan border fully secured after fencing

TORKHAM: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Frontier Corps North Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sajid Majed here on Thursday said Pak-Afghan border had been fully secured after completion of fencing and construction of new forts.

Development of technical mechanism has immensely helped control mobility and movement of unwanted elements, he said.

While briefing national and international media about security arrangements on Pak-Afghan border including comprehensive security mechanism and development projects in merged areas, he said 98 percent fencing had been completed and the 2600 km border with Afghanistan had been fully secured.

Movement of people from authorized crossing border points including Torkham was allowed and only those persons who had valid travelling visa documents were permitted. He said no major refugee influx has been reported so far.

He said Afghan nationals in Pakistan were going back to their country in large number after the fall of Kabul. He said millions of development projects had been initiated in merged areas for socio-economic development of tribal people. He said, "We are ready for every challenge," adding that the security situation had improved and patrolling of troops had been enhanced at our side. Drone and other surveillance technology were being used under the inclusive border management mechanism for the security of Pak-Afghan border. — APP

Sindh Police revampes its Anti Terrorism Financing Unit

Last year UNODC and NACTA together have organised 10 specialized workshops on countering the financing of terrorism to enhance the knowledge and skills of investigators and prosecutors in Sindh

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with support from the European Union, and in collaboration the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) handed over varied essential equipment to revamp an Anti-Terrorism Financing Unit (ATFU) within the Counter Terrorism Department of Sindh Police during a ceremony held in Karachi in presence of members from the international community.

In addition to the equipment, which was delivered under the framework of Pakistan's Action to Counter Terrorism (PACT) project. Since last year UNODC and NACTA together have organised 10 specialized workshops on countering the financing of terrorism to enhance the knowledge and skills of investigators and prosecutors in Sindh and approximately 300 officials have been trained so far under the PACT project. While inaugurating the newly established Unit, UNODC Country Representative Dr. Jeremy Milsom emphasised on UNODC's



commitment to provide specialised training followed by making operational equipment available to investigators to support their day-to-day work. "The Government of Sindh is a frontrunner in establishing a provincial Anti-Terrorism Financing Unit in Pakistan which includes dedicated prosecutors to readily provide legal advice to investigators.

The UNODC is pleased to be part of this ground-breaking initiative under PACT project and in addition to delivery equipment we are promoting conducive work environment and specialised training to the ATFU personnel to holistically enhance its counter-terrorism financing efforts," stated Dr. Milsom. On behalf of the European Union

Mr. François Zablou, participated and acknowledged the "efforts made by Sindh Police for addressing the challenges related to terrorism financing in the province, a greater integrated approach amongst all stakeholder on information sharing was required and with the establishment of ATFU it's a step forward in the right direction."

The Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Counter-Terrorism Department Sindh Police Mr. Omer Shahid appreciated UNODC and the European Union's effort and extended his gratitude on behalf of the Inspector General for their generous contribution in supporting in making the ATFU functional. He stated that "the PACT initiative has and continues to bridge critical gaps to strengthen capacity of front-line investigators by enhancing their counter-terrorism capabilities. We are pleased to see that the initiative has adapted to our provincial needs and strategies and complements our efforts towards reaching our common goals."

The inauguration was attended by officials of Home Department, Sindh Police along with representative of various Consulate Generals based in Karachi.

SEZ, a way to Pakistan's economic growth

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Industries and Commerce Mian Aslam Iqbal on Thursday said that Special Economic Zones (SEZ) were the engine of Pakistan's economic growth.

He added that Punjab government was actively involved in the promotion of investment and the problems of investors were being addressed on priority basis. He said this while hearing the pending applications of the industrialists regarding Allama Iqbal Industrial city at Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC) site office.

Acting Chief Executive Officer Rana Yousaf, members of the newly constituted Board President Chamber of Commerce Hafiz Ehtesham Javed and others were present.

The minister inquired about the problems of the investors including plot, documentation and directed the (FIEDMC) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to guide the investors in completing all the matters as per the checklist and to settle their pending matters on priority basis.

He said that Allama Iqbal Industrial city should be made the first priority of local and foreign investors as this project was a milestone in the industrial development of Pakistan.

He congratulated the members of new board and said that Punjab government would provide services in line with the Prime Minister's vision for industrial development and committed to solve the problems through joint efforts.

SHC summons DIG Traffic

STAFF REPORT

KARACHI: Sindh High Court (SHC) here Thursday on a petition of Pasban Democratic Party (PDP) against closure of six roads in South zone Karachi summoned DIG Traffic in personal capacity.

As per details, the court of chief justice SHC and Justice Yousuf Ali Syed heard a petition of PDP against the closure of six roads in South Zone Karachi. The council of the petitioner, Irfan Aziz, told the court that six roads without legal process including Mir Karam Ali Talpur Road, road to Burns Garden, road near Jang Press and road near Avari Tower.

During the hearing SP Traffic presented him before the court.

Qureshi asks int'l community to help Afghanistan

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Foreign Affairs Shah Mehmood Qureshi Thursday said the international community should fulfill its responsibility and help Afghanistan in achieving peace, stability and prosperity. Speaking at the 4th Think Tank Forum here, he said Pakistan was supporting efforts to establish sustainable peace in Afghanistan.

The use of force in Afghanistan put hurdles in the way of finding a political solution to the conflict, he added.

Foreign Minister Qureshi said the international community

was surprised the way Afghan security forces vanished and Taliban took control of Kabul. Apparently civil war had been averted in the country, he noted. The foreign minister said after taking control of the government, Taliban announced general amnesty and made announcements regarding protection of rights of women, freedom of expression, provision of employment and education and setting up of an inclusive political system. He urged the Afghan leadership to show sagacity in the present situation. Pakistan was the only country which always advocated a peaceful solution of the Afghan conflict, he added.

Officials directed for strict action against power theft

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: On the special directives of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) Engr. Bashir Ahmed FESCO First circle in initiating strict action against the power theft in the circle. In this connection, under the supervision of Superintending Engineer (SE) First Circle

Muhammad Saeed special task forces and surveillance teams of the all six divisions including Civil Line, Abdul-lahpur, Chak Jhumra, Jaran-wala, Chiniot and Lalian, caught 130 power pilferers red handed while stealing electricity. According to details, during special campaign against power theft, 21434 electricity meters were checked and 130 consumers found involved in power theft.



ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi offering Namaz-e-Janaza (in absentia) of Syed Ali Shah Geelani, at National Assembly Ground. — DNA

Punjab Highway Patrol conducts road safety session with students



BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: In pursuance of vision of Addl: IG Punjab Highway Patrol Akram Naeem Bharoka and SSP Patrolling Mirza Anjum Kamal, Incharge Mobile Education unit Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti along with DSP PHP Faisalabad Malik Amin conducted Road show, road safety and Covid-19 awareness session with students.

SSP added that the workshops and seminars are im-

portant tool of inculcating road sense and education about traffic signs, right of way, maintaining of safe distance and hazards of over speeding and use of mobile phone during driving. Accordingly, one session with students was done in order to sensitize them about the obedience of Standard operating Procedure relating to traffic rules and preventive measures to avoid contract of Corona virus. The citizens and students were educated about the washing of hands

properly, wearing mask, avoid social gathering, keep social distance at least of 06 foot and drink lot of water in order to save from dehydration.

The student were advised to wear Helmet, avoid using mobile phone and one wheeling is dangerous tantamount to suicide attempt. The audience was educated about safe distance, rule of overtaking, Land Marking, Road furniture, road signs and hazards of driving under depression, rage and drowsiness. Moreover, in case of emergency, happening of incident/accident, the road commuters can call on help line 1124 of Punjab Highway Patrol police. If the road user faces any kind of harassment on the road or he notices any unlawful activity on the road, he can call on PHP Helpline 1124. Polite, helpful and compassionate is the sole motto of Punjab highway patrol.

Awami Khidmat Service Katchery held

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shehzad hold Revenue Awami Khidmat Service Katchri on the second day and listened to the complaints and directed to the grievances of the citizens regarding revenue department. Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Fazal Rabi Cheema, Assistant Commissioners Umar Maqbool and Syed Ayub Bukhari, officers of Revenue Department, Assistant Director Land Record City and President, Tehsildar, Niab Tehsildar and Patwari were also present. Deputy Commissioner closed off more than 20 application by providing relevant record to the concerned applicants and said that revenue department relating applications of citizens are being resolving on priority basis which have increased their confidence.

Problems of investors to be addressed on priority basis

Minister says that Allama Iqbal Industrial Estate should be made the first priority of local and foreign investors as this project is a milestone in the industrial development of Pakistan

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Punjab Minister for Industries and Commerce Mian Aslam Iqbal has said that Special Economic Zones are the engine of Pakistan's economic growth and according to the Vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan the Buzdar government is actively involved in the promotion of investment and the problems of investors are being addressed on priority basis. He said this while hearing the pending applications of the industrialists regarding Allama Iqbal Industrial Estate in FIEDMC site office. Acting Chief Executive Officer Rana Yousaf, members of the newly constituted Board President Chamber of Commerce Hafiz Ehtesham Javed, Syed Zia Alamdar Hussain, Engineer Rizwan Ashraf, Farrukh Zaman and others besides Officer of Industries Department Punjab Ijaz Khaliq Razzaqi and other officers were present. The Minister of Industries and Commerce inquired about the problems of the investors including plot, documentation and asked the CEO to guide the investors in completing all the matters as per the checklist



and to settle their pending matters on priority basis.

He said that Allama Iqbal Industrial Estate should be made the first priority of local and foreign investors as this project is a milestone in the industrial development of Pakistan. He congratulated the members of new board and said that Punjab Govt. will provide services in line with the Prime Minister's vision for industrial development and are committed to solving the problems through joint efforts. He said that the present government has taken steps for economic prosperity and economic

growth in three years which are continuing.

It was informed on the occasion that FIEDMC has become the largest company developing economic zones in Pakistan which is developing the largest and first priority economic zone under CPEC, Allama Iqbal Industrial City. He said that in order to provide world class facilities to the companies investing in this economic zone, a special window center, expo center, golf and country club are being set up here. Newly members assured of all possible cooperation.

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (NATIONAL POLICE ACADEMY DIVISION)

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender are hereby invited on percentage basis from the approved contractors of Civil Work and having valid Pakistan Engineer Council (PEC) License 2021-22 for the work:-

S. #	Name of Work	NIT Cost	Earnest Money	Tender Fee	Date & Time of Opening
1	Provision of additional facilities and construction of tubwell in National Police Academy in Sector H-11 Islamabad. Sub Head (Installation of Tub Well)	Rs.6,674,044/-	Rs.183,481/-	Rs.3000/-	22-9-2021 (Box closed at 11:30 AM & opened on 12:00 Noon)

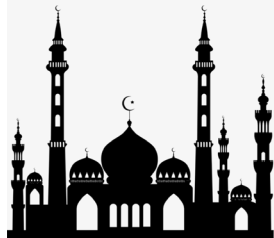
Detailed terms & Conditions can be seen from CDA Website www.cda.gov.pk and PPRA www.ppra.org.pk.

- Application for issuance of tender documents 20-9-2021 upto 5:00 PM must be accompanied with valid copies of PEC License obtaining Tender Category C-6& above for the year 2021-22, having Project Code CE-09 , 10 & EE-03, NTN Certificate, CNIC, Registration of Firm / Partnership Deed / Sole Proprietorship / Power of Attorney / Authority Letter from the contractor in favor of their representative. No tender will be issued without showing all required document in "ORIGINAL".
- Tender documents can be obtained from the office of Deputy Director National Police Academy Division, CDA located at Room No.4, Sector G-7 Markaz (Sitara Market), Islamabad oncash payment asmentioned above per set (Non-Refundable) during working hours or before 21-9-2021 up to 5.00 PM against written request which should be onletter head pad having name, address, phoneNo's and signature of the contractor.No tender will be sold on the date of opening of the tender.
- The prospective bidders are required to submit Bid Security(Deposit at Call) amounting to **Rs. 183,481/-** in favor of Dy; Director National Police Academy Div, CDA, CDA, issued from any scheduled bank against firm's account. Name of Firm should be clearly mentioned on instrument (Deposit at Call). Tender documents shall not be issued without Earnest Money.
- The bid security of all bidders would be deposited in the CDA Bank Account and same may be returned after the acceptance of the Contract with the successful bidder.
- The eligibility criteria of the firms with the relevant experience i.e at least three Number of works in last two (02) financial years may be observed / fulfill before issuance of tender documents.
- Certificate is required on judicial stamp paper worth of Rs.50/ their firm are not involved any litigations and non relation ship .
- Tender bids will be received and opened on above date and time in the office of Project Director I-15/NPA, CDA located at Room No.4, Sector G-7 Markaz (Sitara Market), Islamabad.
- Tender rates on percentage basis should be filled in figures as well as in words.
- CDA reserves the right to accept or reject any / all tenders as per PPRA Rules. No conditional tender will be entertained.

Deputy Director
National Police Academy Division,
CDA Islamabad

PID (I) No. 1344/21

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	04:16 am
Zohr.....	12:08 pm
Asr.....	04:43 pm
Maghrib.....	06:32 pm
Isha.....	07:58 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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CMH.....	5611111
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Cantt Hospital.....	9270907-11
DHQ.....	5556311-4
RGH.....	9290301-7
Holy Family.....	9290322-7
PIMS.....	9261170-79
Polyclinic.....	9218300-09
Shifa International.....	4603666



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CDA.....	9221334-43
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RDA.....	5555864
TMA.....	5770886
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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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Educational institutions under FDE violating NCOC directives

A female teacher on the condition of anonymity said, “Government offices, markets, and gatherings at indoor and outdoor places are banned on Saturday but our school is open”

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: The educational institutions working under the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) are still continuing their routine educational activities on Saturdays in violation of the directives of National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) imposing lockdown on Saturday and Sunday to keep the citizens safe from the health risks of COVID-19. According to an official source, the District Magistrate has imposed a lockdown on Saturday and Sunday in Islamabad in compliance to the decisions of

NCOC in wake of the rising coronavirus cases. But educational institutions of Islamabad Capital Territory will still observe Saturday as a working day obeying the FDE's orders. The FDE seems to be less concerned about the consequences of violating COVID-19 precautions and is reluctant to abide by the orders of District Magistrate Islamabad regarding lockdown. A female teacher on the condition of anonymity said, “Government offices, markets, and gatherings at indoor and outdoor places are banned on Saturday but our school is open”. She continued saying that during the month of Au-



gust, over 25 schools were closed due to corona positive cases. Schools should be closed on Saturday like FDE and other government departments to stay safe from coronavirus as this respiratory disease has already killed over a million people worldwide so far. A lecturer at Islamabad Model College for Girls (Postgraduate) F-7/2 said, “The controlling office (FDE) observes Saturday as a holiday leaving 423 educational institutions on auto system. While in case of any mishap, educational institutions cannot approach FDE because there is nobody to answer on Saturday at FDE. It feels very irritating that

FDE is being so careless because of which, the staff of educational institutions have to suffer. A laboratory assistant of Islamabad Model Postgraduate College H-8 explained his annoyance over not following the directions related to COVID-19 precautions and said “Nothing is more important than the lives of the students and the authorities must listen to the NCOC's orders regarding declaring the weekend days as off. The assistant said, “Not all the parents are sending their children to schools on Saturdays and there will be no academic loss if the rest of the students are allowed to have a holiday.”

Over 2.1m receive vaccine in Rwp

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: As many as 2,108,807 people including 39,477 health workers and 2,069,330 other citizens aged above 18 years have jabbed themselves so far against the lethal coronavirus (COVID-19) across the district. According to data shared by the district health authority here Thursday, 364 more COVID-19 positive cases were reported during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 32,714 in the district. As per the latest data, 60 cases were reported from Rawal Town, 87 from Potohar town, 108 from Rawalpindi Cantt, 36 from Gujar Khan, 34 from Taxila, 13 each from Kalar Syeda and Kahutta, four from KPK, two each from Islamabad, Murree and Kotli Sattian while one each case was reported from Attock, Chakwal and Jhelum. “Presently 200 confirmed patients were admitted to various city facilities, counting 25 in Holy Family Hospital, 31 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 90 in Institute of Urology, 39 in Fauji Foundation Hospital, seven in Bilal hospital, four in Hearts International hospital, two in Begum Akhtar Memorial trust and one each in District Headquarter and Attock hospital,” the health authority report said. District Health Authority updated that so far 29,443 patients were discharged after recovery while ten patients were on ventilators in critical condition, 93 stable and 97 on oxygen. The positivity ratio during the past 24 hours was recorded at 9.35 per cent in the district, it added.

Defence Day conference held at PAC

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The Punjab Arts Council and Anjuman-e-Alami Panjtan (AAP) Pakistan on Thursday jointly organized a conference in connection with the Defence Day of Pakistan. Addressing the conference, President AAP PirAzmatullah Sultan said that September 6 was a war for the survival of Pakistan and the Armed forces of Pakistan performed feats of courage and bravery which would be remembered forever. He said that Pakistan Army was the guarantor of the security of the country. On the occasion, Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmad said that the sacrifices made by the army for the defense of Pakistan were unprecedented in the world. A special prayer was offered for the martyrs of the Pakistan Army and the development of the country while a large number of people from different walks of life participated in the conference.

Court adjourns Lok Virsa reference

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Thursday adjourned hearing till September 17, on Lok Virsa reference against PPP's Senator Robina Khalid and others. ACI Judge Muhammad Bashir adjourned the case without further hearing due to the absence of defense lawyer in the case. NAB prosecutor Sohail Arif and witness Khalid Suleman appeared before the court. The reference had alleged irregularities worth Rs30 millions in the funds of Lok Virsa.

Labor Union will win: Amanullah Khan

He deplored that mazdoor union leader Chaudhary Yaseen had always involved in creating problems in smooth working of his union



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senior leader of Labour Union of Capital Development Authority (CDA), Amanullah Khan has said that his union will win impending referendum with palpable margin in the light of his union services for the employees of the Authority. Khan said this while talking to media here on Thursday. He said that his union worked day and night to serve the CDA's employees and now

onward it will take the fruits of its hard struggle. He said that he always kept an eye by paying visits to many offices once and again for sorting out issues of Authority's employees. He also pointed towards his role regarding cancellation of stay order issued by the court on plots. He deplored that mazdoor union leader Chaudhary Yaseen had always involved in creating problems in smooth working of his union, adding he didn't pay the role of true opposition but his involvement always proved to be a hurdle. He said that Chaudhary was responsible for handing over a number of CDA's directorates to Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI); however, this process got reversed through his hectic efforts. However, he was visibly hopeful about the future of CDA employees.

The referendum will be conducted by the National Industrial Relations Commission (NIRC) going to be held on September 17, 2021 and its official result would be announced after some-time of the polling. He said that his opponents at the CDA have always chosen the politics of confrontation that may open the door to unrest and political instability in the CDA and put at risk the interests of a common employee. The pivot of his politics is to serve the poor employees of Authority, he said. Khan was of the view that the CDA employees will prove that they have complete confidence in him in the impending referendum. He said he is conducting meetings with union workers on daily basis and has enhanced activities regarding electioneering.

Ehsaas to enhance women empowerment

A country cannot thrive when half of its population is not educated and enabled to fulfil their potential

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Dr. Sania Nishtar Thursday said Ehsaas Scholarships would enhance women empowerment through ensuring their increased role in society and businesses, breaking down the barriers. Dr. Sania was speaking as a chief guest at the HEC-USAID Scholarship event jointly hosted by Higher Education Commission (HEC) and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) at the HEC Secretariat. Under the umbrella of Merit and Needs based Scholarship Program (MNBS), USAID and HEC have rolled out 700 new graduate level scholarships for women, talent hunt programme for financially disadvantaged girls, and capacity building plan to support financial aid systems of for-



ty Pakistani public sector universities. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Nishtar said that with Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarship programme dovetailed to Ehsaas School Stipends nationwide, the unprecedented scale of Ehsaas assistance allowed Pakistan, for the first time, to look holistically at measures to improve education at all ages from pre-school to under-graduate and everything in between. Dr. Sania observed, “A country cannot thrive when half of its population is not educated and enabled to fulfil their potential. Therefore, at its core, Ehsaas aims to empower 10 million poorest women in Pakistan and help them to achieve their potential”. “Providing financial access to education for the underprivileged populations, Ehsaas is running a need cum merit based Ehsaas undergraduate scholarship programme nationwide offering 200,000 scholarships worth Rs. 24 Billion over 4 years”, she said.

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National Command Operation Center

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Briefs

Sardar Ali Khawaja appointed as member FBR

ISLAMABAD: Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) appointed Sardar Ali Khawaja, a BS-21 officer of Inland Revenue Services (IRS) as Member, FBR (HQ), Islamabad.

According to the FBR notification issued here on Thursday, he has relinquished the charge of the post of Chief Commissioner, Regional Tax Office, Peshawar and assumed the charge of the post. FBR also notified that Malik Amjad Zubair Tiwana, an IRS/BS-21 officer has assumed the charge of the post Chief Commissioner-IR, Large Tax Office, Islamabad.

Qasim Raza Khan, an IRS/BS-20 officer has assumed the charge of the post Chief Commissioner-IR (OPS), CTO, Islamabad.

FBR notified that Nasir Iqbal, an IRS/BS-20 officer has assumed the charge of the post Commissioner-IR, RTO, Lahore.

Khurshid Ahmed Khan Marwat, an IRS/BS-20 officer has assumed the charge of the post Chief Commissioner-IR (OPS), RTO, Peshawar. Syed Fawad Ali Shah, a PCS/BS-20 officer has assumed the charge of the post Director, Directorate General of Customs Valuation, Karachi. — APP

30 vehicles impounded over SOPs violation

RAWALPINDI: Regional Transport Authority (RTA) on the directives of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ali on Thursday impounded 30 vehicles over violation of COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

According to Secretary, RTA, Rashid Ali, the authority on the directives of the DC had launched a campaign to ensure implementation of the SOPs.

He said the teams of the authority inspected different public transport routes and bus terminals and imposed a fine of Rs 117,500 on violation of coronavirus SOPs issued by the Punjab government to contain the spread of coronavirus. — APP

AIOU announces admission in BA Associate

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced admission for the second phase of autumn Semester 2021.

According to AIOU, in this phase, admissions in BA general (Associate Degree in Arts), B.Com (Associate Degree in Commerce), 2-year associate degree in education, 1.5, 2.5, and 4 years B.Ed is announced.

For admission in BA General and B.Com, the candidate must have passed all compulsory courses in Secondary and Higher Secondary including English.

Eligibility for admission in Associate Degree in Education is 45% with FA / FSC, MA / MSc / BS or BA Honors (four years) qualification is required for admission in 1.5 years B.Ed.

While students who have obtained FA / FSC or equivalent education (Second Division) are eligible for admission in the four-year B.Ed program.

In BA General (Associate Degree) and B.Com (Associate Degree in Commerce) students who are getting enrolled in the first semester or continuing students can apply through both online and manual systems, while in other programs candidates must apply online for admission.

Four-year BS (ODL Mode) programs in 10 subjects are also being offered in this phase, including Accounting and Finance, Arabic, English, Gender and Women's Studies, Instructional Design and Technology, Library and Information Sciences, Mass Communication, Pakistan Studies, Urdu and Islamic Studies with seven specializations (General, Qur'an and Tafsir, Sharia, Hadith and Hadith Sciences, Sharia Studies, Dars-e-Nizami and Interfaith Studies).

Admission forms and prospectuses for all the programs are available on the University website www.aiou.edu.pk. — APP

Peace in Afghanistan must for regional stability: Alvi

Dr. Arif Alvi appreciated the business community for providing crucial support to the needy people during Covid-19 pandemic and added that their good role should be highlighted in the media

**STAFF REPORT**

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan said that Pakistan wanted peace and stability in Afghanistan that would unlock business bonanza for Pakistan in Central Asian States and the business community should gear up to capitalize on these emerging opportunities. He said this while addressing as chief guest the 4th ICCI Business Excellence Awards Ceremony 2021 held at Aiw-e-Sadr, Islamabad. He conferred awards on the awardees and congratulated them for their

excellent achievements in various fields of business. He said that the business community was driving the economic growth of the country and the government was making all possible efforts to promote ease of doing business for them. Dr. Arif Alvi appreciated the business community for providing crucial support to the needy people during Covid-19 pandemic and added that their good role should be highlighted in the media. He urged them to focus on brand Pakistan and mentor women in entrepreneurship for their economic empowerment. He said that ICCI was a responsible chamber

rendering great services for the business community and it should set up a helpdesk for women and differently abled persons to facilitate them in trainings and availing loans from banks. He said that Pakistan has great potential to promote the exports of Halal meat and IT products and emphasized that the business community should exploit these potentials. He also touched upon the tourism potential and importance of inclusive growth. He said that the government with better policies has set the economy in the right direction and was confident that no one could stop Pakistan from

emerging as a great nation. In his welcome address, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the purpose of organizing ICCI 4th Business Excellence Awards Ceremony 2021 was to acknowledge and highlight the achievements of companies and individuals who have achieved excellence in various fields of business and made significant contribution towards the economic growth of the country. He lauded the government for reducing import duties on the tourism sector that has the potential to generate USD 30-40

billion revenue and emphasized that the government should also relax import duties on industrial technology and machinery to upgrade the industries for producing value added products to boost exports. He said that ICCI could generate funds for an industrial estate and the government should cooperate in acquiring land for it through Sec-42. He said an expo center in Islamabad should also be established to promote trade and exports of this region. He said that the self-assessment scheme could make a 25-30 percent increase in tax revenue and stressed that the government should give more focus to this scheme to reduce trust deficit in taxpayers. Mian Akram Farid, Chairman ICCI Founder Group said that the federal capital was emerging as a city of entrepreneurs as 23 markets and 1200 industries were operating in Islamabad and were playing an important role in the economic development of the country. He emphasized that the government should set up direct air links with potential markets that were important to promote Pakistan's trade and exports. He said that the government should work with banks to increase credit facilities for SMEs, which are the backbone of the economy. He highlighted the importance of SEZ and industrial estate in Islamabad and urged that the government should cooperate with ICCI in realizing these vital projects. He also offered useful proposals to further promote the tourism & agriculture sectors to improve the economy.

National AI Forum organized

ISLAMABAD: Sino-Pak Center for Artificial Intelligence (SPCAI) organized the National Artificial Intelligence Forum (NAIF) 2021 on Thursday at Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences & Technology (PAF-IAST).

The forum was held under the auspices of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT), Government of Pakistan, and Pak-Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences & Technology (PAF-IAST).

The forum was inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Atta ur Rehman, Chairman Prime Minister

Task Force on Science and Technology. Speaking on the occasion he said, our youth should be equipped with modern knowledge and required skills to lead the country as innovation driving economies. Dr Muhammad Mujahid, Rector PAF-IAST emphasized over skills orientation, focused and relevant research towards solving the problems and effective academia industry linkages. While welcoming the participants, Dr Atif Shakoor, Managing Director SPCAI shared the background, objectives and importance of AI forum. — DNA



ISLAMABAD: Newly arrived Ambassador-designate of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov in meeting with ambassador of Tajikistan. — DNA

Rotary club launches tree plantation drive

**ARIJ GHAZNAVI**

ISLAMABAD: A tree plantation drive was conducted by the Rotary club of Islamabad Metropolitan on Thursday. The tree plantation day was organized by the efforts of Farkhanda JS Andrabi the president of the RCIM in collaboration with Dr Khalid, Principal of Islamabad Post Graduate College H8/2. An area of the college was allocated for the trees to be planted by the members

of RCIM and also to follow the clean and green slogan. RCIM president and members participated in the tree plantation and promised to donate more fruit trees in the near future. Furthermore, Farkhanda JS Andrabi President RCIM and Professor Dr. Khalid principal of the college discussed and shared ideas regarding the needs of their college students and also on how to facilitate the post graduate studies of the current students in terms of technology e.g. computers, laptops which would help the students in their research projects.

Farkhanda JS Andrabi RCIM president promised to help in terms of facilitating those students who want to pursue their degrees abroad and need help on Improving their English proficiency and achieve the band score they require for IELTS test. The project and its facilitation will follow as soon as the basic needs assessment will be done.

Prof. Khurshid terms death of Ali Geelani an irreparable loss

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Expressing deep grief and sorrow on the demise of renowned Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Geelani, former senator and patron-in-chief of Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Professor Khurshid Ahmad said in his condolence message that while death is a reality that everyone is bound to face, the demise of some people leaves behind a message of life, and Syed Ali Geelani was certainly one of those people. The professor highlighted that he knew

Syed Ali Geelani for over 40 years and many times in this period had a chance to meet and exchange views with him. Consistency and objectivity were the most important aspects of his life. He dedicated his life for the freedom of Kashmir in the name of Islam. He faced atrocities and imprisonments, and was detained in his house even in his last days. The former senator said that the way Geelani exhibited struggle, persistence and sacrifice all through his life and the bravery with which he faced Indian atrocities and oppression, it will be safe to say that he was one of the greatest leaders Kashmir has produced.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi is presenting Best Retail Excellence Award to Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari MD Dwatson at the ceremony of fourth Business Excellence Award of ICCI at President House. — DNA

ICT admin inspects travelling points

ISLAMABAD: The civil administration on Thursday inspected public travelling points as per the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) guidelines to enforce Covid-19 protocols and ensure vaccination in the federal capital.

The Secretary Islamabad Transport Authority Asma Sanaullah and her team along with ICT Police inspected over a hundred buses and coaches entering the federal capital at Rawat junction.

The team inspected standard operating procedures (SOPs) compliance of mask wearing, social distancing, 50 percent passenger occupancy and vaccination status of the travellers.

The DHO mobile vaccination team was deployed along Rawat Junction and others to vaccinate non-vaccinated masses.

The administration also imposed fines to passengers and bus drivers not wearing face masks and observing social distancing in the bus.

Secretary ICT Transport Authority Asma Sanaullah warned that as per National Command and Operation Centre guidelines no individual without vaccination would be allowed to travel on buses or enter in the federal territory after September 15.

However, the administration would further make strict enforcement of vaccination drive to curb the disease spread.

This is the second of vaccination drive enforcement in the transport sector. Thorough inspections being carried out at various bus terminals including 26 Number Chungi Motorway Chowk, Faizabad and Rawat. — APP

12 arrested for possessing illegal arms

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Police in their crackdown against illegal weapons rounded up 12 persons from different areas and recovered nine 30 bore pistols, a 44 rifle, one Kalashnikov with ammunition and 210 grams charras from their possession, said police spokesman on Thursday.

He informed that Gunjmandi, Saidqabad, Naseerabad, Morgah, Saddar Wah, Saddar Baroni and Kotli Sattian police conducted raids in their respective jurisdictions and held Anis Nawaz, Ahmed Iqbal, Suleman, Lal Zumar, Umar Amjad, Zubair Khan, Arif, Muhammad Banaras, Muhammad Qadir, Adil Ahmed and Muhammad Yasir and recovered nine 30 bore pistols, a 44 bore rifle, one Kalashnikov with ammunition and 210 grams charras from their possession. Separate cases have been registered against all the accused while further investigations are underway. He said that the police were conducting operations against criminals on regular basis without any discrimination. — APP

Commissioner for eradication of corruption

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Syed Gulzar Hussain Shah took practical steps to eradicate corruption in the subsidiaries.

According to sources, he scammed the purchase of lands in Rawalpindi Ring Road Attock Loop and received 90% of the amount paid from the public exchequer and the role of Deputy Commissioner Attock and Assistant Commissioner Fateh Jhang is prominent in this.

On the other hand, after the decision to mobilize the Punjab Chief Minister's Complaints Cell which has been inactive since its inception, Chairman Rawalpindi Division Akbar Khan Tanoli has also started a series of open forums in which the local administration also participated.

Is directed. The Commissioner Rawalpindi Division has strongly directed not only the revenue Department, but also the purification of health and education institutions under which the process of suspension and arrest of corrupt elements has also started.

Visiting Afghan delegation urges co-op for peace

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A delegation comprised of senior-level Afghan politicians and journalists urged national and regional cooperation for promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan. They were speaking at a conference organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) in collaboration with the Pak-Afghan Youth Forum (PAYF) here on Thursday.

The visiting Afghan delegation comprising former governor of Kabul Mr Ahmadullah Alizai, Head of the Ulema Council



Mr Panida Hikmat, candidate for the Afghan Parliament Mr Obaidullah Agha, former Ministry of Foreign Affairs official Mr Jalaludin Badar, head of the Harakat NGO Mr Husni Mubarak Azizi, journalist Ms Fatima Sadat, and Media Coordinator at Deputy Chairman's High Council for Reconciliation Mr Atiqurrahman Saleem was of the view that since the era of the divisive presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan had come to an end, it was imperative for the leadership of Pakistan and Afghanistan to work together to promote peace and stability in their country.

Regional terror

DAESH is not just a danger in Afghanistan or the Middle East; any terrorist group near the borders of Pakistan is a warning to our own security forces that instability could very well seep through on Pakistani grounds as well.

The operation carried out in the Mastung district in Balochistan demonstrates the proximity of the threat. The operation, carried out by Balochistan's Counterterrorism Department (CTD) on Tuesday, has claimed to have killed 11 terrorists of Daesh (ISIS) in the Qamar Mazarabad area. The CTD team conducted a raid at the camp of the ringleader of Daesh Abdul Hayee when terrorists opened fire and threw hand grenades at the CTD team during the operation. 11 militants were killed in retaliation and ammunition including 4 SMGs, 1 LMG, 2 suicide jackets, 3 9 mm pistols, 15 kg explosives, prima cords, hand grenades, detonators and other arms were recovered from the camp of the outlaws.

The success of this operation is welcome and the bravery of the security forces who conducted the raid and identified the terrorists and recovered some of the ammunition and weapons in ISIS's possession is commendable. However, these updates are more formidable than relieving. Just as Pakistan is reeling from the elimination of the insidious, foreign-funded terrorist groups because of which the country suffered countless suicide bombs, attacks and casualties, a new, more insidious source of terror seems to have taken root in the region. Daesh is looking to make strong inroads into this region, and its methods are the most violent. ISIS, taking advantage of the instability in Afghanistan, is a threat to the peace of the entire region. To challenge this regional threat, countries like Afghanistan and Iran need to cooperate with our security forces with the aim to subdue this terror.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 102

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

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Increasing restrictions

THE Covid-19 vaccination rate must be increased. Apart from ease of access of vaccination and an accelerated campaign, another way to push people into vaccinating is incentives of being vaccinated and sanctions for not having gotten the jab.

The government seems to be following this route; from Wednesday onwards, people who have not gotten vaccinated will be subject to a number of restrictions. The government has given a timeline; in order to travel on trains and buses and use highways and motorways, citizens will have to be partially vaccinated by September 15 and completely inoculated by October 15. Partially vaccinated people could enter and work in shopping malls but they would have to be fully vaccinated by September 30. Individuals over 17 years would have to get one dose by September 15 and be fully vaccinated by October 15, otherwise, they would not be allowed to enter educational institutions. From Sept 30 onwards, only fully vaccinated people will be able to continue their transport business that catered to students and other school-related supplies.

The move to more direct restrictions against unvaccinated people is not unexpected. It arises out of a rise in coronavirus cases and deaths related to the pandemic. Pakistan reported over 100 Covid-19 deaths for the fourth time in about three weeks, threatening to reverse the initial progress we saw. According to the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) data, 3,838 people contracted the virus and 118 patients lost their lives during the last 24 hours.

These restrictions were necessary. The government must be praised for its expansive campaign; it has cleared vaccination for 17-year-olds, and has hit the record number, of over 1.4 million doses, given in a single day throughout the country. Yet as we have seen in the last few months, an active vaccination campaign is not enough. These are still dangerous times, and with the fatality cases because of the virus, and the burden of healthcare facilities increasing, all possible precautions must be taken.

The spirit of a just cause

Wajeeha Bilal



The problem of the justification of war and conflict and their relationship with politics may never be resolved yet the clearest example of a just cause is self-defence against an aggressor. Self-defence is one of the exceptions to the prohibition against use of force under Article 2(4) of the UN Charter and customary international law. This refers to the defence of a state against an attack by another state

IN the late 6th Century BCE, China was reaching the end of the so called Spring and Autumn period in which philosophers had flourished. Much of the thinking had focused on moral philosophy or ethics and the political philosophy concentrated on the morally correct way that the state should organize its internal affairs. The culmination of this came with Confucius's integration of traditional virtues into a hierarchy led by a sovereign, and administered by a bureaucracy of scholars. But towards the end of this period, the political stability of the various states of China became fragile and tensions between them increased as the population grew. In this atmosphere military advisors became as important as the civil bureaucrats and military strategy began to reform political thinking. The most influential work on the subject was "The Art of War" by Sun Tzu, a general in the army of the King of Wu. It was later an important influence on the tactics of revolutionaries, including Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh. The debate of war ethics also persisted amongst the Greeks and the Romans, though both civilizations infringed those ethics. War ethics were developed further by St Augustine who believed all wars to be evil and St Thomas Aquinas who believed that sometimes it was necessary to fight in order to preserve or restore peace in face of aggression. Later centuries introduced new views about the ethics of war. Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau were seventeenth and 17th and 18th century philosophers with contrasting theories about human nature. Hobbes's view was that human beings needed to be ruled by government as the state of nature was a terrible

dog-eat-dog world. Rousseau argued that it was the civil society and property that led to war with the state as the agency through which war could be pursued. In these debates of war and its cause, Friedrich Nietzsche's name still invites hostility. Like Marx and Freud, he was a leading light in the school of suspicion intent on stripping away the veil from received notions and comforting beliefs. His philosophy was nihilist meaning that it was impossible to find meaning in existence.

The problem of the justification of war and conflict and their relationship with politics may never be resolved yet the clearest example of a just cause is self-defence against an aggressor. Self-defence is one of the exceptions to the prohibition against use of force under Article 2(4) of the UN Charter and customary international law. This refers to the defence of a state against an attack by another state. Self-defence in international law refers to the inherent right of a State to the use of force in response to an armed attack. The best example of this necessary and proportionate use of force and defence against an unlawful attack came during the 1965 war, fought between Pakistan and India.

On 6th September, 1965, without any formal declaration of war, the Indian military crossed the international border at midnight and attacked the cities of Lahore, Kasur, and Sialkot. Charged with fearlessness and courage, Pakistanis dealt the Indian-surprise attacks valiantly. The 17-day long war ended on September 22, 1965, agreeing to the UN-administered ceasefire though Pakistan's strong defence not only defeated the Indian military but also hammered the Indian cause.

Special tributes are paid every year to the martyrs of 1965 war and their sacrifices for the motherland. On this glorious day, we declare our utmost gratitude to honorable martyrs who had sacrificed their blood and souls for the protection of the country which was founded by our fathers on the principles of faith, unity, and discipline. Martyrdom is the highest degree of devotion and dedication to the homeland, and only great nations are built through sacrifice and sincere belonging. Islam is a peaceful religion, and all Muslims wish to live in peace.

But even believers in Islam need to defend themselves against invasion and attack from those who threaten their peace and religion. This duty is encapsulated in the Islamic idea of Jihad meaning struggle or striving and this idea commends the sacrifices of those who lay their lives fearlessly defending their honor during war and struggle.

Every year Defence Day is observed to dignify and recognize those martyrs who sacrificed their lives defending the honour of their homeland. Names of Sarwar Shaheed and Aziz Bhatti Shaheed are at the top of our war heroes and the list goes on with Sarfaraz Rafique Shaheed, M.M. Alam and many more. The army was soon successful in the Khem Karan sector, and the Lahore front was secured.

The nation will never forget the sacrifices of our martyrs that provide us with determination, strength and solidarity. We all stand, on this occasion, in admiration for those who have promised their lives to the support of their homeland and nation. Our Defence Day, 6th September, is a true embodiment of the unburied memories and the spirit of a just cause for war in history. – @WajeehaBilal

Why America lost in Afghanistan?

Dr. Tahir Ashraf

Similarly, at a time when the United States and its allies were pushing the Taliban out of the negotiating table for a political solution to the Afghan problem, the United States failed to realize that the Taliban still represented a point of view that is an acceptable and common point of view for the majority of Pashtuns

TWENTY years ago, the United States invaded Afghanistan when the Taliban were ruling over there. The apparent purpose of this invasion was that the Taliban refused to extradite Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the terrorist attacks in New York and the leader of Al Qaeda, to the United States. The 20-year-long war between the United States and the Taliban, what US President Joe Biden terms as "forever war", has come to an end after the Taliban took control of Kabul on August 15.

Although the war between the United States and the Taliban came to an end when the United States signed an agreement with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban) in Doha in February 2020. Why did the US lose in Afghanistan? What were the reasons? Was it possible to avoid such a defeat? These are the questions that American and international experts in international relations and war strategy will continue to ponder and interpret in their way in the years to come. The following lines will also try to find answers to these questions.

Only a few years after the war began in October 2001, the commanders of the coalition forces realized that it was difficult for them to win the war. According to Christina Lamb (Sunday Times Chief Correspondent), Brigadier Mark Carleton Smith, commander of the British Army at a firebase in Helmand province in 2008, told her in an interview that the war in Afghanistan could not be won militarily. He may have been the first senior Allied military officer to say so publicly, and the story made headlines on the British Sunday Times. The then US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates immediately called Carlton Smith a "loser" in the news media.

US President Joe Biden, thirteen years later, seems to have reached the same conclusion as the British Brigadier. In April, Biden announced that the United States would withdraw all its remaining troops from Afghanistan by the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, which he called "the forever war." But now, such an evacuation was only a foregone conclusion as the Taliban proved to be a stubborn

enemy that was not going anywhere, while the Taliban controlled half of the country. How did the war that was once known as the "Good War" (to distinguish it from the Iraq war) go so wrong? "The American War in Afghanistan: A History" is the subject of a new book, which claims to be America's first comprehensive account of this longest war. The author of the book, Carter Malkasian, is a historian who has spent considerable time, first as a civilian official in Helmand Province and then as a senior adviser to the US military commander in Afghanistan.

Carter Malkasian considers how it is possible that in 2011, with 140,000 troops and some of the world's most advanced equipment, the United States and its NATO allies failed to defeat the Taliban. Moreover, despite the cost of more than \$2 trillion and the loss of more than 3,500 lives of the Allied soldiers, and the severe injuries of many soldiers, why did the Western powers continue this war in Afghanistan? It has long been known that this was an invincible war. According to Malkasian, the United States committed mistakes between 2001 and 2006 that led to its failure. Everyone is now aware of the list of mistakes what he has listed. According to him, Defense Minister Donald Rumsfeld did not want to invest in the Afghan army and by the end of 2003, only 6,000 Afghan soldiers had been trained. The warlords, who were often blamed for the violence in the Afghanistan countryside, at first roamed freely and later became members of parliament and ministers in the Afghan government.

Similarly, at a time when the United States

and its allies were pushing the Taliban out of the negotiating table for a political solution to the Afghan problem, the United States failed to realize that the Taliban still represented a point of view that is an acceptable and common point of view for the majority of Pashtuns. Malkasian suggests that the United States should have put its advantage behind it, and at a time when the Afghan government had public support and the Taliban were under pressure, the United States had empowered militias and launched counterterrorism operations that disengaged ordinary Afghans from the whole system and the Taliban took advantage of this element and started organizing themselves once again.

The majority of American and Western experts view the Taliban's victory in the war against the United States only from a violence-based religious perspective, while forgetting the fact that their continued resistance against the US and NATO forces and their subsequent victory over coalition forces is a victory against external aggression. They have won against the invaders, and the same ideology was popular among ordinary Afghans, especially in rural areas, which enabled the Taliban to fight a long war of twenty years. Although they had enjoyed the tacit support of regional powers which were against the presence of the American forces in this region yet no one can deny the fact that it is not possible to win wars without indigenous support.

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Briefs

Pakistan condemns Indian acts

FROM PAGE 01
statement said, as the family was preparing for the last rites of Syed Geelani, that a heavy contingent of the occupation forces raided his residence in Srinagar, harassed family members and snatched Syed Geelani's body. "When the family members told the raiding party that Syed Geelani's will was to be buried in the 'Cemetery of Martyrs' in Srinagar, they were reportedly told that India would not allow Geelani's burial at the place of his choosing," he said.

The FO spokesperson said the government of India is so afraid of Geelani and what he stood for, that they have now resorted to this inhuman act even after his passing away. "This shows the degree of callousness on part of the Occupation Forces and demonstrates beyond doubt that India would trample all civil and human values in perpetuating its occupation of IIOJK," the statement added.

Indian media subsequently reported that Geelani has been buried. A curfew has been imposed in the valley and all internet services suspended. The spokesperson urged the international community to take serious note of this unprecedented and egregious situation in the Indian Occupied Kashmir and hold India to account for its breaches of international human rights and humanitarian laws.

Although Geelani and his family wanted him to be buried at the Cemetery of Martyrs in Srinagar, Indian authorities did not allow it, fearing agitation from people of occupied Kashmir. He was buried just a few meters away from his house in Haiderpora, Srinagar.

A small number of people mainly some close relatives were allowed to participate in the funeral prayers and to have a last glimpse of the martyred leader.

‘London flats bought with looted money’

FROM PAGE 01
And whenever traffic [of vehicles increases on such projects] then private investment flows in." The prime minister said he would ensure the Sialkot-Kharian motorway is built through public-private partnership, adding that this would ensure the public development fund is saved so that it can be spent on education and health.

PM Imran Khan said Pakistan had a large youth population which it should use to its advantage. "We can convert our huge population into an advantage for us as well," he said. "Only if we work smartly." PM Khan said if the northern areas of Gilgit-Baltistan were connected with other areas, it would boost tourism to unprecedented levels in Pakistan. "More tourists in the country would mean more inflow of dollars into Pakistan," he said. "This, in turn, would improve the exchange rate."

US declares emergency in California

AGENCIES

CALIFORNIA: US President Joe Biden has approved a declaration of emergency for the state of California and federal assistance to help firefighters combat the Caldor Fire – a sprawling blaze near the popular tourist destination of Lake Tahoe.

The White House announced the moves late on Wednesday as crews fought back the wind-driven wildfire, managing to save South Lake Tahoe, the largest town along the rim of North America's largest alpine lake.

The blaze broke out on August 14 and has since charred more than 82,500 hectares (204,000 acres) of drought-parched timber.

Late Wednesday, fire crews deployed from around the country had managed to carve so-called containment lines around just 23 percent of the fire, which had destroyed at least 700 homes and other buildings and forced the evacuation of an estimated 50,000 people.

RISJA makes proposals on National Sports Policy

International boxer Muhammad Wasim who is heading for the USA for an international bout to make more name for Pakistan in boxing said he was never fully supported by the authorities

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Prominent Olympians, sportspersons, organizers, journalists and other sports stakeholders have requested Prime Minister Imran Khan to take on board to all the stakeholders on proposed national sports policy to be formulated in closed doors and should form separate ministry which only deals for sports promotion in the country. These recommendations were formed during a seminar on proposed national sports policy made by the ministry of Inter Provincial Co-ordination which was organized by Rawalpindi-Islamabad Sports Journalists Association (RISJA) at a local hotel in Islamabad.

All speakers (16 in total) stressed the need of spreading the document to every section of society, be it students, cooperate, sectors, journalists, sports organizers, sports administrators or club event managers and take suggestions before the approval of national sports policy. Those who spoke on the occasion included weightlifter Olympian Talah Talib, boxer Mohammad Wasim, Olympian Kiran Khan, Olympian Sadaf Siddiqui, Alamgir Sheikh (chairman Pakistan Billiards and Snooker Association),



Ijaz Chaudhry (former secretary IPC), Dr Waqar Ahmad (chairman NADO), Fahad Hussain (Resident Editor Dawn), Aqil Shah (KPK Olympic Association president), Tauseef Ahmad (Manager Pakistan volleyball team), Mohammad Yaqoob, Abdul Majid Bhatti, Aqeel Ahmad, Abdul Mohi Shah, Ayaz Akbar (all journalists) gave a detailed resume on the proposed sports policy. The recommendations of the stakeholders have been formulated and now these recommendations will be forwarded to the Prime



Minister, Federal Ministers, Members of Parliament and other stakeholders. Giving the feedback through video link, weightlifter Talha Talib said that full facilities should be provided to the athletes and coaches in Pakistan, the athletes do not get proper training and facilities. He said that the government should ensure the provision of facilities, sports academies should be set up in every city and maximum facilities should be provided to the sportspersons. Talha said that he could easily have

won a medal at the Olympics had he used recognized weights in training. "I did not train with the proper weights. Neither there was proper training. I could have won the medal; had I been having all these things." International boxer Muhammad Wasim who is heading for the USA for an international bout to make more name for Pakistan in boxing said he was never fully supported by the authorities. "Youngster want coaching and proper training. But sadly, that has never been the case."

He said that sports in Pakistan have become very limited. There are no facilities for players in the Pakistan Sports Complex. The facility for training of boxers has also come to an end in Pakistan Sports Complex, adding that Prime Minister Imran Khan himself is a sportsman and he will definitely listen to the voices of the sportspersons. Speaking on the occasion former federal secretary IPC Ejaz Chaudhary said that we have buried any clause confronting the International Olympic Charter in 2014. We are signatory to that accord that was reached in Lausanne. It would be absolutely wasting time on repeating that mistake again. Yet I believe that federations are not doing their job properly.

‘Taliban have right to raise voice for...’

FROM PAGE 01

To a question on the Haqqani network, the spokesperson said there is "no such group" and they are "a part of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan". On Sunday, Shaheen said that Washington will "have no right to attack" Afghanistan after August 31, when the withdrawal of its troops its complete.

The United States had launched a drone strike against a Daesh attack "planner" in eastern Afghanistan, a day after a suicide bombing at Kabul airport killed 13 US troops and scores of Afghan civilians, according to Reuters. Responding to a question if the US had carried out the drone strike with the Taliban's consent, Shaheen said that the Taliban-led government will stop any such attack in Afghanistan after August 31.

Earlier, on August 19, Shaheen, in an interview with China's state CGTN television, said China could contribute to the development of Afghanistan in the future.

Taliban preparing to name new Cabinet

FROM PAGE 01

The Afghan government's legitimacy in the eyes of international donors and investors will be crucial for the economy of Afghanistan amid a drought and food shortages. European Union officials have admitted that the bloc needs to engage with the Taliban, but said it will not rush into formally recognizing the group as the new rulers of Afghanistan.

Several European countries are seeking talks with the Taliban, who now control the Kabul airport, to resume evacuation efforts and deliver humanitarian aid.

"We need to engage with the Taliban [...] but we will not rush into recognizing this new formation, nor into establishing official relations," Gunnar Wiegand, the European Commission's managing director for Asia and the Pacific, told members of the European Parliament on Wednesday.

The EU is also hoping its aid money gives it leverage over the Taliban. Britain also has no immediate plans to recognize the Taliban's government, although it sees engaging with them as necessary, British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said on Thursday.

Gillani's legacy to continue: FO

FROM PAGE 01

The funeral prayer for veteran Kashmiri leader was attended amongst others by President Dr. Arif Alvi, Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani, the President and the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir and the parliamentarians. Absentia funeral prayers were also offered in several cities of Azad Kashmir which were attended by political leaders, social workers, lawyers and members of civil society. Jamaat-Islami head Siraj-ul-Haq also led funeral prayers at Lahore. He also lauded services and struggle of the veteran Kashmiri leader for the freedom movement.

National Test cricketers visit PICU

PESHAWAR: Test cricketers of the national cricket team visited Islamia College and met Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Gul Majeed Khan in his office here on Thursday.

Shabir Ahmed, Assistant Registrar, Islamia College, Ali Hoti, Director Sports and others were also present on the occasion.

Pakistan Champion Trophy hero Fakhar Zaman, Test Fast Bowler Imran Khan Senior, Peshawar Zalmi Fast Bowler Sameen Gul Afridi and first class Cricketer Sajjad Hashmi visited Islamia College University, Peshawar.

Talking to the players of the national cricket team, the Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof. Dr. Gul Majeed said that the administration wants to promote sports in Islamia College to provide healthy and positive activities to the youth.

UK will not recognise Taliban but sees scope for dialogue: Raab

AGENCIES

DOHA: The United Kingdom will not recognise the Taliban but sees scope for dialogue, the British foreign secretary has said, adding that he is monitoring closely whether the hardline group lives up to its promises to maintain peace.

During a diplomatic mission to Qatar to ensure the safe passage of the Britons and Afghans left behind, Dominic Raab said on Thursday that he was attempting to build a regional coalition to "exert the maximum moderating influence" on the Taliban as they "adjust to the new reality" of the group in power.

The Taliban shocked Western leaders and observers with its rapid advance ahead of the American pullout on August 31. Within hours of

taking control of Afghanistan on August 15, a chaotic race began among global powers to evacuate foreigners and Afghan collaborators as many feared the Taliban would not honour pledges that it would not seek retribution. At a press conference in the Qatari capital, Doha, after meeting the emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Raab said a "direct engagement" was required with the Taliban.

"The reality is we will not be recognising the Taliban any time in the foreseeable future but I think there is an important scope for engagement and dialogue," he said. Thousands of Afghans who helped British efforts in the nation and their relatives are feared to have been left behind when the RAF departed Kabul ahead of the United States's end of

August deadline for withdrawal. At Raab's side, Qatari foreign minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said he was "hopeful" that Kabul airport will reopen soon, with the Gulf state seen as key to progress as it has maintained close relations with the Taliban.

The reopening of Hamid Karzai International Airport would allow for a greater scale of evacuations from Afghanistan, with those trying to flee the Taliban currently being told to cross into neighbouring countries. "There is no clear indication when it is going to be fully operational yet but we are working very hard and also engaging with the Taliban to identify what are the gaps and the risks for having the airport back up and running," the minister said.

"We will remain hopeful that we will be able to operate it as soon as possible." During the trip, Raab is also expected to visit Pakistan, which crucially shares a land border with Afghanistan and is home to more than a million Afghan refugees. Thousands are crossing into Pakistan each day, following the Taliban's takeover.

Raab said Qatar was a "linchpin" in dealing with the crisis going forward as he seeks to get "wider buying" to the diplomatic efforts. "I think above all we need to put a grouping together that can exert the maximum moderating influence on what the Taliban does next and we will certainly be judging them, yes on their words, but more importantly what they do to live up to the assurances they've made," he added.

Ronaldo becomes highest goalscorer in int'l football

LONDON: Cristiano Ronaldo has become the record highest goalscorer in international football after he helped Portugal beat Republic of Ireland 2-1 in World Cup qualifying on Wednesday. The Manchester United forward has now 111 international goals, breaking a record of 109 goals previously held by Iran's Ali Daei. Ronaldo, who is the all-time top goalscorer in his country to their only major tournament win at Euro 2016. The 36 year old spoke of his pride after his latest milestone. "From all the records – and fortunately there have been me and it's certainly on the shelf truly proud," Ronaldo said in a post for Portugal means 111 moments like garve, moments of worldwide union and Portuguese citizens all around the globe. Ronaldo became the first player to feature in five 2020, winning the Golden Boot. And he could equal the record of playing at five World Cups should Portugal make it to Qatar next year. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner, who secured a return to United from Juventus this week, hinted he has no intention of retiring from international football in the near future. "Thank you Portugal. – DNA



Taliban: Then and Now-Part 1

FROM PAGE 01

"The conversation stops there, and I prefer to step aside. Soon the convoy of guests arrives. Mullah Abdul Salam Rocketti and his brother – recently released from the Quetta prison in a prisoners exchange deal with Pakistani authorities – are greeted with warmth and love. After brief conversation with him, Mullah Omar writes down war instructions on a paper foil taken out of a Silk Cut cigarette packet, which Mullah Rocketti then passes on to his commanders ready for the battlefield in Ghazni, the ninth Afghan province under Taliban attack.

"It rains heavily that evening. So, I take refuge in a Taliban barrack, but it is crowded and scary. Lucky enough, I find refuge inside the headquarter. Following Traveeh prayers, in a side room, I sit with some Taliban Shoorra members on the carpet. The discussion over Afghan tea is mostly about whether to attack Kabul now or capture more Afghan provinces. All of them hate Hekmatyar, the Hizbe-Islami leader, and are impatient to destroy his Charasayab stronghold to reach Kabul. They want to establish the true Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan and also replicate it in neighbouring Muslim countries. A Shoorra member from the North proudly claims that over 100 Taliban have already joined the Islamic fight against Russian occupation in Chechnya. "Maulvi Amir Muttaqi (who would later serve as Information Minister in the Taliban government is currently a senior Taliban leader) and Mullah Mansoor

(who succeeded Mullah Omar as Emir-ul-Momineen and was later killed in a US drone strike in Baluchistan)) also join in later. The discussion moves to more substantive issues. Both of them say, their leader is very clear about enforcing Hanafi form of Sunni Islam in Afghanistan, which is also an ideal system of government for other Muslim nations. From Taliban conversations, I can easily guess that they carry a deep sense of pride, for defeating the communist Soviet Union; mixed with a deep sense of betrayal by the Americans, for using and then abandoning the Mujahideen. Hence, now they want to defeat the remaining superpower. When asked why they partnered with America before, they rationalise it by saying: "We joined the lesser evil to defeat the bigger evil, now we shall defeat the lesser evil." Hence, it is apparent from the anecdotal evidence presented above that the Taliban were quite clear at the initial stage of their debut rise to power about their political objective of establishing the Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan. They also shared the Al Qaeda's agenda of exporting violence across the Afghan frontiers at the world stage, which is why the international terrorist outfit eventually found a safe haven under the Taliban rule. Moreover, the Taliban were also clear about their military strategy. Realising that mere public support was not enough to conquer the rest of Afghanistan, the Taliban were willing to forge unholy alliances with notorious Afghan warlords like Mullah Rocketti. Yet, it took seven months for the

Taliban to capture the south-western province of Herat in September 1995 due to the fierce resistance from its largely Shia Hazara population. And, it would take another year for the Taliban to conquer Kabul in September 1996. The last stronghold in the outskirts of the Afghan capital to fall was Charasayab, where the Hizbe-Islami forces of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar fought hard against the Taliban. The Taliban had first entered Mazare-Sharif in May 1997, but were routed within couple of days. They were finally able to capture this capital city of the ethnically Uzbek-dominated northern province of Balkh in August 1998. Moreover, even while ruling Kabul, the Taliban were never able to conquer almost 10 percent of northern Afghanistan, where the Northern Alliance retained control, with its ethnically Tajik-dominated leadership intact in the north-eastern Panjshir Valley.

The Swift Victory
The stark difference between the rise of the Taliban then and now is the sheer speed with which they have conquered entire Afghanistan within a fortnight – surprisingly starting the major military push from the north this time before the final assault on Kabul. The Taliban also pursued an effective military strategy, which was to choke the Afghan regime by denying it trade revenues, and energy and communication means, then encircle Kabul from the north and the rest of the sides. Well before the Afghan capital swiftly fell to the Taliban on August 15, they had established control over almost all the provincial capitals, except the Panjshir Valley, including Jalala-

bad in the east. Mazare-Sharif also quickly fell, despite President Ashraf Ghani's last-ditch effort to shore up alliance with the Uzbek militia of Rashid Dostum, who himself chose to flee.

Clearly, the hasty withdrawal of foreign forces – under the US-Taliban agreement that was signed last year without securing a ceasefire – emboldened the Taliban to reconquer the war-ravaged country without much resistance. With the US air support, the Afghan National Army was able to resist the Taliban for years, sacrificing tens of thousands of its soldiers. The denial of this support demoralised this army to the extent that its soldiers volunteered to surrender before the advancing Taliban combatants.

Despite this, the incapacitation of the Afghanistan National Defence and Security Force was a factor that contributed to the Taliban's blitz. With widely known corruption, ineptness and factionalism, especially its rank-and-file dominated by the erstwhile Northern Alliance, there was no chance that it would act as the last resort for the beleaguered Ghani regime's survival from the impending Taliban onslaught on the Afghan capital. Once the Taliban reached the gates of Kabul, Ghani had no choice but to flee. First, he was betrayed by the old foxes like former President Hamid Karzai and the chief Afghan interlocutor for talks with the Taliban and his political rival, Abdullah Abdullah. Both are said to have played an instrumental role in persuading the provincial commanders not to resist the advancing Taliban en route to Kabul. Hence, it is no

surprise that they are currently trying to reap the reward of this service by negotiating their role in the Taliban-led government.

Second, it is also believed that President Ghani had set up various meetings for August 15, and that he was forced to take the flight out of Afghanistan only after being told that a Taliban death squad had entered the city to execute him the same way as the Taliban had publicly hung the former Afghan president, Najibullah, by the pole in a Kabul square back in 1996. Thus, he simply feared or his life. Obviously, he had to subsequently create the pretence of "avoiding the bloodshed" for an act that was actually motivated by basic human instinct – and understandably so.

Like before, in the Taliban's current conquest of Afghanistan, Panjshir Valley remains in the hands of their only opponents: Amrullah Saleh, the Afghan Vice President who has now declared himself as the President in Ghani's absence and Ahmed Massoud, the son of legendary Afghan commander Ahmad Shah Massoud and the head of the National Resistance Front of Afghanistan. The Taliban may again find it hard to capture this remote and inaccessible place. However, the fact the Taliban are in control of the entire country and turncoats like Abdullah have betrayed the cause of the Shura-e-Nazar founded and led by late Massoud in the valley, means the odds are in the Taliban's favour.

To be continued

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Briefs

Ireland fines
WhatsApp
225 mn euros

DUBLIN: Ireland on Thursday imposed a 225-million-euro fine on Facebook-owned messaging service WhatsApp for breaching EU data privacy laws after European regulators demanded the penalty be increased. Ireland was asked to "reassess and increase its proposed fine on the basis of a number of factors ... and following this reassessment the DPC has imposed a fine of 225 million euro on WhatsApp," said Ireland's Data Protection Commission (DPC). The fine, the equivalent of \$267 million, was handed down by the DPC as the country hosts the European headquarters of Facebook. As Ireland hosts the regional headquarters of a number of major tech players such as Apple, Google and Twitter, the DPC has been largely responsible for policing adherence to the EU's landmark GDPR data rights charter. The agency launched the WhatsApp probe in December 2018 to examine whether the messaging app "discharged its GDPR transparency obligations" with regard to telling users how their data would be used. This included information provided about the processing of information between WhatsApp and other Facebook companies. — APP

Six Germans
charged over
museum heist

BERLIN: German prosecutors said Thursday they have charged six men over a spectacular heist in 2019 when more than a dozen diamond-encrusted artefacts worth over 100 million euros were snatched from a state museum. The suspects, all German nationals aged between 22 and 27 years old, are accused of aggravated gang robbery and aggravated arson. Two among them had previously been convicted for stealing in 2017 a 100-kilogramme (220-pound) gold coin from Berlin's Bode Museum — another robbery that shook up Germany. Armed with a loaded revolver and an automatic-loading gun with a silencer, the men allegedly broke into the Green Vault museum in Dresden in the early hours of November 25, 2019, making away with 21 pieces of jewellery encrusted with more than 4,300 diamonds. The insured value of the pieces reached 113.8 million euros (\$135 million), said prosecutors in a statement. None of the stolen items have been recovered. The suspects are believed to have started a fire to cut off the power supply for street lighting around the museum just before the burglary. — APP

World failing
people with
dementia

GENEVA: Dementia, which robs people of their "memories, independence and dignity", is on the rise worldwide but few countries are equipped to fight it, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned Thursday. In a report, the WHO said dementia, caused by a variety of diseases and injuries that affect the brain such as Alzheimer's or stroke, affects more than 55 million people in what has become a "global public health concern." That figure is set to rise to 78 million by 2030 and 139 million by 2050 as the population grows older. Yet only a quarter of countries worldwide have a national strategy for supporting people with dementia and their families, the WHO said. Half of these countries are in Europe, with the remainder split between other regions in the world. "Yet even in Europe, many plans are expiring or have already expired, indicating a need for renewed commitment from governments," the WHO said. The organisation's chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said "dementia robs memories of people of their memories, independence and dignity, but it also robs the rest of us of the people we know and love." "The world is failing people with dementia, and that hurts all of us," he was quoted as saying in a statement. — APP

Tokayev emphasises new social initiatives in address to nation

The minimum wage will be increased from the current 42,500 tenge (US\$100) to 60,000 tenge (US\$140) starting Jan. 1 next year which is expected to affect more than one million people

DNA

NUR-SULTAN: Developing nuclear energy, boosting the country's military capacity, extending support for businesses, and five new social initiatives were among the topics that President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev raised during his one-and-a-half-hour-long state-of-the-nation address delivered on Sept. 1. All initiatives voiced in the address are aimed at supporting the country in the post-pandemic period, improving the efficiency of health care systems, ensuring quality education, improving regional policy, and creating an effective ecosystem in the labour market. "It seems to me that everyone who doubts the head of the state, who fails to do their job, who wants to sit and do nothing, should resign from their posts. We are now entering a decisive stage in our development. The state apparatus must work as a single mechanism. Only then will we be able to achieve our objectives," said the President.

Social Initiatives

The social sector has been a priority for Kazakhstan. Nearly half of the country's budget for 2022-2025 will be allocated to the social sector.

In his address to the nation, Tokayev announced five social initiatives. The minimum wage will be increased from the current 42,500 tenge (US\$100) to 60,000 tenge (US\$140) starting Jan. 1 next year which is expected to affect more than one million people. The minimum wage has not changed since 2018. "I believe it is time to review the level of the minimum wage. On the one hand, it is the most important macro-indicator, and on the other hand, it is an indicator that everyone can understand," said Tokayev. He said that experts project it will increase the gross domestic product by 1.5 percent. He also cautioned the government to rely less on the minimum wage levels when making calculations in tax and social spheres. Tokayev also spoke about the need to increase the wage fund. Over the past 10 years, it has been 60 percent lower than the profits of business owners. The government will develop measures to motivate businesses to increase the salaries of their employees. Decreasing the burden on the payroll is another initiative. "Micro and small businesses are particularly affected by this.



I propose to introduce a single payment from the payroll with a reduction of the total burden from 34 percent to 25 percent. This will stimulate businesses to bring thousands of employees out of the shadows and make them participants in the pension, social security, and health insurance systems," said Tokayev. Kazakhstan will also continue increasing salaries for people working in spheres financed from the budget (employees of cultural institutions, archives, libraries). From 2022 to 2025, the state will increase the salaries of nearly 600,000 people working in these

fields by 20 percent annually on average. In 2020, Kazakhstan increased the salaries of doctors, social workers, and teachers. Kazakhstan will also allow the transfer of part of people's pension savings above the sufficiency threshold to the Otasy bank for the subsequent purchase of housing. This comes as a continuation of the country's 2020 initiative that allowed citizens to withdraw part of their future pension savings to purchase housing now. **Development of Nuclear Energy** Kazakhstan may face an energy

shortage by 2050, according to Tokayev, and the country needs to start thinking of alternative reliable energy sources. Peaceful nuclear energy might be one of them.

"Within a year, the government and the Samruk Kazyna National Wealth Fund should study the possibility of developing a safe and environmentally-friendly nuclear power industry in Kazakhstan. It should also include the development of engineering and creating a new generation of qualified nuclear engineers in our country. Hydrogen energy as a whole is also a promising sector," said Tokayev.

Kazakhstan has been making significant progress as it tries to transition to a green energy and economy. It has committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2060 and bringing the share of renewable energy in the total energy balance to 15 percent by 2050, among other national targets.

Situation in Afghanistan

The escalating situation in Afghanistan and the country's takeover by the Taliban group have been in global headlines over the past month. Though Kazakhstan and Afghanistan do not have a border, the situation still affects the region.

Tokayev emphasized the need to enhance Kazakhstan's capacity to respond to external threats and strengthen defense capabilities.

"We must prepare for external shocks and worst-case scenarios. Modeling external risks has become highly relevant. Stress tests should be conducted, and scenarios should be worked out that will determine further actions of the state apparatus," he said.

Independence – the highest value of the nation

As Kazakhstan celebrates the 30th anniversary of its independence this year, Tokayev described independence as the highest value of the nation.

"In unity and harmony, we were able to build a new state – this is our greatest achievement. We have strengthened the spirit of the nation, laying a solid foundation for development. (...) Together, we are building a strong state. Sovereignty is not an empty slogan or a loud word. The most important thing is that every citizen should feel the fruits of independence – a peaceful life, social harmony, increased prosperity of the people, and the confidence of young people in their future. All our initiatives are aimed at this," said Tokayev.



KARACHI: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi in a group photo with Commander Pakistan Fleet and Officers of Naval Aviation at the induction ceremony of long range maritime Patrol Jet Aircraft in Pakistan Navy. — DNA

EU pushes for more
defence autonomy amid
Afghanistan fallout

AGENCIES

BRUSSELS: Still reeling from the European Union's shortcomings in Afghanistan, officials from the 27-nation bloc have met to discuss ways to improve their response to future crises and reduce reliance on the United States. European ministers of defence and foreign affairs gathered on Thursday in Slovenia for talks also involving NATO and UN officials to look at ways to improve the bloc's operational engagement and develop a rapid response force capable of operating in difficult military theatres. Ministers will discuss plans for the so-called strategic compass, a document aiming at harmonising crisis management and defining defence ambitions for the bloc, that is expected to be drafted before the end of the year. "It's clear that the need for more European defence has never been as much as evident as today after the events in Afghanistan," EU foreign policy

chief Josep Borrell said upon his arrival. "There are events that catalyse the history," he said. "Sometimes something happens that pushes the history, it creates a breakthrough and I think the Afghanistan events of this summer are one of these cases."

The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan and the rushed



airlift operation out of the country that followed have laid bare the EU's dependency on its ally. Without US support, European countries would not have been able to guarantee the safe passage of their citizens, or even their troops, out of the war-torn country. "The strategic situation, the geo-strategic changes, show that now we need a stronger Europe," said Claudio Graziano, chairman of the EU military committee. "The situation in Afghanistan, Libya, Middle East, Sahel,

show that now it's the time to act starting with the creation of a rapid European entry force able to show the will of the European Union to act as a global strategic partner. When if not now, later would be late." But finding a consensus among the 27 EU member states to create such a force is a tall order. European countries on the border with Russia, for instance, Poland and the Baltic nations, often oppose the idea of autonomy. EU heavyweight Germany is also a strong supporter of using NATO for security operations and keeping the US defence umbrella in Europe. However, Slovenian defence minister Matej Tonin, whose country currently holds the EU's rotating presidency, said he believes a small majority of countries is favourable to the idea. The EU is already endowed with rapid reaction teams – so-called battlegroups – made up of about 1,500 personnel. But they have never been used in major crises, and the bloc does not deploy EU missions to active conflict zones.

Russia
records
18,985 daily
cases

MOSCOW: Russia confirmed 18,985 new coronavirus cases over the past 24 hours, taking the nationwide tally to 6,956,318, the official monitoring and response center said Thursday. Meanwhile, the nationwide death toll grew by 798 to 184,812, while the number of recoveries increased by 18,669 to 6,218,048. During the same period, Moscow reported 1,864 new cases, taking the city's total to 1,570,631. — APP

Azerbaijan,
Russia to ink
food safety deal

FOREIGN DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijan's Food Safety Agency and Russia's Rosselkhoz nadzor will sign a cooperation accord on the safe use of pesticides and agrochemicals with Russia's Rosselkhoz nadzor, Food Safety Agency Head Goshgar Tahmazli said on September 1. He added that under the new agreement, Azerbaijan cannot export fruits and vegetables containing pesticides, nitrates, and heavy metals to Russia that do not meet the local standards. Tahmazli noted that the problem emerged after the Russian federal law "On the safe use of pesticides and agrochemicals" was amended. He said that according to the changes, fruit and vegetable producers should use

only registered and internationally recognized pesticides and agrochemicals when growing crops.

The agency head said that due to the recent changes in legislation, information on pesticides used by 157 tomato, 86 apple and other crop producers were collected and submitted to Russia. It should be noted that Russia's agriculture watchdog Rosselkhoz nadzor banned the import of Azerbaijani tomatoes and apples on December 10, citing the necessity to "prevent the import and spread" of pesticides to Russia. Furthermore, Rosselkhoz nadzor lifted the ban on tomato and apple imports from Azerbaijani enterprises, starting from June 15. Azerbaijan is a major supplier of fruits and vegetables to Russia.

India records most Covid
cases in two months

NEW DELHI: India has reported the biggest single-day rise in COVID-19 cases in two months, as the government worries about the virus spreading from the most-affected Kerala state, schools reopening, and the start of the festival season. Densely populated Kerala, on India's southern tip, accounted for nearly 70 percent of the 47,092 new infections and a third of deaths, a week after it celebrated its biggest festival during which family and social gatherings were common. "With cases rising in Kerala, adequate steps should be taken to contain the inter-state spread of COVID-19," Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said in a statement on Thursday after speaking with his state counterparts in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, which border Kerala. He asked them to increase vaccination in the districts close to Kerala. — Agencies



TBILISI: Ambassador Bilal Hayee called on Alexander Khvtisiashvili, Deputy Foreign Minister of Georgia in Tbilisi. — DNA

Armenia not ready for int'l neighborhood policy: MFA

"We draw the attention of the new Armenian FM to the fact that Azerbaijan has ensured its territorial integrity in accordance with the regulations of international law and it is time to implement the statements signed by the parties [Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia in Nov 2010 and Jan 2021]"

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan has said that Armenia is not yet ready for a neighborhood policy based on principles of international law, the Foreign Ministry said on September 3. Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Leyla Abdullayeva made the remarks to comment on Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan's interview with the Russian media. "Our country has repeatedly stat-

ed its support for the normalization of relations on the basis of the principles of international law. The revanchist statements and behavior of the Armenian side show that the country is not yet ready for a neighborhood policy based on the principles of international law," the ministry said. The spokesperson stressed that in an interview with Russia's RIA Novosti news agency, Mirzoyan reiterated official Yerevan's position, which traditionally contradicts international law and reflects territorial claims against Azerbaijan.

By inciting aggressive separatism on Azerbaijani territories within its international borders, the Armenian foreign minister makes it clear that his "peace and security strategy" is nothing but fraud and that the country has not yet renounced its policy of aggression, Abdullayeva stressed. "We draw the attention of the new Armenian foreign minister to the fact that Azerbaijan has ensured its territorial integrity in accordance with the regulations of international law and it is time to im-

plement the statements signed by the parties [Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia in November 2010 and January 2021]," she said. Abdullayeva added that it is in the interest of Armenia to understand this reality as "the country can finally put an end to lies and fantasies and focus on future development and progress". On November 10, 2020, Baku and Yerevan signed a Moscow-brokered deal that brought an end to 44 days of fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani army declared

a victory against the Armenian troops. The signed agreement obliged Armenia to withdraw its troops from the Azerbaijani lands that it has occupied since the early 1990s. On January 11, 2021, the Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian leaders signed the second statement since the end of the 44-day war. The newly-signed statement is set to implement clause 9 of the November 2020 statement related to the unblocking of all economic and transport communications in the region.

Turkey's
exports reach
all-time high
Aug. figure

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkey's exports hit an all-time high August figure with \$18.9 billion, Trade Minister Mehmet Mus announced on Thursday. Citing preliminary figures, Mus said the country's exports surged 52% from the same month last year. "With this strong momentum achieved in our exports, we surpassed the pre-pandemic performance," he said. The figure also represents a rise of 43% from August 2019, he underlined. Turkish imports climbed 23.8% to \$23.2 billion during the same period, he noted, while the exports/imports coverage ratio jumped 15.1 points to 81.5% in August. Turkey's 12-month rolling exports reached \$207.5 billion, an all-time high, Mus noted. He also highlighted that in January-August, Turkish exports soared 37% annually to \$140.2 billion. The eight-month figure was up 20% from the same period of 2019, Mus noted. Turkey's imports reached \$170 billion in January-August, rising 25.5% from last year. The exports-to-imports coverage ratio rose to 82.5% in the first eight months of the year, up 6.9 points from the same period of 2020.

Azerbaijan,
Turkey hold
joint drills

DNA

BAKU: The Azerbaijani and Turkish servicemen are holding joint drills in Baku, the Defence Ministry reported on September 2. The drills are conducted in line with the Azerbaijani-Turkish military cooperation agreement, the ministry said.

The joint exercises aim to improve the interaction between the two countries' army units during combat operations, to develop the commanders' military decision-making and unit management skills.

The ministry said that the servicemen will also carry out underwater attacks and defence operations during the drills.

The joint exercises will last until September 12.

On September 2, the Turkish National Defence Ministry reported on its Twitter account that Turkey's Victory Day and Armed Forces Day had been celebrated at the Turkish-Russian joint monitoring centre in Azerbaijan's Aghdam region. On January 30, 2021, the joint Turkish-Russian monitoring centre was inaugurated in Aghdam. The centre aims to contribute to the restoration of lasting peace and security in and around the Karabakh region liberated from Armenia's occupation in the 44-day war in 2020.

Briefs

NRFA claims heavy casualties to Taliban

ISLAMABAD: The Northern Resistance Front of Afghanistan (NRFA) on Thursday claimed heavy casualties to Taliban fighters during their multiple attempts to enter Shotul from Jabul-Saraj in Panjshir valley but failed each time and bodies of more than forty Taliban were left on the battlefield.

The Taliban, However, in a statement refuted the NRFA's claim and stated that the resistance forces in Panjshir suffered heavy damages and various of their defence check posts and strategic roads fallen to their fighters.

Taliban claimed Shotul district of Panjshir had fallen to them and their fighters were heading through central highway of Darra district in Panjshir. The Taliban said Panjshir issue would be resolved very soon.

"The enemy has spread rumors that they have entered parts of Panjshir. These are psychological operation (PsyOp) and propaganda. We assure everyone of full control over all the passes and entrances of Panjshir. The enemy made multiple attempts to enter Shotul from Jabul-Saraj, and failed each time. Bodies of more than forty Taliban casualties were left on the battlefield, which were handed over to them through mediation by elders of Gulbahar, in accordance with human rights and the conventions of war," said NRFA Spokesperson Faheem Dashti in a statement issued to media.

He said the enemy had been repelled and no clashes had been reported on that front since Thursday morning. Reports from hospitals in Kabul tell of mounting number of Taliban wounded who are left untreated because hospital staff have not returned to work since the Taliban's takeover of the capital, he added. — APP

US to send 4mn doses of Pfizer to Pak

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: The US will begin sending over four million doses of the Pfizer vaccine to Pakistan Thursday, said a spokesperson of the White House, speaking to the Voice of America. The 4,149,990 doses, sent through COVAX, the global vaccine-sharing initiative co-led by Gavi (the Vaccine Alliance), the WHO (World Health Organization) and CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness), are in addition to the more than 9.2 million doses of Moderna and Pfizer vaccine already donated to Pakistan since June.

In an email, the White House spokesperson said that US President Biden had said earlier that the US is committed to ensuring vaccination of citizens abroad with the same energy it has overseen vaccinations at home.

"We are working to get as many safe and effective vaccines to as many people around the world as fast as possible," he wrote.

Bahrain removes Pakistan from red list

NEWS DESK

MANAMA: Bahrain has decided to remove Pakistan from the travel red list on Wednesday, the travel restriction will be removed from 3rd September. Along with Pakistan other countries have also been removed, these include India, Panama and the Dominican Republic. These restrictions were implemented in May where countries Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal were put on the red list. The country also mandated a precautionary 10-day quarantine for vaccinated and non-vaccinated people from all other countries.

EU delegation starts Business Forum to facilitate Pak SMEs

Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan Mrs Androulla Kaminara said, "We are confident that the business community – especially the small and medium enterprises will take full benefit from the upcoming EU-Pakistan Business Forum

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan is launching the first-ever EU-Pakistan Business Forum on 8 September 2021 in Islamabad to provide opportunities for both the EU and Pakistani businesses for bilateral trade enhancement, H. E. Mrs Androulla Kaminara said, while addressing media experts

The inauguration ceremony of

the EU-Pakistan Business Forum for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) is expected to be attended by the representatives of local Small and Medium Enterprises from four key sectors including: Gems, Jewellery and Mining, Information Technology, Handicrafts and Fashion-wear as well as Travel and Tourism.

During the first Islamabad session, the participants will be informed about the European Union's GSP+ Scheme and



the ways to benefit from the scheme. GSP+ provides two thirds of tariff lines duty free access to the EU market with the rest on preferential duties.

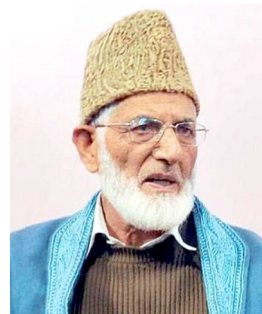
In subsequent meetings of the EU-Pakistan Business Forum later this year, more sectors including the agricultural and auto-parts manufacturers, will also be included.

Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan Mrs Androulla Kaminara said, "We are con-

fident that the business community – especially the small and medium enterprises will take full benefit from the upcoming EU-Pakistan Business Forum and establish the right linkages to expand their trade in the EU market while the European Union granted GSP+ concessions are in place."

The first part of the EU-Pakistan Business Forum in Islamabad will be followed by subsequent meetings in Lahore and Karachi later this year.

Air Chief grieved over sad demise of Ali Gilani



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff Pakistan Air Force, expresses his heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of senior Hurriyat Leader Syed Ali Shah Gilani. His life long struggle for the Kashmir cause in the face of brutalities & illegal occupation by Indian forces gave impetus to three generations of Kashmiris in their struggle for right of self-determination.

He will always be remembered for his unabated contribution for Kashmir cause and love for Pakistan. "May Allah bless the departed soul and give strength to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss, Ameen!" the CAS said.

Afghan women call for respect in rare protest

AGENCIES

HERAT: Defiant Afghan women held a rare protest Thursday saying they were willing to accept the burqa if their daughters could still go to school under Taliban rule.

"It is our right to have education, work and security," the group of around 50 female demonstrators chanted, waving placards on the streets of Afghanistan's western city of Herat. During the Taliban's first stint in power, before being ousted by a US-led invasion in 2001, women and girls were mostly denied education and employment.

Burqas became mandatory in public, women could not leave home without a male companion, and street protests were unthinkable.

Abu Dhabi eases tourist quarantines

WEB DESK

ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi lifted its quarantine requirement for vaccinated tourists on Thursday as the UAE recorded zero Covid deaths for the first time since November.

The oil-rich emirate, which has been cautious about easing coronavirus measures, said vaccinated travellers with negative PCR tests would not need to quarantine. "From Sunday) all vaccinated tourists coming to Abu Dhabi emirate do not need to quarantine," the Abu Dhabi Media Office said, adding that tests must be carried out within 48 hours of departure. The announcement comes as the United Arab Emirates – made up of seven emirates including Abu Dhabi and Dubai – recorded zero Covid-related deaths for the first time since November 14. On Monday, the UAE resumed issuing visas to all fully vaccinated tourists, a month before Dubai hosts the delayed Expo 2020 trade fair.

China bans 'sissy men' from TV

WEB DESK

BEIJING: China's government banned effeminate men on TV and told broadcasters on Thursday to promote "revolutionary culture", broadening a campaign to tighten control over business and society and enforce official morality. President Xi Jinping has called for a "national rejuvenation", with tighter Communist Party control of business, education, culture and religion. Companies and the public are under increasing pressure to align with its vision for a more powerful China and healthier society.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Nigeria Mohammed Bello Abioye calls on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Baber Sidhu. — DNA

Emergency in NY, NJ; at least 9 dead in rains

MONITORING DESK

NEW YORK: The governors of New York and New Jersey declared a state of emergency late on Wednesday as record-breaking rains from tropical storm Ida led to flooding and hazardous conditions on the roads, with media reporting at least nine deaths.

"I am declaring a state of emergency to help New Yorkers affected by tonight's storm," New York Governor Kathy Hochul said on Twitter. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio described the flooding and weather on Wednesday night as a "historic weather event". The National Weather Service issued a flash flood emergency in New York City for the first time.

At least one person was killed as the flooding inundated the New Jersey city of Passaic, Mayor Hector Lora told CNN.

NBC New York reported that one more person had died in New Jersey and seven had died in New York City, including a 2-year-old boy.

Local media reported that people had been trapped in their basements as the storm sent water surging through the city. Lora said the body of a man in his seventies was retrieved from floodwaters. The vehicle the man was riding in was swept away by the water and firefighters were swept under the vehicle, preventing them reaching him, CNN reported.

Nearly all New York City subway lines were suspended late on Wednesday as the remnants of Ida brought torrential rain and the threat of flash floods and tornadoes to parts of the northern mid-Atlantic, CNN reported earlier. All non-emergency vehicles were banned from New York City's streets until 5am (0900 GMT) on Thursday due to the weather, city authorities said on Twitter.

At least five flash flood emergencies were issued on Wednesday evening by the National Weather Service, stretching from west of Philadelphia through northern New Jersey.

Blame game begins over turbulent US withdrawal

The chaotic end to America's longest war has sparked the biggest crisis of President Joe Biden's seven months in the White House

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: A week into the evacuation from Kabul, the US military was forced to take a drastic step: stop all flights from Hamid Karzai International Airport for seven hours because there was no where for the evacuees to go. For months, military officials had urged the US State Department to convince other countries to take Afghans at risk from Taliban retaliation. They had largely failed to secure agreements with other countries, prompting officials across the US government to rush to try to find space for the evacuees.

The Biden administration's scramble was emblematic of failures over the past month, which culminated with a hastily organised airlift that left thousands of US-aided Afghans behind and was punctuated by a suicide bombing outside Kabul's airport that killed 13 US troops and

scores of Afghans.

The chaotic end to America's longest war has sparked the biggest crisis of President Joe Biden's seven months in the White House, finger-pointing within the administration and questions about who, if anyone, would be held responsible. Despite the missteps, the administration carried out one of the largest airlifts in history, evacuating more than 120,000 Americans, Afghans and people of other nationalities amid the threat of attacks by the militant Islamic State group. The last US troops left Afghanistan on Monday.

Current and former officials and lawmakers said there is little appetite for Biden to fire or demote top advisers over the handling of the US withdrawal. The Democratic president, meanwhile, has strongly defended his administration's actions.

Frustrated and angry officials at the Pentagon have privately blamed the lack of urgency



leading up to the airlift on the State and Homeland Security departments, who in turn have blamed the White House for slow decision-making. "Finger-pointing is an ugly Washington sport ... in this case, fingers could be pointed in all directions and probably be right in each case," said Dan Fried, a former senior US diplomat now at the Atlantic Council think tank.

"A failure like this is collective. Everybody screwed up," Fried added.

A source familiar with the matter defended the evacuation planning and said the

State Department was unaware of any concerns at the Department of Defense about a lack of urgency in the effort. White House officials told Reuters that firings have not been discussed, but the administration expects Congress to aggressively investigate the turbulent exit from Afghanistan in hearings. One Biden administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said any dismissal would be seen as a tacit admission that the president had erred in removing troops unconditionally from the South Asian nation.

Biden, in a defiant speech on Tuesday, defended his decision to withdraw the troops and stood by the evacuation plan. "Some say we should have started mass evacuations sooner and 'Couldn't this have been done – have been done in a more orderly manner?' I respectfully disagree," said Biden, who noted that he was ultimately responsible for the withdrawal.

Huawei launches Microfilms; awards Pakistani team

"We will continue to work together, we all need to treat the improvement of digital skills as a priority and tackle the challenges facing governments, enterprises, and even technology firms themselves to be able to bring the benefits of digitization to more people, homes, and organizations than ever before."

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Huawei Pakistan held a Microfilm Premiere recently at Serena Hotel. The Microfilms followed the stories of three Pakistanis who ventured out of their country, to make a better life for themselves, their loved ones, and their family. Although these might just be films, this is the truth for millions of Pakistanis worldwide who have only a few ways to stay connected to their loved ones, and Huawei Pakistan has vowed to stand behind these people. The Premiere was attended by the Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting of Pakistan, Mr. Fawad Chaudhary, Federal Secretary for IT and Telecommunications, Dr. Sohail Rajput, Ambassador of People's Republic of China to Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Mr. Nong Rong, Deputy CEO Huawei Pakistan, Mr. Ahmed Bilal Masud and Mr. Wuhan, along with other distinguished guests. Each of the microfilms depicted the life of different individuals; a construction worker working in the UAE to help send monetary support for his ailing mother. A salon girl, the eldest sibling in the house, breaking stereotypes to lend her father a



helping hand to financially support their family, and a taxi driver, who dreamed of becoming the first engineer in his family but sacrificed that dream to make sure that he could give his son that future instead.

Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting of Pakistan, Mr. Fawad Chaudhary stated at the event, "I would like to thank Huawei for making these emotionally evoking films that show the truth for many Pakistanis. With their help, we've accomplished a lot in the past in the realms of ICT and we are counting on Huawei's continued support in different collaborations in the future. The way



things are going, and with Huawei's unwavering support, we are sure that Pakistan will fulfill its goal of becoming 'Digital Pakistan' quite soon. Federal Secretary for IT and Telecommunications, Dr. Sohail Rajput resonated the same sentiment, saying, "On the front of Digital Transformation, Huawei is helping the Government of Pakistan in helping 1000 government officers in the field of

digital technologies. We hope that in the future we can enhance this scope and engage in more partnerships in further training our youth as well."

Ambassador of People's Republic of China to Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mr. Nong Rong also added, "By perfecting Huawei's technical support, product supply and other services, strengthening technical

exchange and local talent training, as well as seriously implementing social responsibilities, they can, together with their Pakistani partners, make incessant contribution of wisdom and force to the implementation of "Digital Pakistan Initiative", to the economic and social development of Pakistan, and to the building of a closer China-Pakistan community."