



# Islamabad POST

Saturday, September 18, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

**UNHCR acknowledges Pak humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan**

Detailed News On Page-08

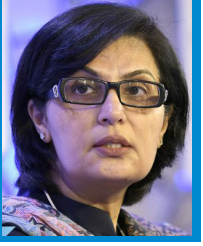
**Azeri envoy calls for private sector co-op**

Detailed News On Page-04



**Sania stresses importance of digital systems**

Detailed News On Page-07



## Briefs

**COAS visits GCU Lahore**

DNA

RAWALPINDI: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), visited Government College University (GCU) Lahore on Friday. COAS was chief guest on University's convocation. Chancellor of GCU Mr Ch Mohanmad Sarwar, Governor Punjab was also present on the occasion. COAS awarded degrees and medals to various graduating students. Speaking on the occasion, COAS paid rich tributes to both the faculty and management of the University for their role towards grooming and honing of our country's brilliant youth. COAS said the GCU, a jewel in the crown of Pakistan's education institutions, has always played key role in producing icons of international acclaim, who have contributed immensely in their respective domains. COAS emphasised on the youth to always aim high and strive for excellence with sheer hard work and dignity in line with Quaid's vision. COAS, while expressing his hope of a brighter future for Pakistan said that we are a resilient nation and our youth is our real asset.

**No polio case in 7 months**

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant on National Health Services Dr Faisal Sultan has said that no polio case has been detected in the country during last seven months. Addressing an event in Islamabad, he said this is an important milestone which will be taken forward. He said our future campaigns will focus on high risk areas in order to completely rid the country of this disease. The Special Assistant clarified that polio drops are completely safe, appealing the parents to get their children administered anti polio drops whilst giving no ears to propaganda.

## Holiday Notice

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

## Inside...

Chairman PPP to visit South Punjab soon: Faisal Kundi - Page 02

Azerbaijan envoy calls for bilateral private sector co-op - Page 03

Australia-Pakistan bus art show hits the road - Page 04

Potential alliance of five countries vs Quad group - Page 05

Pakistan-China Friendship Marathon held in China - Page 06

Digital systems vital to improve public sector delivery: Dr. Sania - Page 07

PM wants Pak-Tajik role to bring Afghan factions closer - Page 08

# NZ cancel Pakistan tour unilaterally

New Zealand Cricket informed us they had been alerted to some security alert and have unilaterally decided to postpone the series, reads PCB press release

**Imran Khan talked to NZ PM: Fawad**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said on Friday Prime Minister Imran Khan contacted New Zealand's Prime Minister to discuss postponement of their cricket team's tour to Pakistan. The minister said in a tweet that Prime Minister Imran Khan had assured her that the New Zealand team was provided foolproof security in Pakistan. He said that according to Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), New Zealand's own security experts had expressed satisfaction over Pakistan's security arrangements. "Our intelligence agencies are among the best in

Continued on Page 06

AFZAL JAVED / DNA

RAWALPINDI: The New Zealand cricket team has cancelled its tour of Pakistan Friday after informing the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) of a "security alert", a statement issued by the board confirmed. "Earlier today, New Zealand Cricket informed us they had been alerted to some security alert and have unilaterally decided to postpone the series," reads the press release. "Pakistan Cricket Board and Pakistan Government made foolproof security arrangements for all visiting teams. We have assured the New Zealand Cricket of the same. The Pakistan prime minister spoke personally to the prime minister of New Zealand and informed her that we have one of the best intelligence systems in the world and that no security threat of any kind exists for the visiting team," it added. The PCB said that the security officials who travelled with the

Continued on Page 06

**Ramiz Raja lashes out at NZ Cricket**

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: New Zealand will hear Pakistan at the International Cricket Council (ICC), the country's cricket board chief Ramiz Raja said Friday after the Kiwis cancelled their tour citing a "security alert". "Earlier today, New Zealand Cricket informed us they had been alerted to some security alert and have unilaterally decided to postpone the series," a statement from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had said. "Termining the quick developments as a "crazy day", the PCB chairman said he felt sorry for the fans and the players, as the tour would have been the first after Raja took over the board's reins.

Continued on Page 06

# Conspiracy behind tour cancellation

Interior Minister says this conspiracy has been hatched to tarnish the image of Pakistan



ALI FURQAN

ISLAMABAD: The New Zealand authorities do not have substantive proof of threat in Pakistan, Federal Minister for Interior Sheikh Rasheed said Friday, hours after the Kiwis cancelled their tour of Pakistan. Rasheed, addressing a press conference in Islamabad,

Continued on Page 06

**UK not behind tour cancellation: Turner**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner Christian Turner has said that his country had nothing to do with the cancellation of New Zealand tour. In his Twitter message he said speculation that British High Commission was involved in Pak vs NZ tour being called off are untrue; this was a decision for the New Zealand authorities & taken independently. He added that he recognised that this was a sad day for cricket fans in Pakistan and around who were

Continued on Page 06

# European parliament resolution unjustified

Pakistan cannot be held responsible for the failure of the Ghani govt: Asim Iftikhar

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Asim Iftikhar Ahmed the Spokesperson Ministry of Foreign Affairs has expressed dismay over Resolution adopted by the European Parliament on the situation in Afghanistan. While the resolution does not relate to Pakistan, we are disappointed at the unwarranted and negative references to Pakistan, he said in his statement. He said, this is not consistent with the cooperative relations between Pakistan and the EU. Pakistan has played and continues to play a construc-



tive role in facilitating peace and stability in Afghanistan. Pakistan's key contribution towards the Doha peace process and subsequent Intra-Afghan Negotiations has been widely acknowledged by the international community. Pakistan cannot be held responsible for the failure of the Ghani government,

Continued on Page 06

## SCO Dushanbe Summit



DUSHANBE: President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon welcomes Prime Minister Imran Khan at Qasr-e-Milat. - DNA



DUSHANBE: Prime Minister Imran Khan during the SCO summit. -DNA



DUSHANBE: Leaders and delegations from DCO states attending the summit. - DNA

## Iran joins SCO as member

DNA

DUSHANBE: Iran joined a rapidly expanding Central Asian security body led by Russia and China on Friday, calling on the countries in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to help it form a mechanism to avert sanctions imposed by the West. In a sign of its growing influence, the body's summit in Tajikistan was the first appearance abroad of Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi since taking office in August. Raisi hailed the opportunity that membership would provide for Iran, as a country along China's "Belt and Road" route, to join important trade links across Eurasia.

## China, Russia urge Taliban to behave



MONITORING DESK

DUSHANBE: Russia and China's leaders on Friday urged the new Taliban government in Afghanistan to remain peaceful to its neighbours and combat terrorism and drug-trafficking. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping spoke via video link at a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), an eight-member group that promotes itself as an antidote to Western geopolitical dominance.

Continued on Page 06

# SCO must shun bloc politics: Imran

The premier says addressing the threats to int'l and regional peace are a vital interest for SCO

CENTRELINE REPORT

DUSHANBE: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday called upon the regional countries to "resist any drift towards bloc politics" and stressed pursuing the approach of peaceful coexistence and cooperation - not confrontation, should be the main drivers of global politics," he said in his address at the 20th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

Continued on Page 06

## PM, Chinese FM exchange views

NEWS DESK / DNA

DUSHANBE: Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi met Friday on the sidelines of SCO Council of Heads of State in Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe and discussed China-Pakistan bilateral relations, economic corridor and regional situation.

Continued on Page 06

# Pakistan finally out of UK Red List

Sri Lanka, Oman, Bangladesh, Kenya, Turkey, Egypt, and the Maldives also to be removed

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will finally be removed from the United Kingdom's red list on September 22 (Wednesday), the country's Secretary of State for Transport Rt Hon Grant Shapps said Friday. Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Oman, Bangladesh, Kenya, Turkey, Egypt, and the Maldives are among the eight countries that are set to be removed from England's red list, according to the British official. Providing further updates on travel restrictions, the British official said the government was making coronavirus testing easier for travel from October 4. "If you're fully [vaccinated] you won't need a pre-departure test before arrival into England from a non-red country and from later in Oct, will be able to replace the day 2 PCR test with a cheaper lateral flow," he said. Responding to the development, British High Commis-



sioner to Pakistan Christian Turner said he was aware of how difficult the last five months were for so many who relied on close links between UK and Pakistan. The envoy thanked Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Asad Umar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Health Dr Faisal Sultan, and relevant Pakistani institutions for their close collaboration. Turner said UK and Pakistan would continue to work closely to ensure data sharing and safeguard public health in both countries. "No one is safe until everyone is safe." - DNA

## SEPTEMBER 2021

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

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11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,  
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# Chairman PPP to visit South Punjab soon: Faisal Kundi

Faisal Kundi says that Tariq Khattak had met Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and announced his return to the PPP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Information Secretary Pakistan Peoples Party, Faisal Karim Kundi has said that inflation and unemployment in the country have crossed all limits, we should not interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan, peaceful Pakistan is very important for peaceful Pakistan, there are no official contacts with Jahangir Tareen and his group, the doors of PPP are open for political people, newcomers are welcomed, opposition parties should come together to bring a no-confidence motion against the government in Punjab and Center, cancellation of New Zealand cricket team's tour is very unfortunate. He said this while addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Friday afternoon. Former KP Assembly member Tariq Khattak from Nowshera, who belongs to JUI, along with his associates announced joining PPP on the occasion. Faisal Karim Kundi said that Tariq Khattak had met Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and announced his return to the PPP. Faisal Karim Kundi said that inflation and unemployment in the country have crossed all limits. The people are now looking to the PPP. We welcome Tariq Khattak in the PPP.



He said that Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited South Punjab after a tour of Sindh. Now Chairman will soon visit Sindh and then Pakhtunkhwa, Central Punjab and Balochistan. Under PTI government the economic condition of the people has deteriorated, our government cannot solve its own problems; they are interfering in other countries. We want human rights to be respected in Afghanistan, if there is peace in Afghanistan then there will be peace in Pakistan too. Faisal Karim Kundi said that we once again invite all the opposition parties to come together to get rid of this anti-people government. They should work for no-confidence in Punjab. Why the no-confidence motion is justified in Balochistan and unjustified in Punjab? If you are not a facilitator of the

government, let us fight together. The doors are open for political people. Kundi said that there is no official contact with Jahangir Tareen's group, there are unofficial contacts. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto had said that there is no place for those who want to join the party for their own benefit. Every political worker is welcome. He said that our New Zealand visiting team came and at the last minute they cancelled their tour. The news of cancellation of New Zealand team's visit is unfortunate. The government has also failed to handle cricket as other challenges. This is a failure of government diplomacy, the government cannot provide security in their country, and the cancellation of the New Zealand team's visit will have a global impact. When Muslims were attacked in New Zealand, their Prime Minister hugged them, why doesn't our Prime Minister do that? Tariq Khattak said that I was an old PPP worker, I have an old relationship with PPP, till today we have not been able to get PPP out of our hearts. Ziaullah Afridi said that the PPP is going to protest in every district against inflation and unemployment. The health sector is in ruins in KP as half of the doctors' strength has quit their jobs.



SIACHIN: Federal Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed laying floral wreath at Yadgare Shuhda of Gyari Avalanche Incident, during his visit to the Siachin Sector. – DNA

## EVM will bring an end to rigged elections

There will be challenges of learning how to operate these machines by the population in the initial phases but this tech is the best solution to conduct fair and transparent elections

ARIJ GHAZNAVI

ISLAMABAD: Electronic voting machines are the solution to end the problem of rigging in election and put an end to the claims of an unfair elections. This was addressed by Malik Amin Aslam at a press conference held at PID Media Center on Friday. He highlighted the problem faced in the recent cantonment board election where claims for recount-



ing were made and both times different results were found though the winner was obvious but the number of votes secured for winning varied. In order to avoid this situation in the future the PTI gov-

ernment has proposed the implementation of EVM. With this, every vote will be registered and a digital document will be created for each vote, which can be manually cross checked, making it more difficult to challenge the decision. There will be challenges of learning how to operate these machines by the rural population in the initial phases but this technology is the best solution to conduct fair and transparent elections.

## E-tendering portal to eradicate bribery

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Housing and Urban Development Malik Asad Khokhar has said that e-tendering portal will be introduced very soon with an aim to eradicate the trend of bribery and corruption. He was addressing a meeting regarding the setting up of the e-tendering portal in the committee room of the housing department on Friday. Additional Secretary Housing Omar Farooq, Deputy Secretary Mumtaz Ahmed and PITB officials participated in the meeting. Additional Secretary Omar Farooq gave a briefing on e-tendering. The minister observed that the e-tendering portal was essential for the eradication of bribery and archaic culture of recommendations. Later, talking to the media,

the minister said that technology will help to plug any loophole in the department as every effort was being made to ensure a corruption-free system. He said the online e-tendering portal would be implemented in all subsidiaries including Housing Department, LDA, and WASA. The tendering of projects under the annual development programme would also be linked with this system, he added. He said that an e-tendering system was very important to ensure transparency. Corrupt in the contracting system should be eliminated from the department, he emphasized. A call centre will also be set up for providing guidance about the e-tendering system. Malik Asad Khokhar said that a computerized record of any change or amendment in the tender notice would be maintained. The

computerized system will provide the security code to the applicant participating in the tender while the computerized system will also mark the firm itself regarding the system tendering. The lowest bidder in the tender will be automatically determined. The minister said that only enlisted firms in the housing department will be able to participate in the tender. "We are devising a transparent system that will protect the people's money," he maintained and directed to complete and implement the e-tendering system this year. The Additional Secretary said that no official of the department or PITB would be able to see the tendering rates before the tender was opened. An applicant can change the rates up to one minute before the opening of tendering, he concluded.

## Potato powder cheaper energy source

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: The University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) scientists found that dried potato powder can successfully be used as a cheaper energy source in animal feed formulation and can be added up to 30 percent in ruminants concentrate without any negative effect. They conducted an experiment to investigate the feeding potential of potato waste in 'Nili Ravi' buffalo bulls. The project was funded by Pakistan Science Foundation, Islamabad. While visiting the project at the university farms, UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr. Iqrar Ahmad Khan said there was a significant gap between supply and demand of feed resources for livestock in Pakistan. It was necessary to increase the availability of feedstuffs to meet the maintenance and production requirements of the animals in order to get control for this shortage. He said that UAF was taking all possible measures to increase agricultural and livestock productivity to ensure food security. Giving briefing, Dr. Muhammad Sharif said the use of non-conventional feed resources (NCFR) in the animal feeding system was one of the solutions. Feedstuffs such as citrus pulp, sugar beet pulp, poultry litter, and kitchen waste and cull potato can be used as NCFR. Many of these NCFR were high in protein, energy and minerals that's why it can be used to fulfill the supply and demand gap.



KARACHI: Consul General of Japan Isomura Toshikazu talking to the media persons on the occasion of translation of 100 years old Japanese novel "The Tale of Genji" (Ghainji Ki Kahani) in Urdu at Press Club. – APP


## ECP gives stern reply to NADRA over E-voting

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: In a stern reply to the National Database and Registration Authority on internet voting, the Election Commission of Pakistan reminded NADRA that it cannot dictate a constitutional body. NADRA wrote to the ECP on August 20 and September 6 regarding the use of internet voting for overseas Pakistan in the upcoming general election, to which the Commission responded on September 13. In its letter, NADRA wrote that the "ECP should consider progressing positively on NADRA's proposed system at the earliest, otherwise there might be unwanted and uncalled for delays." Referring to these lines, the Commission said it was "dismayed" at the general tone and tenor of NADRA's letter, as per the document seen by Geo.tv, adding that the language used gave the impression that the ECP is a subordinate body of NADRA, which is trying to dictate a constitutional body. It further added that the ECP will discharge its obligations as per Article 218 (3) of the constitution. "The responsibility and execution of any new technology is the primary responsibility of the ECP, provided the

technology is implementable and practical in the given timeframe," it wrote. The Commission also inquired why NADRA wants to engage ECP in a new contract for I-Voting, which will cost Rs2.4 billion, when the existing system for internet voting is already in the field. "NADRA must first inform the ECP of the fate of the previous project," it insisted, asking why NADRA wanted to abandon the previous system and on what grounds since Rs. 66,500,000 had already been spent on it. "Why should the ECP go for a new contract amounting to Rs2.4 billion if the existing system has loopholes?" it asked "Who is responsible? Has NADRA fixed responsibility?" In a stern reply to the National Database and Registration Authority on internet voting, the Election Commission of Pakistan reminded NADRA that it cannot dictate a constitutional body. NADRA wrote to the ECP on August 20 and September 6 regarding the use of internet voting for overseas Pakistan in the upcoming general election, to which the Commission responded on September 13. In its letter, NADRA wrote that the "ECP should consider progressing positively on NADRA's proposed system at the earliest, otherwise there might be unwanted and uncalled for

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**Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority**  
Government of Pakistan

**اٹل اینڈ گیس ریگولیشن اتھارٹی**  
حکومت پاکستان

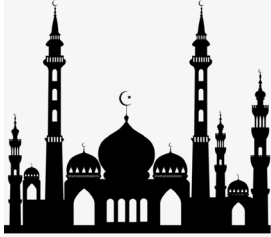
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**FOR GENERAL PUBLIC/ TRANSPORTERS**  
**USE OF LPG IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT VEHICLES**  
**(THREE WHEELERS, BUSES, COACHES AND WAGONS)**  
**IS PROHIBITED**

It is for information of the General Public that the LPG is highly inflammable and being heavier than air tends to spread along the ground upon leakage. Therefore, proper care must be taken while using LPG as a fuel to ensure the safety. For safety reasons, filling of LPG in Public Transport (three wheelers, buses, coaches and wagons) is prohibited/ illegal under the LPG Rules, 2001 and the Policy of the Government of Pakistan. Therefore, OGRA, under the provision of Section-29 of OGRA Ordinance 2002, had authorized the Deputy Commissioners and the Assistant Commissioners of all the Provincial Governments, for taking stern action against illegal decanting of LPG and Filling of LPG in Public Transport i.e. three wheelers, buses, coaches and wagons to ensure public safety and to protect human lives. The owners of the Public Transport Vehicles are advised to co-operate and comply with the aforesaid Rules/ Policy of the Government of Pakistan and must not use LPG as a fuel in their vehicles to ensure safety of innocent human lives otherwise they are directly responsible for any accident in this regard. The General Public is also requested not to use such Public Transport which is using LPG as a fuel in their vehicles to ensure their own safety. Such co-operation of the General Public and the Transporters shall not only discourage the use of LPG in the Public Transport but also save precious human lives.

**Executive Director**  
LPG Department  
Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA)  
54-B, Fazal-e-Haq Road, Blue Area, Islamabad

**Public Service Message:**  
**’کورونا ویکسین لگوائیں اور زندگیاں بچائیں’**  
PID (I) No. 1741/21

## SERVICES



## Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	04:05 am
Zohr.....	12:08 pm
Asr.....	04:50 pm
Maghrib.....	06:23 pm
Isha.....	07:45 pm



## Hotels &amp; Restaurants

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



## Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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## Emergency

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



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CAA.....	9281092



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



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



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G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8.....	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8.....	9266316
Wapda Islamabad.....	9217579
Wapda Rawalpindi	111-309-309

## Islamabad Metropolitan

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

## Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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## Azerbaijan envoy calls for bilateral private sector co-op

United Business Group Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, former Vice President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Bakhtawari and Secretary General of PTI Traders Wing Islamabad Waqar Bakhtawari at his embassy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Azerbaijan Ambassador Khazer Farhadov has said that the private sector of Pakistan, Azerbaijan and Turkey should work together to promote trade, economy and investment within these countries.

He expressed these views during a meeting with United Business Group Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, former Vice President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Bakhtawari and Secretary General of PTI Traders Wing Islamabad Waqar

Bakhtawari at his embassy in Islamabad.

The Ambassador of Azerbaijan further said that air, railway and road links between Pakistan and Azerbaijan need to be established and he assured to pay special attention to these projects. He further said that the trade volume between Pakistan and Azerbaijan is just 14 million US dollars which is not up to the mark and there is a huge potential for expansion in various sectors. Recently, it has established a link between Pakistan's rice exporters and Azerbaijan's rice importers, which will yield better results.

DNA



UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari said that Pakistan, Turkey and Azerbaijan are three countries while they are one nation and they will soon try to bring the private sector of the three countries closer by holding Pakistan, Turkey and Azerbaijan Business Forum. Zafar Bakhtawari also called for the establishment of direct air links between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. Ahsan Bakhtawari, former vice president of the ICCI, said that the exchange of business community delegations is important for the promotion of trade between the two countries he said that they

would have virtual contacts before visiting Azerbaijan with a business delegation. Waqar Bakhtawari, Secretary General, PTI Traders Wing, Islamabad, apprised the Ambassador of the problems faced by the two countries in terms of cargo shipment. He said that air cargo is too expensive, road and railway links are not working and sea route is much difficult for trade. special attention to build the infrastructure is required in this regard.

Zafar Bakhtawari presented his book "Jahan Dost" which includes articles on Pakistan-Azerbaijan to the Ambassador of Azerbaijan.

## Govt for ordinance to nab tax evaders

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government Friday promulgated an ordinance, which will enable it to arrest tax evaders. President Arif Alvi signed the Tax Laws, Third Amendment Ordinance, 2021 under which both the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) will have the powers to access details of the non-filers.

The ordinance will empower the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to disconnect electricity, gas and telephone connections of those not paying their taxes, while they may also stand deprived of the booking facilities. Similarly, a fine of Rs3 million may be imposed on a non-filer. Under the new arrangement, NADRA will provide details of income, expenditures as well as assets of the non-filers. The Authority will also provide the data of people guilty of not giving complete details of their assets.

## Annual Report



ISLAMABAD: Federal Ombudsman for Protection against Harassment of Women, Ms. Kashmala Tariq, presenting Annual Report 2019-20 to President Dr. Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. – DNA

## Zahir's parents' bail case adjourned

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday adjourned hearing on post arrest bail petition of Zahir Jaffer's parents till September 21, in Noor Mukadam murder case. The lawyer of accused Zakir Jaffer and Asmat Jaffer concluded arguments on the bail petition after this, the bench instructed the counsel of plaintiff to argue on next hearing. Justice Aamer Farooq heard the bail case of the two accused. A lower court had already dismissed the bail petitions. At the outset of hearing, petitioner's lawyer Khawaja Haris argued that the murder case was not much complex. The accused Zahir Jaffer in his initial statement had stated that he informed his family after committing the crime. However, later the accused stated that he informed his parents before murder, the lawyer said. – APP

## RWMC to clean the city on "World Cleanup day"

STAFF REPORT

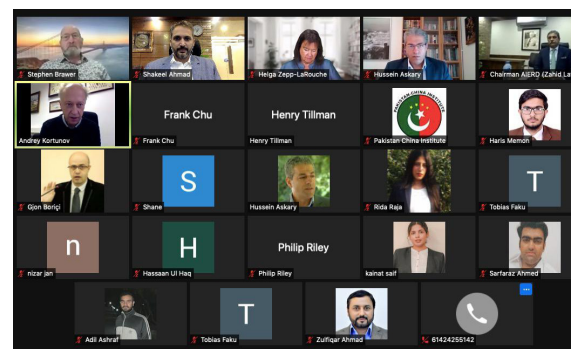
RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) would launch a special cleanliness and awareness campaign in connection with World Cleanup Day on September 18 (Saturday). Under the campaign, Chairman RWMC Col (ret'd) Ajmal Sabir Raja said that all city areas would be cleaned while pamphlets would be distributed among the residents for creating awareness about hygiene measures.

Raja said that the sanitation staff would discharge their duties, during the drive with full dedication while 100 per cent attendance of sanitation staff was to be ensured. He said making the city neat and clean was not possible without the cooperation of citizens. The Chairman urged the residents to keep their homes as well as streets and neighborhoods clean and avoid throwing waste in open.

## Practical steps needed for peace in Afghanistan

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: World needs to take practical steps and launch economic linkages and development initiatives to realize the dream of development, prosperity and sustainable development in Afghanistan, said by Zahid Latif Khan Chairman Asian Institute of Eco-civilization. While launching the Kandahar Dialogue, he emphasized that China-Pakistan should extend CPCPC to Afghanistan. Besides, China should also launch seventh corridor of BRI with the name of Corridor of Peace and Prosperity. He asked the global community to work together and establish a global fund called, "Afghanistan Regional Economic Integration Fund" to assist the people of Afghanistan.



Mr. Saleem Safi emphasized on the need to understand Afghanistan through the lens of Afghanistan. He suggested that there is a need to work more closely with all segments of society and the world needs to come out of its mentality of favoritism. Regional countries should join hand and help Afghan people. They should avoid proxy game. Development will be key to stabilize Af-

ghanistan, for that purpose it is necessary to understand the needs of Afghanistan. He suggested there should be more deliberation on it and there should be international consultation to devise instruments of assistance. Professor Frank Zheng Senior Fellow, CITIC Foundation Reform & Development, China said that China always look for opportunities to assist other countries

according to their needs, norms, values and system of governance. China always respect other countries system and never interfere in their internal matters. China will do same with the Afghanistan; we want to partner in development and prosperity of Afghanistan and Afghan people. Professor especially emphasized on the building of the mechanisms for the cooperation in agriculture sector. There is a need of geo-economic initiatives not geo-strategic, said Ms. Helga Zepp-LaRouche, Schiller Institute of USA. She emphasized to look for opportunities of economic integration and creating linkages with BRI. She strongly suggested for a major role of BRI and China. She also suggested to immediately start working on the health, as health sector is facing crisis in Afghanistan.

## Islamabad police set up anti-narcotics unit

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have set up an anti-narcotics unit with an aim to curb drug peddling activities and root out this menace. Inspector General of Police Qazi Jamil ur Rehman formally inaugurated the unit equipped with latest technology and renewed commitment to root out drug menace from the society. SSP (Operations) Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer, Additional SP Farhat Abbass Kazmi and staff of anti-narcotics unit were also present on the occasion. SSP (Operations) briefed the IGP about efforts of Islamabad police against drug peddling activities and said that more than 1000 drug pushers were arrested during the ongoing year besides recovery of 588 kilogram hashish and 121 kilogram heroin from them. He said that anti-narcotics unit would comprise of 15 experienced policemen and it would be equipped with modern technology and vehicles. He said that personnel of the unit would ensure prompt action after receiving tip-off received. Speaking on the occasion, the IGP directed to take stringent measures against drug pushers for protection of youth from this menace. He said that fighting against the drug menace is a shared responsibility and police must ensure effective coordination to eradicate it. The IGP said that Islamabad police is well aware of its obligations and to leave no stone unturned to curb drug pushing activities. However, he appealed the society members and people from various fields to pay special attention to drug addict persons and assist them in getting rid of this menace. Islamabad police chief hoped that this unit would perform effectively and secure the youth from this evil. – DNA

## PHA approves 25% salary increase

RAWALPINDI: The 15th meeting of the Board of Directors of Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Rawalpindi on Friday approved 25 percent salary increase for the employees of the authority and other incentives. According to a PHA spokesperson, the Board meeting was chaired by the Advisor to the Chief Minister Punjab Chairman PHA Asif Mahmood. Director General PHA Rawalpindi Zaheer Ahmed Jappa briefed the board members on the ongoing activities of PHA. The meeting was informed that nearly 300,000 saplings were planted in different parts of the city under monsoon tree plantation campaign 2021. – APP

## PRCS and ICRC help reconnect families

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in collaboration, facilitated families from across Pakistan to attend the International Families Conference from 7-8 September organized by the ICRC Central Tracing Agency together with the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world. The local conference hub at the PRCS national headquarters hosted families with a relative separated or being sought as a result of international migration, mainly towards Europe.

In Pakistan, the PRCS and ICRC work closely with Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies throughout the world under the Restoring Family Links (RFL) program to help people separated from their families or without news of them following natural disasters, international migration, emergencies as well as in other situations of humanitarian need. The event provided families and practitioners the space to connect with a global support network, to share their experiences, and to inspire each other to take effective action for themselves, families and wider community. It also called to attention the coping strategies for the psychological distress these families experience.

In a statement on the occasion, PRCS Chairman Abrar ul Haq said, "Losing contact with a loved one is an unimaginable pain. Under the Trace the Face initiative of RFL, Family Links Network has reconnected more than 245 families who had been separated along the migratory route to Europe. PRCS operates with a mission to alleviate human suffering, and we make it a priority to respond to the RFL needs of separated families."



ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan Green Task Force, Dr. Jamal Nasir, Group leader, Sohail Altaf, S.M Nasim, Senator Mian Atteq, Mian Abdur Rauf, Raja Amir in a group photo along with newly elected President of RCCI, Main Nadeem Rauf, Senior VP Mailk Asif, VP Talat Awan and other member. – DNA

## Briefs

## 5 arrested for possessing illegal weapons

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Police in their crackdown against illegal weapons and drugs rounded up five persons from different areas and recovered 2870 grams charas, a 30 bore pistol, 12 bore rifle and ammunition from their possession, said a police spokesman on Friday. He said that Gujjar Khan police held a drug peddler named Amjad Khan and recovered 2170 grams charas from his possession. Taxila police arrested Muhammad Tayyab and recovered 360 grams charas while Saddar Baroni police rounded up another accused named Amjad with 340 grams charas. Kahuta police arrested Mu-been Ahmed and Muhammad Saleem on recovery of a 30 bore pistol, 12 bore rifle and ammunition from their possession. Separate cases have been registered against all the accused. He said that police would continue their raids against lawbreakers. — APP

## CTP's complaint cell at forefront of public service

RAWALPINDI: City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi's complaint cell is at the forefront of public service and CTP on the directives of Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Rai Mazhar Iqbal is trying to ease traffic flow on the city roads. According to a CTP spokesman, last month, 79 percent of the complaints received on the PM portal were resolved within shortest possible time frame while 81 percent of the citizens expressed satisfaction over the prompt resolution of their complaints. Inspector Adeel In-charge of Complaints Cell on the special directives of Chief Traffic Officer Rawalpindi, Rai Mazhar Iqbal responded to the complaints received on PM portal and resolved 79% of the complaints. During last month, the traffic police received total 147 complaints on the portal out of which 46 complaints were related to other departments which were forwarded to the departments concerned. Rai Mazhar Iqbal appreciated the performance of the Complaints Cell and said that Allah Almighty has chosen us to serve the people and all out efforts should be made to resolve their complaints as soon as possible as per their satisfaction. The response given by CTP Rawalpindi on the complaints also helped creating positive image about police. The CTO said that CTP is face of the Punjab Police and traffic wardens are ambassadors of the police so the Traffic Wardens and CTP officers should be polite and well-mannered while dealing with the citizens and they should not leave patience while on duty. — APP

## 5 lawbreakers including PO arrested

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police in their ongoing drive against lawbreakers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up five including two for selling Shisha Hookahs and other items, two for running LPG and petrol agencies and a Proclaimed Offender (PO) said a police spokesman on Friday. He informed that Sadiqabad police conducted a raid at a shop and arrested two named Umar Shehzad and Muhammad Mudassar besides recovering Shisha flavors, 15 Hookahs and other items from their possession. Ratta Amral police held Usman Shah for running an illegal LPG agency and recovered LPG cylinders and LPG refilling gadgets. In another raid, Ratta Amral police rounded up Muhammad Tanveer, a proprietor of an illegal petrol agency. Meanwhile, Naseerabad police managed to round up a Proclaimed Offender named Moman Khan, wanted in a murder case of Kamran Ali, registered in June 2018 in Naseerabad police station. Accomplice of the accused named Dawood Khan had already been netted and awarded death sentence by the trial court. — APP

## Australia-Pakistan bus art show hits the road

“Our two countries have much in common – from our Commonwealth heritage and similar climates to our sporting and strong people-to-people links. More than 80,000 people of Pakistani origin call Australia home.”

## STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Australian High Commission supported an exhibition of two public buses showcasing artworks with Australian and Pakistani images, by Pakistani-Australian artists, Imran Ahmad and Fatima Saeed in collaboration with local emerging artists and students. The exhibition aims to cultivate the cultural connections between Australia and Pakistan as well as encourage dialogue and new ways of thinking about public spaces during the coronavirus pandemic. Admiring Pakistan's beautiful tradition of decorating vehicles, the Australian High Commissioner Dr Geoffrey Shaw highlighted that while Australia and Pakistan are both diverse countries, they share many common links. “Our two countries have much in common – from our Commonwealth heritage and similar climates to our sporting and strong people-to-people links. More than 80,000 people of Pakistani origin call Australia home.” Around 100 students, including students of art and design from prominent educational institutes of Pakistan, joined the artists in a series of workshops to paint the buses, held at Saeed Akhtar Studio Lahore and



Lok Virsa Islamabad.

The buses will travel across Pakistan for the residents, commuters and workers to experience the art on wheels throughout the year. “We are excited that this project has given us the opportunity to create an accessible cross-country exhibition, that promotes creative ways of connecting people through art during the pandemic,” High Commissioner Dr Shaw added. The visual artist Fatima Saeed said, “Through this project, Imran and I have been able to celebrate uniqueness and similarities

of both the countries we call home! The diversity and inclusiveness that we experienced while living and travelling in Australia, left an indelible mark. As much as we feel at home in Pakistan, the feeling of homesickness for Australia never really goes away. This past year has taught us to celebrate all the good things in our lives and share it with as many people as we can.” Artist and curator Imran Ahmad shared, “this was a very challenging project because of the coronavirus lockdowns. But the idea of creating an inspiring artwork for

the roads of Pakistan kept us going. I thank my amazing team, the diverse group of students and the talented artists who participated in this project during these challenging times.” Pakistani-Australian artists Imran Ahmad and Fatima Saeed have studied at the University of New South Wales, Sydney and has exhibited their acclaimed works across Pakistan and Australia. Other prominent artists who participated in the project include Amal Nadeem, Ali Laraib Rizvi and Nisar Ahmed.



## Women picked up to pitch business ideas to Silicon Valley

## KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: In a competition featuring some of the most innovative women-led businesses in Pakistan, a panel of business experts selected 12 startups out of a pool of 476 for the opportunity to pitch their business ideas to Silicon Valley investors via the U.S. Embassy's Accelerator Program for Women Entrepreneurs (APWE). Sponsored by the U.S. government, the APWE promotes women's economic empowerment through fostering female entrepreneurship. Following a rigorous selection process, 75 startups were shortlisted and received professional feedback and coaching on their entrepreneurship plans and pitches. The list was further narrowed down to 35 startups who were invited to participate in a virtual pitch competition modeled after the famous American television series, Shark Tank. Based on these pitches, a panel of accomplished business leaders selected the top 12 finalists who will receive the resources, coaching, mentorship, and sustainable platforms needed to develop business connections with both local and global investors to prepare for their trip to the United States. “I know each and every one of you has big dreams to change your communities and your country,” said Assistant Cultural Attaché Juan J. German in his remarks to participants.

## 40m children to be vaccinated in nationwide anti-polio drive

ISLAMABAD: Over 40 million children under five years of age will be vaccinated with the polio vaccine, along with a supplementary dose of Vitamin-A capsule during the nationwide campaign. The third nationwide polio campaign for 2021 will kick off in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on September 17 and on September 20, for the rest of the country. More than 290,000 Sehat Tahafuz frontline workers will go house to house for vaccination to protect children from lifelong paralysis caused by the polio virus. Research shows approximately 50% of all children are vitamin-A deficient in Pakistan, so a supplementary dose of Vitamin A will be included providing protection against various

infections and diseases like diarrhea, pneumonia, measles, and night blindness. “The programme has made significant gains with not a single case being reported for seven months, giving us a unique opportunity to achieve polio eradication. Now is the time to re-double our efforts and ensure to each every eligible child with the polio vaccine to solidify this progress. “Parents should open their door to frontline workers and vaccinate their children to make way for a polio-free Pakistan,” Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services, Dr Faisal Sultan said while addressing the Polio immunization drive's launching ceremony. He said, “As an indication of how high a priority polio

eradication is, the Prime Minister recently met with the District Commissioners of 21 highest risk Districts and directed them to personally double their efforts to eradicate polio, and we expect to see the results of that meeting in this upcoming campaign.” He said Pakistan remains one of only two countries in the world with circulating wild polio virus, together with Afghanistan. Wild polio virus has been eradicated in all other countries, attesting to the safety and efficacy of the vaccine. “The upcoming campaign is vital for the programme and Pakistan's ability to achieve polio eradication,” said Dr. Shahzad Baig, Coordinator of the Pakistan Polio Eradication Initiative.

He said, “We are currently going into the high transmission season during which the virus is especially active and need to ensure protection of all our children with the vaccine. It is essential to vaccinate every child in the upcoming campaign, especially the newborns and infants.” “We must emphasize that caregivers prioritize routine immunisation of children and visit health facilities as per the schedule. Our aim is to immunize all children against vaccine-preventable diseases to protect them from life-threatening diseases,” he added. He said that Pakistan has made substantial progress towards polio eradication, with only one wild polio virus case reported in 2021



ISLAMABAD: Carpet vendors sitting along the roadside waiting for customers. — APP

## Petroleum products in Pakistan still cheaper: Farrukh

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said on Friday that Pakistan was still providing cheaper petroleum products than many countries in the world. In a tweet, he said the ratio of taxes on petroleum products during the rule of those who were now making hue and cry on petrol prices remained at 52 per cent. The minister said that prices of petroleum products rose by 80 per cent globally in one year.

The government, he said has gradually reduced its tax ratio to 18.5 per cent. He said that according to Pakistani currency, petrol price in India was currently Rs 245 per litre. He said that petroleum was priced at Rs 175.33 in Bangladesh, Rs 104.20 in Saudi Arabia and Rs 111.42 in the UAE. He said that petrol price in China is Rs 194 per litre, in Sri Lanka Rs 154 per litre, in Azerbaijan Rs 98.65 and in Hong Kong Rs 425.25 per litre. — APP

## Prices of food items go down

ISLAMABAD: The prices of various food items went down considerably during the week ending on September 16, as compared to the previous week, the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) data released by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) Friday revealed. According to the data, the good commodities that witnessed decrease in prices on Week-on-Week basis (WoW) included tomatoes (18.59%), onions (7.22%), bananas (4.92%), potatoes (3.90%), pulse Moong (2.24%), garlic (1.53%), pulse Gram (1.20%), rice Irri (1.05%), pulse Mash (0.85%) and pulse Masoor (0.03%). On Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the commodities that witnessed decrease in prices during the week included tomatoes (40.51%), potatoes (29.03%) and pulse Moong (27.24%). On the other hand, the items that witnessed increase in prices on WoW basis included electricity charges for Q1 (7.23%), diesel (4.37%), petrol (4.19%), chicken (3.40%), eggs (3.10%), LPG (2.58%), washing soap (2.43%), tea Lipton (1.73%), cooking oil 5 litre (1.43%), georgette (1.35%) and sugar (1.23%) with joint impact of (1.68%) into the overall SPI for combined group of (1.31%). It is pertinent to mention here that the overall SPI based weekly inflation for the week ended on September 16 witnessed an increase of 1.31 per cent as compared to the previous week. — APP

## Lawmakers asked to submit asset statements

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Friday asked all members of parliament and provincial assemblies to submit their statements of assets and liabilities including those of their spouses and dependents by December 31. According to ECP, all parliamentarians have to submit to the commission by December 31 each year, yearly statements of assets and liabilities including similar details of their spouses and dependent children as on the preceding June 30 on Form B. The Commission, on the first day of January each year will publish names of members, who fail to submit the requisite statement of assets and liabilities within the period specified under sub-section (1). The commission will on January 16 by an order suspend the membership of a member of an Assembly or Senate, who fails to submit the statement of assets and liabilities. The ECP further said that any member submitting fake statement of assets and liabilities under this section in material particulars may be proceeded against for committing the offence of corrupt practice. — APP

## CCoE approves incentive package

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) Friday approved the summary submitted by Power Division on the winter incentive package on incremental consumption for all domestic, commercial and general services consumers of XW-DISCOs and K Electrics from November 01, 2021 till February 28, 2022.

The meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) was held under the Chairmanship of the Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar here. The CCoE also considered revision of Gas tariff slabs for the domestic consumers during winter season of FY 21-22 submitted by Petroleum Division. The forum discussed the agenda in detail and outline that gas is a precious energy resource and resultantly import of LNG is a large drain on Pakistan's foreign exchange. It constitutes a major part of the country's total imports and consumer spending. It is now critically important to realize both on individual and national level that energy resources need to be conserved by switching to energy efficient appliances. Keeping in view a committee headed by Minister for science and technology Shibli Faraz has been formed. — APP

## Indian nuclear program unsafe, say experts

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: The speakers in a webinar on “Indian Nuclear Safety and Security: A reality Check?” have noted that Indian nuclear program has been unsafe with many incidents of leakage and material theft. Now it is posing more integrated threat with RSS Ideology that does not accept diversity of religions and beliefs. Both factors can prove destructive for the peace in the region and the world. The Webinar was held by Pakistan House, Islamabad based think tank. The speakers included Ambassador Zamir Akram, Former Permanent Representative to the United Nations and International Organizations in Geneva, Mr. Syed Muhammad Ali, Director Nuclear and Strategic Affairs at CASS, Muhammad Athar Javed DG Pakistan House and Ms. Sitara Noor, Senior Research Associate at CASS and South Asian Voices Visiting Fellows 2019-2020. Amb. Zamir Akram stated that Indian nuclear safety regime is very weak, and several cases have been reported by Indian and international media. The threat of stolen radiological

material from Indian facilities would fall in the hands of Non-State Actors is real, and recommended that International organizations including IAEA should take necessary actions to such incidents to re-occur. Mr. Syed Muhammad Ali said that the

California is not a naturally occurring radioactive material like Uranium and it is produced in nuclear reactors which proves that not only Indian nuclear mines have poor safety and security standards but also the Indian nuclear reactors. Therefore, he

urged the international community to review its nuclear cooperation with India and support for New Delhi's Nuclear Suppliers Group membership case, in view of Indian irresponsible nuclear behavior. Ms. Sitara Noor highlighted the importance of an independent regulatory body, and said that since India's regulatory authority is not independent, thus lacks international security and safety standards. She emphasized that international regulatory bodies must take note of India's irregular practices concerning radioactive material. An impartial commission should be formed to investigate the episodes of missing and stoles radioactive material from Indian nuclear facilities (which is happening since 1974), she concluded. Muhammad Athar Javed, while concluding the webinar, said that India is posing an integrated threat of RSS ideology, Unsafe and insecure nuclear programs, the scope of which has threatened not only domestic but also international security environment. Therefore, India's integrated threat needs an integrated response from the international community.



## Double passports

**T**HE Ministry of Interior is set to give one more amnesty to those Pakistani citizens who have illegally acquired multiple passports by submitting forged documents. Under the official pardon, such holders of multiple passports would be given a 90-day period to get more than one passport issued in their names revoked through the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports. This will be the seventh such instance of amnesty.

The offence of double passports should not be taken lightly. This can have serious implications on national security. Owing a double passport is punishable with imprisonment which may extend to three years, or with fine, under the 1974 legislation called the Passports Act.

Fraudulent information on passports or forged passports facilitate the carrying out of several international crimes and pose a threat to Pakistan's borders. Double passports have played a part in human trafficking and smuggling, in allowing local criminals to travel abroad and become absconders, tax evasion, and identity theft. With another refugee crisis on our borders, Pakistan has to bring its implementation of passport laws to order. This is the sort of crime we can easily act upon as now passport details are computerised and easily verifiable.

This pardon has been thought to accommodate overseas Pakistanis, who may have found themselves blacklisted and now unable to renew their passports, or are barred from obtaining a new passport. Most overseas Pakistanis get the benefit of the official pardon because a number of dual passport holders are those who acquire such passports against forged documents to travel abroad.

However, if amnesty has been tried and tested six times, it remains doubtful that one last step will bring about some big change. After this, the government must not show any more tolerance on this matter and use digital records to crack down on fraudulent or double passports.

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Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti  
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

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Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



## Another year, another PIA bailout

**T**HE PIA management hasn't yet presented any sort of plan to turn its fortunes around, despite promising to do just that for years, but it has forced the government to keep up the tradition of bailing it out every year. The blame rests squarely with the management, that made a number of very tall claims when it took over with the change in government, but nothing at all has yet been done on the ground. So in this way even the PTI government, which made a big issue of SOEs being such a burden on the budget since forever, has also been forced to throw good money after bad money to keep outfits like PIA functioning.

It's also not that PTI didn't offer any ideas at all; it's just that when it came to power it also realised that its first finance minister's suggestion of creating a holding company which would isolate bad debts of SOEs (State Owned Enterprises), etc, was not a very smart one. And then the management decided to privatise it about half a dozen times, only to shelve such plans every time. The latest Rs44 billion bailout package approved by the government is the fourth since PTI came to power; and there's still no plan for the future of the national flag carrier. PIA even mulled floating a bond to raise fresh debt, but not much has been heard of this particular plan in a while either. PIA suffered great harm because of the aviation minister's dressing down of the airline, and the storm it created about alleged fake licenses of many pilots, led to cancellation of PIA operations in much of the European Union (EU).

The unfortunate fact of the matter is that PIA's management does not even have the faintest clue about how to save this airline. Much was expected of it when it was put in place but it has been one big letdown. Even other than things like the ban, it has not even been able to improve service delivery or trim the workforce as it was tasked to do. Perhaps a better team is needed to fly PIA out of its troubles.

## Potential alliance of five countries vs Quad group

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



China has been a key pillar in Pakistan's efforts to strike a balance against India. Furthermore, Pakistan continues to support Turkey's ambitions to assume a leading role in the Islamic world, as Turkey is Pakistan's strongest supporter on Kashmir. Furthermore, Pakistan has been trying to strengthen its strategic relationship with both Russia and Iran and has been taking advantage of the warmth in India-US relations. No, it is not in Pakistan's interest to leave a strong and balanced alliance against the Quad Group

**Q**UADRILATERAL Security Dialogue is known as Quad (A Strategic Dialogue between United States, Australia, Japan and India). The dialogue was arranged in 2007 with the support of United States in 2007 it was paralleled by joint military exercise of an exceptional scale. These military and diplomatic arrangements were viewed in the response of growing Chinese economic military power. That's why Beijing protested to the Quadrilateral Dialogue member states. In 2017, the member states revived quadrilateral agreement and agreed to counter China diplomatically and militarily in South China Sea. It seemed to be beginning of new cold war. In 2021, a joint declaration, "A shared vision for a Free and open Indo Pacific and a Rule based maritime order in the east and South China Sea, which member states wanted to counter Chinese maritime claim. So, China has been reacting negatively towards QUAD.

As the QUAD continued cementing its role in Indo Pacific and beyond, there have been discussions to counter the QUAD groups arrangements. Iranian envoy to Pakistan last year had proposed about a potential China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey regional security arrangements (Penta). Such arrangements are much supportive to China because it is building physical presence and creating dependency in the region through its Belt and Road Initiative and notably port of Gwadar. Since the CPEC project has started China-Pakistan regional security concerns have also been growing. It is also speculated that China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey are thinking of a bloc. Such groupings may also be aimed to counter the growing influence of the Quad. However, Penta a group of five countries can be highly impractical due to many reasons. In fact, the arrangement between China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey (Penta) has only been described that it may counter the arrangement and influence of Quad in the region. But according to analysts and experts, the possible arrangement of five countries has raised many question marks that the countries do not share the same values and interests. They have their diverse grievances and strategic interests. The arrangement may be complicated due to mistrust among them. China and Russia have been opposed to Quad Group management and the two countries have often cooperated to establish a balance against Quad particularly US ambitions. In response to this year's Quad Group conference, China has sharply criticized. On the other hand, Russia also has made similar comments that Western countries are trying to "suppress China

and Russia" by promoting the "Indo-Pacific Strategy" and the Quad Group, which is questionable. Furthermore, during the clash with Ukraine in 2014, heavy sanctions by Weston Russia have led Moscow to embrace Beijing to deal its economic challenges. However, it does not seem possible to achieve the possible results because Beijing and Moscow have also a lot of fears and anxieties from each other and also a lack of trust in each other.

Iran's relations with the United States have been worsening since 1979 and Iran faced the negative effects of sanctions imposed by the Washington administration. But in the midst of such a tumultuous situation, China has violated US sanctions by importing oil from Iran and positioning itself as a key partner of Iran. In addition, in March 2021, the two countries have agreed on a major strategic agreement worth \$400 billion to purchase Iranian oil, increase investment and deepen military cooperation. Along with China, Russia has also clarified its position as a key security partner of Iran.

Despite being a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Turkey's dissatisfaction with the United States continues to grow. Last year, Turkey imported 400 missiles from Russia to pledge the Trump administration's decision of striking sanctions. In addition, Turkey's support for Pakistan in internationalizing the Kashmir issue and Turkey's interference in India's internal affairs in favor of Pakistan have forced India to side with the Quad group. On the other hand, Pakistan always supports any organization or group that opposes or challenges Indian influence. According to former Indian Ambassador Vishnu Prakash, "Islamabad is ready to jump on any bandwagon against New Delhi or to do anything that is damaging to Indian interests from afar".

China has been a key pillar in Pakistan's efforts to strike a balance against India. Furthermore, Pakistan continues to support Turkey's ambitions to assume a leading role in the Islamic world, as Turkey is Pakistan's strongest supporter on Kashmir. Furthermore, Pakistan has been trying to strengthen its strategic relationship with both Russia and Iran and has been taking advantage of the warmth in India-US relations. No, it is not in Pakistan's interest to leave a strong and balanced alliance against the Quad Group. Despite some common strategic goals that bring these five countries together at one point, these five countries do not share some of the values and principles that can strengthen such an arrangement. Because these values and differences are dictatorial and religious in nature,

there is no room for flexibility in these countries in the long run. Furthermore, there is a constant dilemma of suspicion against each other in every country.

China and Russia can be important strategic partners in pursuing certain strategic goals. However, a closer look reveals that Beijing's engagement with Moscow is significantly selective and based on its personal interests. China has refused to back Moscow over Crimea and Ukraine

On the occasion, it did not even express a desire to support Russia. In addition, China is expanding its strategic influence in Central Asia. Through arms sales, training programs and new military outposts, China is pushing for entry into the former Soviet republic, which could significantly weaken Russia's influence and interests in Central Asia in the years to come. On the other hand, although economic relations between Turkey and Iran are improving, the same cannot be said for the scope of strategic interests, as Turkey and Iran are mostly concerned with regional geopolitical issues such as the Syrian conflict, the situation in Iraq and Israel. There have been opposing sides in the relationship. Furthermore, Turkey's reduction in Iranian oil purchases is a mixed indication of the viability of its bilateral relations.

Turkey's relations with Russia are not ideal either. Despite efforts by both sides to improve relations, there are signs of mistrust between the two countries. As Turkey seeks to increase its influence in the South Caucasus and Central Asia, active military assistance from Ukraine continues to weaken Turkish-Russian relations.

On the other hand, Pakistan also faces many obstacles in bridging the gap with Iran. Due to its heavy reliance on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, it is difficult for Pakistan to maximize its partnership with Iran on various issues. In addition, China's relations with Turkey are embroiled in conflict, especially over its treatment of the Uighurs. A possible alliance of five countries, which may be an effort towards achieving strategic goals, as the quad focuses on overall stability, transparent development and discipline among all countries in the region. And this arrangement of five countries may get caught up in each other's intentions because will not compromise on their goals, as a result, it is impossible to achieve significant objectives. It may be affective for regional peace and stability but not for overall balance.

— PhD Political Science  
akramzaheer86@yahoo.com

## The pros and cons of the UN for Palestine

Daoud Kuttab



This year's UNGA – the first during Joe Biden's presidency – has the promise of bringing back world support to Palestine. The Biden administration is called on to pick up where Barack Obama left off in 2016 when the UNSC passed the landmark anti-settlement Resolution 2334. This resolution, which the US didn't veto...

**T**HE Palestinian conflict has taken more of the UN's time and energy than any other conflict in the world. This has been both good and bad for Palestine.

As the 76th session of the UN General Assembly begins its deliberations, an important question must be honestly addressed. Does the UN still make a difference to the lives of people, especially Palestinians, under the Israeli military occupation and the illegal colonial settlement enterprise? Supporters say the UN is still an important forum and its decisions set the record for what is right. If the world community is unable to deliver the decisions of this international body, the problem is with those countries, not the UN system.

Supporters of the UN point to its repeated insistence on the illegality of Israeli settlements, the refusal of every country to recognize Israel's unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem, and the fact that the UNGA voted overwhelmingly to recognize Palestine as a nonmember state. This statehood recognition has allowed Palestine to request the International Court of Justice at The Hague to pursue Israeli war crimes, including the continuous violation of international humanitarian law, the war on Gaza, and, most recently, house demolitions by Israel in the Jordan Valley. Palestinian UN officials and supporters around the world have pushed the envelope as hard as they can. They have instituted a quarterly session at the UN Security Council in which UN officials are obliged to report on progress on the Palestinian issue.

Naturally, the biggest obstacle for Palestinians is the fact that UN resolutions are toothless due to the near-constant use by a permanent UNSC member – the US – of its veto power. While the US has used its veto power

more than any other country, all five permanent members (the US, the UK, France, China and Russia) have used their vetoes in areas that are of interest to them and their allies. As part of its protection of Israel, the US also prevents the use of sanctions and other punitive powers under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Chapter VII sets out the UNSC's powers to maintain peace. It allows the council to "determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression" and to take military and nonmilitary action to "restore international peace and security." Denying anyone the ability to refer to Chapter VII, Washington has turned this important body into a debate club at times rather than an institute for peace and security around the world.

While the UNSC has been handcuffed by America's protection of Israel, Palestinians can point to success on other international fronts. UN officials of the state of Palestine refer to the success of the UN refugee agency for Palestinians, the development agency UNDP and UNICEF's efforts to protect Palestinian children. They refer to calls for the protection of important Palestinian locations in Jerusalem, Hebron and Bethlehem under UNESCO's World Heritage Sites program. This has helped focus attention on these locations, although it has done little to actually deter Israel from its regular violations of these protected sites. Israel has even barred UNESCO teams from visiting the sites, but they have not paid a political price for this insubordination. To overcome these problems, a unifying effort is needed with the participation of the world powers. Palestine is a leading member of the G77 plus China coalition and is supported by most of the UN members, yet it has

been difficult to translate this network into the kind of power that could force the US to place serious pressure on Israel to abide by the UN's rules and its resolutions.

During the Donald Trump era, Palestine's ability to put a stop to Washington's blind support for Israel was at its lowest level. That was despite the fact the world community joined Palestine in condemning Trump's vision, which would have absorbed a third of the Occupied Territories into Israel.

This year's UNGA – the first during Joe Biden's presidency – has the promise of bringing back world support to Palestine. The Biden administration is called on to pick up where Barack Obama left off in 2016 when the UNSC passed the landmark anti-settlement Resolution 2334. This resolution, which the US didn't veto, has been sitting on the table without any serious effort to try and enforce it on the ground ever since.

The issue is no longer a UN issue, but a test of the political will of the international community. The political will requires networking and prioritization by the Palestinian leadership in order to make the Israelis pay a political price for defying the will of the UN community. Ever since the UN gave Israel its birth certificate in 1948, the Israelis have not only taken that gift but have also gobbled up the land earmarked for a Palestinian state and have moved their people on to those occupied lands, in violation of international law. The UN and its decisions can be a savior for the oppressed, so long as their words have meaning and their resolutions have teeth. For now, the UN continues to produce toothless statements when it comes to the question of Palestine.

— Courtesy: Arab News

## Briefs

NZ cancels  
Pakistan tour  
unilaterally

FROM PAGE 01

New Zealand team were satisfied with security arrangements made by the Pakistan government throughout their stay here. "PCB is willing to continue the scheduled matches. However, cricket lovers in Pakistan and around the world will be disappointed by this last-minute withdrawal," stated the PCB. Shortly after New Zealand pulled out of the Pakistan cricket series, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said it would determine in the next 24-48 hours whether it will proceed with the tour or not. England's men and women teams are due to play two T20s in Rawalpindi on October 13 and 14. The women's team are also due to play three ODIs in Pakistan on October 17, 19 and 21.

Imran Khan  
talked to NZ  
PM: Fawad

FROM PAGE 01

the world", the minister said and there was no security threat to the New Zealand team. However, the Prime Minister of New Zealand requested Prime Minister Imran Khan for postponement of the visit in view of the policy of extreme caution, the minister said.

Ramiz Raja  
lashes out at  
NZ Cricket

FROM PAGE 01

"Walking out of the tour by taking a unilateral approach on a security threat is very frustrating. Especially when it's not shared!" the PCB chairman lashed out at New Zealand Cricket. "Which world is NZ living in? NZ will hear us at ICC," said the statement.

UK not  
behind...

FROM PAGE 01

looking forward to the series. It may be mentioned here that there were speculations that Britain had reportedly managed cancellation of the tour in order to find an excuse for the English cricket team that it should not visit Pakistan due to security concerns. Sources believe various lobbies were involved in the cancellation of the tour. Indian lobbies are also said to have pumped in resources to get the tour cancelled.

Conspiracy  
behind...

FROM PAGE 01

the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had said. The New Zealand authorities did not have any evidence to support their claim as the Pakistan army, security forces, and 4,000 police personnel were deployed for the Kiwis' security, the interior minister said. Rasheed said Pakistan had proposed holding the matches without spectators, but the New Zealand authorities did not agree to that. Following this, the Pakistani officials spoke to Prime Minister Imran Khan - who is currently in Tajikistan. "The prime minister was briefed on the matter. He then called New Zealand Prime Minister [Jacinda Ardern] and assured her that there was no security threat," the interior minister said.

Responding to PM Imran Khan, New Zealand prime minister said there were reports that the team might be attacked once it steps out of the hotel, the interior minister said. "They took a unilateral decision to cancel their tour," he said, adding that no security institution of Pakistan had received reports of threats to the New Zealand cricket team. The interior minister said the unilateral decision comes as Pakistan is playing a crucial role in establishing peace in the world. "The country has strong institutions which have fought terrorism." "The tour has been cancelled on the basis of a conspiracy. This is their [New Zealand's] problem. The National Crisis Management Cell and other institutions had tried to convince them, but New Zealand's government has taken a unilateral decision," he said.

Pakistan-China Friendship  
Marathon held in China

Children of Pakistan Embassy College attired in colourful dresses presented national songs, participated in kite painting and applied henna. A group of Chinese girls mesmerized audience with traditional Chinese songs and Pecking Opera performance

TIANJIN: The Embassy of Pakistan in coordination with Tianjin Municipal Government organized the marathon. The event was part of the celebrations of 70 years of diplomatic ties between China and Pakistan. It was a manifestation of warm and cordial relations between the two friendly countries and people. Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moynul Haque and Director General of Foreign Affairs Office of Tianjin Municipal Government, Luan Jianzhang inaugurated the event. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Haque said that today's grant event is part of the 70 years celebrations of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Pakistan and China. He said that the all weather strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries has been nurtured and sustained over the seven decades by commitment and devotion of the people and the government of the two countries.

"This relationship is unique in the world and is higher than the mountains, deeper than the oceans, sweeter than honey and stronger than steel and it has been an example of inter-states relationship in the world," he added. Ambassador Haque expressed his pleasure over participation of all Pakistani and Chinese friends in big number to make this event a great success. Children of Pakistan Embassy College (PECB) attired in colourful dresses presented national songs, participated in kite painting and applied henna. A group of Chinese girls mesmerized audience with traditional Chinese songs and Pecking Opera performance. "Later on, the Ambassador and the Director General distributed the prizes among the winners of the marathon. Noor Hussain, a Pakistani national won the marathon. - APP

Italian investors  
keen to invest in  
Pakistan:  
Ambassador Jauhar

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan to Italy, Jauhar Saleem on Friday said that Italian investors and various companies were ready to invest in different sectors of country's economy, which would further strengthen economic ties between the two countries. Italian companies new to Pakistani market are now investing in different sectors such as food, steel, leather, textile, tourism, Information Technology (IT), electric vehicles and allied equipment, said a press release issued. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem said this while talking to the media.

The Ambassador appreciated the role of Italian Government, embassy and private sector companies in providing technical assistance and technology transfer, especially in leather and textile sectors which are of prime importance for Pakistan's economy, particularly in terms of export capacity. While talking about bilateral investment cooperation, Ambassador Saleem stated that previously Italian investment in Pakistan was highly concentrated in hydrocarbon market. He said the embassy was endeavoring to help build a more diversified investment portfolio from Italy and has pitched Pakistan's priority sectors for investment so that Pak Italy bilateral investment portfolio could experience sustainable growth. He highlighted some of the main factors that are fueling the unprecedented growth

streak in remittances in the last 4 quarters. He named the user friendly financial products of State Bank of Pakistan like Roshan Digital Account (RDA), restrictions on cross border travel due to the pandemic, favourable exchange rate, legalization of undocumented Pakistani workers in Italy, Pakistan's inclusion in seasonal work visa program in Italy and 'Remittances Promotion Drive of the Pakistan Embassy in Italy' as some of the leading factors that are helping remittances growth to record heights. He informed that the major indicators of bilateral economic relations namely trade cooperation and workers' remittances are reflecting extraordinary growth.

Pakistani workers' remittances from Italy increased by a staggering 92 percent in August 2021 as against August 2020, making Italy the largest contributor in remittances from the European Union, he said. Keeping in view the growth trend of the last 12 months, Italy could be expected to join the so called Billion Dollar Club/markets for remittances for Pakistan which could help address the current account gap being faced by Pakistan. He shared that Pakistan has been included in Italy's Seasonal Work Visa Programme for 2022 as well that would help our semi-skilled workers to come through legal channels and work in agriculture and services sectors of Italian market. - APP

China reaches semifinals  
at Asian Volleyball C'ship

CHIBA: China worked hard to beat Qatar 3-2 and book a semifinal berth at the Asian Men's Volleyball Championship here on Friday. China, who finished sixth at the last two Asian Championships, will next take on defending champion Iran, who beat Chinese Taipei 3-0 to become the only unbeaten squad at the tournament. Nine-time champion Japan also entered the last four after easing past Australia in straight sets, setting up a semifinal clash against Chinese Taipei, who shocked China two years ago to finish fifth. The Chinese players were apparently not in good shape at the beginning, largely because their match with Japan had finished less than 15 hours before. But they managed to find their rhythm when 2-1 down, winning 28-26, 21-25, 26-28, 25-19, 15-10 after two hours and 24 minutes. Spiker Zhang Jingyin scored a game-high 26 points and captain Jiang Chuan added 23. "We are very tired after the victory over Japan last night," said Jiang Chuan. "We made too many mistakes in the first three sets, but we finally found ourselves. Nobody wants to lose the match in that way." Jiang, competing in his third Asian Championship, added: "We will try our best in the semifinals. We don't want to have any regrets here in Japan." - Agencies

PM, Chinese  
FM exchange  
views

FROM PAGE 01

Terming Pakistan and China as 'iron brothers' and strategic partners, the prime minister conveyed cordial greetings for Chinese President Xi and Premier Li. He appreciated China's support for assisting Pakistan's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

PM Imran Khan underscored that CPEC was a transformational project and both sides were working for its timely completion. He underlined that a peaceful and stable Afghanistan was of critical importance for Pakistan and the region. In this perspective, he said, Pakistan had assiduously supported the Afghan peace process.

The prime minister said the international community should remain engaged in support of the Afghan people and take steps to prevent a humanitarian crisis and to stabilise the economy.

China,  
Russia urge  
Taliban to  
behave

FROM PAGE 01

Putin said the organisation, holding its meeting in Tajikistan, should "use its potential" to "stimulate the new Afghan authorities" in fulfilling their promises on normalising life and bringing security in Afghanistan. The hasty withdrawal of US-led forces had left behind "an open Pandora's box full of problems related to terrorism, drug trafficking, organised crime and, unfortunately, religious extremism," Putin said. Partners should work with the new Afghan government, even if it was not representative, the Russian leader added. China's Xi said it was necessary to "encourage Afghanistan to put in place a broad-based and inclusive political framework" and to "resolutely fight all forms of terrorism" and live in peace with its neighbours. Like Putin, Xi did not attend the summit held in the Tajik capital Dushanbe in person, addressing the meeting by video link instead. "Certain countries" should assume their due responsibilities for Afghanistan's future development as "instigators" of the situation, Xi added.

EU urges UAE to free  
imprisoned human  
rights activists

AGENCIES

BRUSSELS: European Union legislators have urged the United Arab Emirates to free several prominent human rights activists and other "peaceful dissidents" imprisoned in the country. In a strongly worded resolution passed on Thursday, the EU Parliament condemned alleged rights violations in the wealthy Gulf state and demanded the "immediate" and unconditional release of Ahmed Mansoor, Mohammed al-Roken and Nasser bin Ghaith.

The resolution was approved with a sizeable majority, winning the support of 383 legislators. Just 47 legislators opposed the text, while 259 abstained from the vote. Mansoor, 52, was arrested in 2017 and later sentenced to 10 years in prison on charges of publishing false information and "insulting the status and prestige of the UAE", including in posts on social media platforms. Global rights group Amnesty International has designated the activist, who has allegedly been held in solitary confinement since his arrest, as a "prisoner of conscience". Al-Roken, a human rights lawyer, is also considered a "prisoner of conscience" by Amnesty. The 58-year-old is currently serving a 10-year prison sentence after being found guilty of attempting to overthrow the government in a July 2013 mass trial that saw scores of other defendants convicted.

Bin Ghaith, an economist and academic, was also imprisoned for 10 years in March 2017 over a series of social media posts deemed to be critical of UAE authorities. The EU Parliament resolution called for "all other human rights defenders, political activists and peaceful dissidents" detained in the country to be freed. It urged EU member states to boycott the Expo 2020 world fair in Dubai, "in order to signal their disapproval of the human rights violations in the UAE", recommending they "withdraw their sponsorship". Expo 2020 is scheduled to start on October 1, after a year-long delay caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the health crisis, officials have stuck to a pre-pandemic target of 25 million total visitors to pass through the gates of the Expo, more than twice the size of the UAE's roughly 10 million population.

European  
parliament..

FROM PAGE 01

We continue to host over 4 million Afghan refugees, the world's largest protracted refugee population. A peaceful and stable Afghanistan is therefore in the best interest of Pakistan.

Pakistan has offered unparalleled support and facilitated the international community, including the EU and its member states in evacuating their diplomats, local staff of the EU Missions in Afghanistan, staff of international organizations and others from Afghanistan. This has also been acknowledged by the visiting Foreign Ministers of Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, the UK and also other European Foreign Ministers during their telephonic conversations with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan. We continue to extend invaluable support and assistance to the international community in this regard. We are providing humanitarian assistance for the Afghan people and also facilitating international humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan. Pakistan also remains proactively engaged with a range of partners including from the EU for constructive exchange of views on the evolving situation in Afghanistan and the best way forward. GSP Plus is a mutually beneficial undertaking. Pakistan remains fully committed to the effective implementation of the 27 international conventions, implementation of which is the basis for according GSP Plus status. We are closely engaged with the European Commission in this regard.

SCO must  
shun bloc...

FROM PAGE 01

Council of Heads of State meeting, held in the capital of Tajikistan. The summit gathered the Presidents of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Iran, the leaders of observer states, foreign ministers, and the heads of international and regional organizations. Vladimir Norov, SCO Secretary General and Jumakhon Giyasov, Director Executive Committee of SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure were also present. The prime minister said addressing the threats to international and regional peace and security was a vital interest for SCO.

**REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY**  
The Prime Minister said sustainable peace and stability in Afghanistan would also help realize Pakistan's vision of an inter-connected, prosperous and economically vibrant region. He said Pakistan has shifted its focus from geo-politics to geo-economics. "Our new economic security paradigm has three central pillars: peace, development partnerships, and connectivity."

**SCO:**  
Imran Khan termed the 20th anniversary of SCO an important juncture to reflect its journey so far and guided by the "Shanghai Spirit", the organization had steadily grown in size and stature. He said that today, SCO cumulatively represented 44 per cent of the world's population, 25 per cent of global landmass, and 20 per cent of the global GDP. He said impressive progress has been made in strengthening SCO's normative and institutional basis, and in developing practical cooperation on SCO's twin planks of security and socio-economic development. The Prime Minister also proposed a five-point way forward on the SCO:

One, "We must reaffirm our complete support for effective multilateralism and the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, including equality and sovereignty of states, respect for territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-use or threat of force, and peoples' right for self-determination. Two, "We must strengthen our collective endeavors to mitigate the adverse economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, including through the SCO Joint Advisory measures. Three, "We must chart out a coordinated SCO approach towards stabilizing the situation in Afghanistan - including through enhanced engagement to address our common concerns and safeguard our shared interests, steps to provide humanitarian support and ensure economic stability, and measures to enable Afghanistan to become a reliable partner in peace and prosperity.



WASHINGTON: Chairman NADRA Tariq Malik inaugurated NADARA Centre at the embassy in Washington. NICOP/POC can now be processed & succession certificates facilitated at the embassy. - DNA

## Pak cricketers blast NZ unilateral approach

Pakistan captain Babar Azam took to twitter to express his frustration over the New Zealand's decision to withdraw from the series. "Extremely disappointed on the abrupt postponement of the series, which could have brought the smiles back for millions of Pakistan cricket fans

ISLAMABAD: New Zealand's unilateral approach to call off Pakistan tour at the last minute, citing security reasons has drawn massive criticism from cricket fraternity in the country. Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Ramiz Raja expressed his disappointment at the New Zealand decision. "Crazy day it has been! Feel so sorry for the fans and our players," Ramiz said on his twitter handle moments after the series was abandoned by the Black Caps. "Walking out of the tour by taking a unilateral approach on a security threat is very frustrating. Especially when it is not shared! Which world is NZ living in? NZ will hear us at ICC," he added. Former pacer Shoaib Akhtar lambasted the New Zealand cricket authorities

for pulling out of the series unilaterally, saying Pakistan's image had been hurt before the whole world. "We stand firm with our government, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), our Army and security agencies," he told a private news channel. Shoaib said that it was unfortunate for PCB Chief Ramiz Raja, who took over the reins of the board a few days ago. "You have to understand that Pakistan's image has been damaged. I am not concerned about Pakistan cricket at the moment, I care for the country's image," he said. Former Pakistani fast bowler Sikander Bakht also lashed out at the New Zealand authorities, saying that their security alert was indeed an excuse to abandon the tour. "They practiced here for

five days. Not a single stone was hurled at them. Withdrawing at the last minute is very disappointing," he said. He said Pakistan had facilitated countries around the world by playing Test matches in difficult conditions, in England and elsewhere. "We went the extra mile for them, we played Test matches for them. And they are the ones who hit us. I was saying at the time that they [New Zealand] will not come to Pakistan and the same has happened now. For God's sake, do not help them [New Zealand] again," he said. Pakistan captain Babar Azam took to twitter to express his frustration over the New Zealand's decision to withdraw from the series. "Extremely disappointed on the abrupt postponement of the se-

ries, which could have brought the smiles back for millions of Pakistan cricket fans. "I've full trust in the capabilities and credibility of our security agencies. They are our pride and always will be! Pakistan Zindabad!" Babar remarked. Fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi said he was lost for words after the news of the postponement broke out. "Wish I had words to describe my disappointment. We not only have the best security forces in the world but many foreign teams have successfully and peacefully completed their cricket tours in Pakistan. "Can feel for the cricket lovers in Pakistan & around the world," he said. All-rounder Mohammad Hafeez said nation was proud that Pakistan was a safe country. "Postponing

series is absolutely sad news for [the] whole nation," he remarked. Vice-captain Shadab Khan said successful holding of Pakistan Super League and other teams' visits to Pakistan was a proof that the country's hospitality was matchless and its security arrangements were flawless. "This is heartbreaking. Pakistanis love cricket so much, we have worked really hard to bring cricket back here," he said. Batsman Shan Masood feared that New Zealand's decision would run counter Pakistan's efforts to get international cricket back in the country. "Pakistan has made monumental efforts to get international cricket back on track. We've lost a lot with no international cricket for 6 years in the past and today might set us back again.

## Briefs

## Int'l Bakhshi Art Festival starts

## FOREIGN DESK

TASHKENT: Currently, the city of Nukus lives in anticipation of the bakhshi art festival. In connection with the forum, numerous bakhshi, tourists and other guests arrive. This testifies to the expansion of the number of people interested in this art form, as well as in our country.

According to the latest data, more than 100 participants and guests from 22 countries of the world arrived at the International Festival, including representatives of such organizations as UNESCO, TURKSOY, distinguished guests, experts in the field of local heritage, science, art and other spheres, as well as representatives MASS MEDIA.

On the alley near the State Museum of Arts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan named after I.V. Savitsky, stands are installed, dedicated to peculiar customs and traditions, historical monuments of each region. Various stage performances, national songs and dastans are performed here, a festive atmosphere is created. In the Central Amphitheater of the city of Nukus, the opening ceremony of the II International Bakhshi Art Festival will take place and a concert program will be presented. The event will be attended by the local population and foreign guests, festival participants, media representatives.

## New Zealand reports 11 new cases of COVID-19

WELLINGTON: New Zealand reported 11 new community cases of COVID-19 on Friday, all in the largest city Auckland, which brought the total number of cases in the current community outbreak in the country to 1,007. Of the current community cases, 14 are in hospital, including three in intensive care units (ICUs) or high dependency units (HDUs), Director of Public Health Caroline McElroy told a press conference.

Auckland has 990 community cases and the capital Wellington has 17 cases, McElroy said.

There are 973 cases that have been clearly epidemiologically-linked to another case or sub-cluster, and a further 13 for which links are yet to be fully established, she said.

According to the Ministry of Health, New Zealand also reported five cases in recent returnees. These cases have remained in managed isolation and quarantine facilities in Auckland, Hamilton and Christchurch.

Areas outside Auckland moved to Alert Level 2 from 11:59 p.m. local time on Sept. 7, which means businesses and schools are back to normal, with masks mandatory in certain settings and gatherings limited to 50 people in size. — APP

## Azerbaijan, UNDP mull bilateral cooperation

## DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijani Foreign Affairs Minister Jeyhun Bayramov received UNDP Resident Representative in Azerbaijan Alessandro Fracassetti, on the completion of his tenure in Azerbaijan, the Foreign Ministry has reported.

During the meeting, Bayramov emphasized the importance of Azerbaijan's cooperation with the UN and its specialized agencies, highlighting Azerbaijan's relations with the UNDP.

Noting with satisfaction the work done by Fracassetti in a number of spheres, particularly in the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, the minister noted that there are opportunities for further expansion of bilateral cooperation in the future.

In turn, Fracassetti noted that UNDP has successfully implemented programs in a number of areas in Azerbaijan, including support for vulnerable groups, vocational education, climate change, green economy, rural development, etc.

## Digital systems vital to improve public sector delivery: Dr. Sania

“Our EEC experience has shown us how cash transfer programmes can be deployed to counter the socio-economic fallout from COVID-19, which presents a long-term predicament, she observed.”

WASHINGTON: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Senator Dr. Sania Nishar Friday said data innovations and digital delivery systems can vitally help improve the public sector delivery and enable those in distress to seek social support during the times of crisis.

Dr. Sania was sharing lessons for the region from COVID-19 Ehsaas Emergency Cash (EEC) at the World Bank's 7th One South Conversation on leveraging technologies to build human capital and greater resilience in South Asia, held in Washington.

The World Bank's Regional Integration, Cooperation and Engagement in South Asia hosted the public event that was broadcast on the World Bank Group Live Page.

Speaking on the occasion, she said, “The Ehsaas COVID 19 experience has specific learnings for other countries that utilize unique personal identification systems. Because it demonstrates that by cell phone SMS messaging, internet connectivity, national IDs, and the capability of commercial banks, a demand-based system can be created to enable those in distress to seek social support during times of crisis, essentially an adaptive system which contributes to building resilience at scale as well”.

She said, further adding, “Our experience has taught us that data innovations and digital delivery systems, can only be deployed when there is a commitment to integrity, transpar-



ency, and accountability overall. And, it is only when you combine these that you are able to address the long-standing fault lines, that have plagued public sector delivery.”

“Our EEC experience has shown us how cash transfer programmes can be deployed to counter the socio-economic fallout from COVID-19, which presents a long-term predicament, she observed.”

The panel included senior policy makers and representatives from governments, tech entrepreneurs, academics, and civil society representatives from South Asia.

The public event was moderated by Cecile Fruman, Director, Regional Integration and

Engagement, South Asia. Alongside Dr. Sania, other panelists were: Dr. Khondekar A Mamum, Founder of CMED Bangladesh, a health-tech start up that provides preventive health services to over 3.3 million people and Rabi Karmacharya, from OLE Nepal that works to integrate technology to improve access to education with open-source digital platforms and teachers' trainings, and others.

The discussion explored the ways converging technologies can overcome regional barriers, promote cross-country collaboration to support recovery from COVID and other shocks, and build human capital and adaptable resilience in South Asia.

South Asia is among the fastest growing regions globally, with a vast human capital potential. By 2030, it will be home to over a quarter of the world's working adults. Despite the potential, the region faces persistent human capital deficits—one out of every three children is stunted here, and four out of 100 do not live beyond the age of five.

There are added challenges including low life expectancy, early deficits in learning, infectious disease burdens, and pervasive structural inequalities.

COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these vulnerabilities and reversed much of the recent gains in human development. With deep disruptions, the pandemic has shifted focus on digitalization and use of converging technologies for delivering health, education, social protection services, and on building future pandemic and climate resilience.

The ongoing tech-revolution offers tremendous opportunities, but also exposes striking digital inequality in the region.

The conversations also built on the recent World Bank publication, “The Converging Technology Revolution and Human Capital: Potential and Implications for South Asia”, that examines the ways technologies can accelerate human capital development, with a focus on improving service delivery, building adaptability and resilience, and promoting inclusion. The report was formally released on September 08, 2021. — APP

## Morocco registers 2,432 new Covid cases

RABAT: Morocco announced on Friday 2,432 new COVID-19 cases, taking the tally of infections in the North African country to 913,423.

The total number of recoveries from COVID-19 in Morocco increased by 3,672 to 872,976.

The death toll rose to 13,775 with 46 new fatalities, while 1,595 people are in intensive care units.

Meanwhile, a total of 20,757,405 people have received their first vaccine shots against COVID-19 in the country, while 17,225,962 have taken two doses.

The North African country launched a nationwide vaccination campaign on Jan. 28 after the arrival of the first shipment of China's Sinopharm vaccine. — APP

## EU endorses Malta's pandemic recovery plan

VALLETTA: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Wednesday endorsed Malta's recovery and resilience plan, which will see the European Union (EU) disbursing 316.4 million euros (372 million U.S. dollars) in grants under the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

She held talks with Maltese Prime Minister Robert Abela about the country's plans to tap into EU funds as part of its COVID-19 recovery package.

At a press conference, von der Leyen praised the Maltese government's plan to use a large chunk of the recovery funds to finance green initiatives in line with the EU's digital strategy.

She said that Malta's plan was among the greenest in the bloc.

Von der Leyen also welcomed plans to further strengthen the independence and efficiency of Malta's justice and prosecution systems and to combat money laundering. — APP

## Govt to facilitate investors for SOEs revival

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatization Mohammed Mian Soomro on Friday reiterated the government's resolve to facilitate foreign as well as local investors in line with vision of Prime Minister to revive state owned enterprises and turn them into profit oriented enterprises.

“We welcome the foreign investment in Pakistan and as per the vision of PM. We will provide all possible facilities and support and necessary information to investors,” he added.

In this regard, he said roadshows are most effective way of reaching out to the potential investors in an efficient manner, this strategy has the potential to take the marketing at the next level.

He said that the Ministry of Privatization has started a series of roadshows with international and national investors for the revival of Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM).

The meetings with renowned investors consortium from Korea and China were held on Friday as well, he said adding that so far leading investors consortium from China, Korea and Russia have been interacted with, which have shown keen interest in the investment potential of Pakistan in general and Steel Mills in particular.

Federal Minister for Privatization Mohammed Mian Soomro, Federal Secretary Privatization, financial and legal advisers and senior officers of the ministry responded to the queries from the potential investors.

Pakistan Steel Mills is non-functional since 2015, and the government has come up with a unique and most feasible transaction structure for the revival of PSM namely Steel Corp would be divested through a competitive and transparent bidding process.

After the publication of EOIs renowned national and international investors consortiums responded; consequently, the Ministry has arranged for the roadshows started from September 13 and will continue till September 23. — APP

## ENERGY MEETING



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar chairs meeting of Cabinet Committee on Energy. — APP

## Trade Bodies to explore hidden potential of African Region

## Pakistan can double its exports to African countries, UBG

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: The trade bodies of Pakistan should make all-out efforts to explore the potential market of Africa, this was suggested by SM Munir Chief Petron United Business Group (UBG) while commenting on Pakistan's multilateral trade with Africa region which has been stagnant at approximately US \$ four billion per year for the last few years.

UBG further suggested that the government strategy for promotion of Pakistan Export under “Look Africa Campaign” needs to be augmented by trade bodies so that Pakistan can utilize its full potential.

Pakistan exports to Africa is US \$ 1.48 billion in 2019-20 while the volume of exports to Africa by China and India stand at around US\$ 90 billion and US\$ 30 billion re-

spectively and the main reason behind their huge export is their continuous presence and aggressive marketing in the African region.

The goods pharmaceutical products, cereals, textile, machinery and leather goods are the main exports of China and India to Africa while Pakistan has also a competitive advantage in these commodities and by exploring the African markets Pakistan can maximize the benefits of exports and minimize the risk of exports uncertainty. At present, Pakistan is mainly exporting cereals, cotton, textile products, sugar and paper products to Africa and importing tea, coffee, crude oil, iron, steel, inorganic chemicals and cotton from the African region.

UBG said that the entire Africa is a potential market for Pakistani rice, pharmaceuticals, surgical goods

and light engineering and electronic products including tractors and agricultural implements, two and three wheelers, commercial and domestic fans, water pumps and electrical machinery and equipment etc.

Africa is rich in natural and mineral resources and is called the world's storehouse of strategic raw materials, UBG said. Lack of information, mutual understandings, business interactions, connectivity and people to people contact between Pakistan and African countries are the ground of the low economic relations.

UBG further added that the main reason of the low trade volume was the low level of engagement of Pakistan with Africa. The Trade bodies of Pakistan should develop their networking with their African counterparts through Pakistan trade missions in African countries.

## Major work on CPEC projects done: Asad

## STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Asad Umar Friday dispelled the impression of slowing down pace of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects saying that major work of the CPEC projects was completed during the current government's tenure,” he said while addressing a press conference here.

He said in first phase of CPEC, two major sectors—power and infrastructure, were under main focus.

“Power projects with installed capacity of 3,340 MW were completed during the previous government while 5,864 MW of power projects were being completed during the current government's tenure,” he said while addressing a press conference here.

## Shusha nominated for Turkic cultural capital

## DNA

BAKU: Shusha has been nominated for the title of the cultural capital of the Turkic world in 2023.

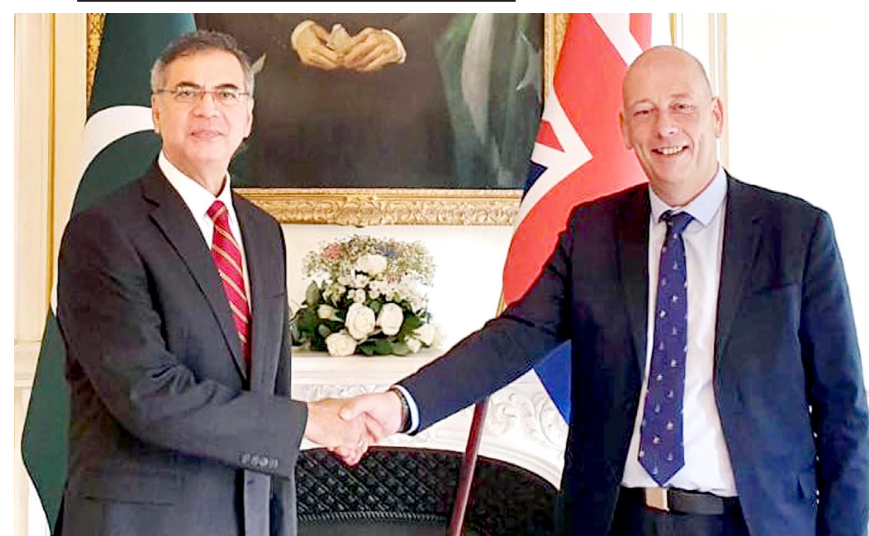
Culture Minister Anar Karimov made the proposal at the 38th ministerial meeting of TURKSOY held in Uzbekistan. “I nominated Shusha as the cultural capital of the Turkic world in 2023,” Karimov wrote on his Twitter account.

He added that during the meeting, he touched upon Azerbaijan's partnership with TURKSOY, as well as the destruction of the historical and cultural monuments in Karabakh as a result of the Armenian occupation which lasted almost 30 years and the 44-day Patriotic War in 2020.

The 2020 Karabakh war ended with a Russian-brokered peace deal signed on November 10 by the Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian leaders.

Shusha is often considered the cradle of Azerbaijan's music and poetry.

In 2021, President Ilham Aliyev named Shusha Azerbaijan's cultural capital. The city was liberated from the Armenian occupation in 2020.



LONDON: Pakistan HC to the UK, Moazzam Ahmad Khan with UK's newly appointed trade envoy for Pakistan, Mark Eastwood MP. — DNA

## Pak to boost co-op with China through Counsellors

## DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan will further boost Pak-China cooperation through newly appointed Investment Counsellors, said Pakistan Ambassador Moin ul Haque.

According to Gwadar Pro, eight newly appointed Investment Counsellors have been approved by the Board of Investment (BOI). It will help Pakistan and China moving ahead to forge close practical cooperation in trade and investments sector.

“I believe the investment counsellors will play an important role in further facilitating Pak-China trade and investment,” said Moin ul Haque at the Honourable Investment Counsellor Awarding Ceremony held here at the Pakistan Embassy.

He noted that he expected the investment counsellors to help build Pakistan's image in China by encouraging people-to-people exchanges, cultural activities between the two countries and facilitating the sisterhood between Chinese and Pakistani cities to help develop Pakistani

cities and provinces.

Mr Haque also expected the investment counsellors to boost bilateral trade since the Pakistani government gives Chinese investors preferential policies. “Pakistan is an ideal destination for investment.

We have a favourable geographical position and a huge market of 20 million people, and a large young

workforce. In addition, we have a very good foundation in industries such as textile, vehicle manufacturing, medicine, manufacturing, information technology.”

Echoing the ambassador in the role of the honorable investment counsellor, Wu Yongqiang, Member of All-China Youth Federation (AYF), offered three suggestions.

A first step is to familiarise the investment counsellors with Pakistan's policies and regulations, market demands and religious and folk taboos to facilitate investment activities.

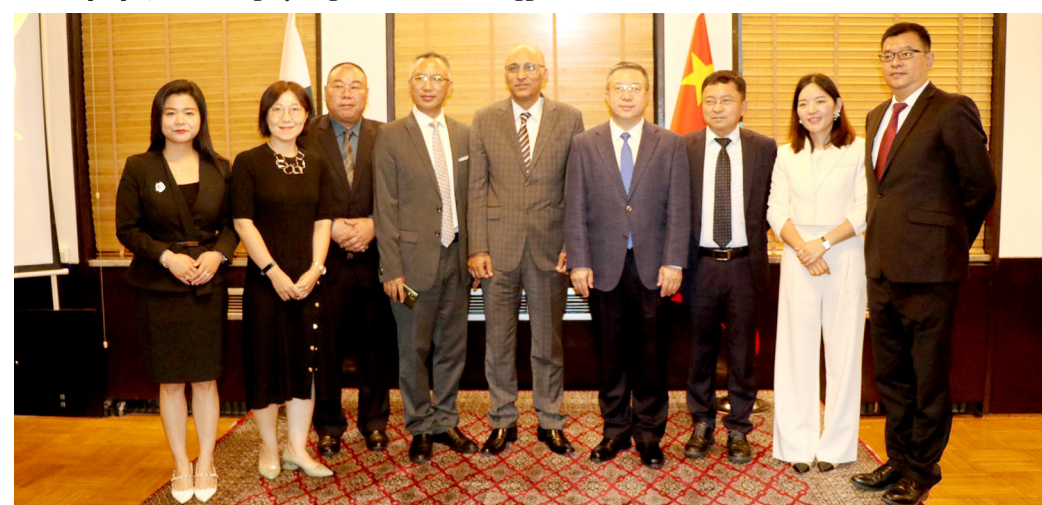
He said that Pakistan should set up a contact and communication mechanism where Pakistani experts can communicate with the investment

counsellors to understand each other's market demand and supply, adding that a mechanism for regular research and visits should be established to be better informed of potential areas for cooperation.

Offering suggestions on future bilateral cooperation, Mr Fang Qiuchen, Chairman of the China International Contractors Association (CICA), said enterprises should focus on the construction of new infrastructure by adopting 5G and the new-generation technologies.

“Both countries show great promises to develop data centres, AI-powered network and smart cities, which will promote bilateral industrial upgrading.” He added, both countries should stick to sustainable development and promote green-minded enterprises and technologies to put in place energy-saving projects.

Mr Fang also mentioned that both sides should make concerted efforts to grapple with challenges in the process to speed up projects under construction and build a favourable, safe business environment for investors.



**Briefs**

**Lack of quorum: NA session adjourned**

**KHAYAM ABBASI**

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser on Friday adjourned the House proceeding till Monday after the opposition members pointed out the lack of quorum. As the House proceeding started, Senior leader of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Syed Naveed Qamar and Khawaja Saad Rafique of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) expressed concern over not allowing the media to sit in the press gallery during the joint sitting of the Parliament on Monday and summoning the current session in a short-time notice. They said the quorum would be pointed out after Fateha for Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, former Chief Minister Balochistan Sardar Attaullah Mengal, former parliamentarians Maulana Ghulam Sadiq, M Hamza, Javed Iqbal Bhootani and victims of Dir incident, and adoption of a condolence resolution for late veteran Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Soon after the resolution was passed, Agha Rafiullah of PPP pointed out the quorum. Initially, the speaker asked for the members' count and suspended the House proceeding till the quorum was achieved as it was short of the required number. After around a 40-minute suspension, the speaker adjourned the House to meet again on Monday at 5 p.m.

**PML-N issues show-cause notice to Javed Latif**

**ABID RAZA**

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz has issued a show-cause notice to the party stalwart Javed Latif for leveling allegations against party leadership during a talk show. Leveling baseless and frivolous allegations is against the party discipline, the party said in a show-cause notice served to Javed Latif who has reportedly indirectly criticized the PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif. It said the PML-N president is proud of his associates who stood by him and united the party despite all conspiracies being hatched against it. "The victory in recent cantonment elections is the evidence of party's growing popularity and unity among the ranks," the notice served by PML-N general secretary Ahsan Iqbal said. The notice said that the party has always encouraged its cadres to exercise freedom of speech, however, violation of party discipline during talk shows could not be tolerated. It asked Javed Latif to submit his response within seven days as to why no action should be taken against him over his remarks.

**Indian govt using tax charges to silence critics**

**DNA**

NEW YORK: New York-based rights watchdog, Human Rights Watch (HRW) on Friday said that the Indian authorities are using politically motivated allegations of tax evasion and financial irregularities to silence human rights activists, journalists, and other critics of the government. The HRW in a statement posted on its website expressed concern about a number of cases, including tax raids on actor Sonu Sood, human rights activist Harsh Mander and digital media outlets Newsland and NewsClick. The statement said in September 2021, government financial officials have carried out raids in Srinagar, Delhi, and Mumbai on journalists' homes, news offices, an actor's premises, and the home and office of a human rights activist.

# PM wants Pak-Tajik role to bring Afghan factions closer

Prime Minister Imran Khan commended President Emomali Rahmon for hosting the Jubilee Summit of the Council of Heads of State of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

**DNA**

DUSHANBE: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said on Friday that Prime Minister Imran Khan had desired that Pakistan and Tajikistan should play role in bringing various Afghan ethnic factions closer. In a media talk the minister said that Tajikistan has an important role to play in bringing durable peace and stability in Afghanistan. He said that Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Prime Minister's Adviser on National Security Moeed Yousuf and Pakistan's Ambassador to Tajikistan were also present. He said that after the summit, Pakistan delegation would go to Presidential Palace where bilateral talks would begin. He said that besides other issues of mutual interest, Afghanistan situation would also figure in the talks. The joint statement issued after the meeting between the Tajik President and Prime Minister Imran Khan said, the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Imran Khan paid an official visit to the Republic of Tajikistan on 16-17 September 2021 on the invitation of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan H.E. Emomali Rahmon. Prime Minister H.E. Imran Khan also participated in the Jubilee Summit of the Council of Heads of State of Shanghai Cooperation Organization besides his official visit. The two leaders had wide-ranging deliberations covering all aspects



of the mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation, and regional and international issues of common interest during the tete-a-tete and delegation-level talks. Prime Minister Imran Khan commended President Emomali Rahmon for hosting the Jubilee Summit of the Council of Heads of State of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and other events in Dushanbe during the SCO Chairmanship of Republic of Tajikistan. Both leaders agreed to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the estab-

lishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Tajikistan in 2022 in a befitting manner. The two leaders expressed satisfaction over the growing mutually beneficial political, trade, economic, scientific, technical, and cultural cooperation between the two countries. They underscored the importance of following Joint Statement/Declarations signed earlier: Joint Statement "Towards Strategic Partnership for Regional Solidarity" between the Republic of Tajikistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan signed on 5

July 2017; the Joint Declaration "Strengthening the Pathway to Strategic Partnership for Regional Solidarity" between the Republic of Tajikistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan signed on 19 June 2018; and the Joint Declaration on "Next Steps to Build Strategic Partnership for Regional Solidarity and Integration" of 2 June 2021. The two leaders, building on the previous understandings and given the strong desire of the two countries to further promote mutual cooperation in diverse areas,

decided to upgrade the bilateral relations to the level of a long-term strategic partnership. They underscored that the strategic partnership aimed at ensuring the two countries' security, mutual trust, countering the current global threats and challenges, enhancing regional stability, and expanding political, economic and humanitarian cooperation, would create a sustainable foundation for development of long-term relations between the Republic of Tajikistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

**EVM will bring an end to rigged elections**

**ARIJ GHAZNAVI**

ISLAMABAD: Electronic voting machines are the solution to end the problem of rigging in election and put an end to the claims of an unfair elections. This was addressed by Malik Amin Aslam at a press conference held at PID Media Center on Friday. He highlighted the problem faced in the recent cantonment board election where claims for recounting were made and both times different results were found though the winner was obvious but the number of votes secured for winning varied. In order to avoid this situation in the future the PTI government has proposed the implementation of EVM. With this, every vote will be registered and a digital document will be created for each vote, which can be manually cross checked, making it more difficult to challenge the decision. There will be challenges of learning how to operate these machines by the rural population in the initial phases but this technology is the best solution to conduct fair and transparent elections.

**US Capitol braced for rally supporting rioters**

**AGENCIES**

WASHINGTON: Washington was on high alert Friday ahead of a rally in support of the pro-Trump rioters who ransacked the US Capitol, with security forces better prepared to avoid a repeat of the mayhem seen on January 6. A black fence that surrounded the complex for six months after the deadly insurrection has been put back up for the weekend along with surveillance cameras, although police don't have indications of a specific plot associated with Saturday's "Justice for J6" rally. Homeland Security officials nevertheless warned about the potential for violence, according to an intelligence briefing obtained by US media, with a counter-rally scheduled to take place nearby. "We are aware of a small number of recent online threats of violence referencing the planned rally, including online discussions encouraging violence the day before the rally," the brief from the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis says, according to CNN.

**Tareen group contacting PML-N, PPP**

**DNA**

LAHORE: Feeling hopeless about their return to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) as active members of the party, members of 'estranged' PTI leader Jahangir Khan Tareen (JKT) group have started contacting Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in order to save their political future. Sources told media that nine members of the group had contacted PML-N in recent days following Prime Minister Imran Khan's refusal to 'forgive' them for their past conduct.

It has been learnt that PML-N Punjab President Rana Sanaullah is in touch with members of the JKT group. The sources further disclosed that three members of the group who are MNAs had even had a telephonic talk with former prime minister and PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif. According to reports, these MNAs would be inducted in the PML-N at the time of elections, keeping in view the situation. Similarly, it has also been learnt that some of the members of the JKT group have even reached out to PPP for their inclusion in the party, and that former prime minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and Dost Muhammad Khosa are acting as coordinators.

# UNHCR lauds Pakistan's humanitarian efforts

**SHUJAAT HAMZA**

ISLAMABAD: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi on Friday thanked Pakistan for facilitating the humanitarian operations in Afghanistan and termed it very important as most of the relief supplies coming through Pakistan borders. Addressing a press conference here, he said that during his three-day visit to Pakistan, he holds meetings with senior government officials, refugee representatives and other partners. He said that this was his fourth visit to Pakistan as UN High Commissioner for Refugees. UN Higher Commissioner for Refugees said that as usual Pakistan will play very important role to support humanitarian operations inside Afghanistan.

He said that whether it was Pakistani or international donations coming through Pakistan and he was grateful for it to Pakistan. He appealed that Pakistan to facilitate Afghan citizens of specific needs or minority if they don't have proper documentation, so that may be facilitated. He said that we also understand the position of Pakistan as got so many refugees for 40 years and the international community should do more. He said that on the decision of Secretary General, UN is engaging with the interim Taliban administration in Afghanistan especially on humanitarian matters. He said that he spent three days in Afghanistan and also paid field visit to Mazar Sharif. He also holds meetings with different ministers of interim government of Af-



ghanistan. Filippo Grandi said that the meetings were constructive and cordial were focused on human issues. He said that he had got assurance of security of the humanitarian operations in Afghanistan. He said that Taliban expressed the wish that humanitarian assistance be ruled out quickly as possible as the country condition is very difficult. He said that this was not just after 15th August but

humanitarian situation was bad already. He said that after this new development people were in dire need of food, medicines, shelter and other first necessities of life. He said that there were three and half million people displaced by the conflict. He said that half million were displaced very recently. He said that with the assurance of Taliban there was improvement in the overall security situation as of course the fighting ended. He said that UN will never leave the country, however we reduced the presence because of the situation after 15th August. He said that he has not seen big refugee movement but of course if the state collapses we could see a lot of people trying to seek refugees in other countries because of the situation in Afghanistan.

# India tells China troop pullback vital

**FOREIGN DESK**

DUSHANBE: India has told China that their bilateral relations will only develop when both countries pull their troops back from a confrontation on their disputed Himalayan border, the Indian foreign minister said. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar discussed the possibility of both sides when he met his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi, on the sidelines of a regional conference in Dushanbe on Thursday. "Discussed disengagement

in our border areas. Underlined that progress in this regard is essential for restoration of peace and tranquility, which is the basis for development of bilateral ties," Jaishankar said on Twitter. Thousands of Indian and Chinese soldiers have been locked in a confrontation in the western Himalayas since last year when animosity over a decades-old border dispute blew up. In June last year, tension erupted into hand-to-hand fighting resulting in deaths on both sides, the first between them in decades.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of European Union Androulla Kaminara hosted the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi. Ambassadors of the countries participating in the Sustainable Solutions for Afghan Refugees attended the event. They discussed the humanitarian needs of Afghans and collective response. - DNA

# Australia-UK-US defense deal irks Europe

The deal, which was unveiled on Wednesday, will see the US and UK send strategic and technical teams to Australia to help the country procure nuclear-powered submarines

**MONITORING DESK**

BRUSSELS: The surprise announcement that the United States, United Kingdom and Australia have agreed a defense pact that will go some way toward countering China in the Indo-Pacific region sparked an array of emotions. In Europe, it left the French government furious and European Union officials somewhat confused as to what the bloc should do about China. The deal, which was unveiled on

Wednesday, will see the US and UK send strategic and technical teams to Australia to help the country procure nuclear-powered submarines. It also meant that the Australian government cancelled a multi-billion contract for non-nuclear submarines with a French manufacturer. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian described this as a "real stab in the back" from Australia. He also fired a shot at US President Joe Biden, saying that the sudden announcement of this deal without consulting other allies was a "brutal and unilateral decision" that "resem-

bles a lot of what Mr. Trump was doing." Leaving aside France's wounded pride, the new geopolitical pact between English-speaking maritime powers (known as AUKUS and pronounced "aw-kiss") presents a strategic headscratcher for the EU. Officials in Brussels said that the timing of the AUKUS announcement was viewed dimly, as the EU's high representative on foreign affairs was set to deliver his own strategy for the Indo-Pacific on Thursday afternoon. At best, it was considered a bit

rude; at worst, it confirmed that, despite Brussels' global ambitions, it is not taken seriously as a geopolitical player. Either way, Brussels is feeling scarred. A senior EU official told CNN that this was "English-speaking countries" who are "very belligerent" forming an alliance "against China." The official noted that these were the same nations who took the lead in invading Afghanistan and Iraq. "And we all know the results," they added. The EU's strategy for handling China differs from the US in one major

way: the EU actively seeks cooperation with China, and sees it as an economic and strategic partner. Brussels officials believe that by trading and working with China, not only can they lean on Beijing to reform their human rights and energy policies, but also use a good relationship with China to act as a buffer between Beijing and Washington, thus giving the EU a clear and important geopolitical role. The AUKUS deal has, in the eyes of some, undermined any real claim that Brussels had as an influential presence on the world stage.