



Islamabad POST

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

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Turkey plans to open its first nuclear power plant by 2023

Detailed News On Page-07

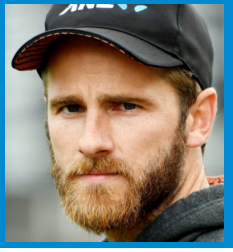
No reason to doubt Taliban's intentions

Detailed News On Page-01



Cricket in Pakistan is amazing

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Qureshi off to New York

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi left here for New York on Monday to attend the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). During his visit from September 21-25, he will participate in various high-level meetings and side events, and also deliver a talk at the prestigious think-tank Council on Foreign Relations. The foreign minister will hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts and the UN leadership. He will also interact with a cross-section of the international media and meet the dynamic Pakistani-American community.

Ministers' speaking PM's language

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) Senator Sherry Rehman has said that the ministers are speaking the language of Prime Minister Imran Khan against the chief election commissioner (CEC). In a statement, the PPP senator, responding to the press conference of Azam Swati and Babar Awan, said that the government wants to run the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) as per its desire. Sherry Rehman also said that making false statements by accusing people is an old strategy of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Capital to be made fully vaccinated

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Health Dr Faisal Sultan said Monday that the government is trying to make Islamabad a fully vaccinated city. The SAPM was briefing the media about the efficiency of mobile vaccination teams after inaugurating the community vaccination centre in the federal capital. "We are working on making Islamabad a 100% vaccinated city where every citizen and resident is fully vaccinated," said Dr Sultan.

Russia: Varsity shooting kills six students

Students and teachers barricaded themselves inside the university building; others were seen jumping from windows

CENTRELINE REPORT

MOSCOW: At least 6 people have died after a gunman opened fire at a university in the Russian city of Perm, officials say. The assailant walked on to the campus on Monday morning and started shooting. Students and teachers barricaded themselves inside the university building; others were seen jumping from windows. Police wounded and detained the attacker, who is said to be a student. The local health ministry says 19 people were injured in the attack. The incident occurred at 11:00 (06:00 GMT) at Perm State University, located around 1,300 kilometres (800 miles) east of the capital, Moscow, in the Urals. Video from outside the university showed distressed students fleeing the campus and making phone calls to friends and family behind a cordon of police wearing helmets and body armour. President Vladimir Putin had been notified of the shooting, the Kremlin said, and ministers had been ordered to travel to Perm to coordinate assistance for the victims. "The president expresses sincere condolences to those who have lost family and loved ones as a result of this incident," Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. Regional authorities said that classes at local schools, colleges and universities were cancelled on Monday. School shootings have been relatively unusual in Russia due to tight security at education facilities and because it is difficult to buy firearms. But Monday's attack was the second one this year, after a 19-year-old opened fire in his old school in the central city of Kazan in May, killing nine people. In-

Committing mass murder was a dream: Shooter

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: The detained Russian university shooter Timur Bekmansurov published a long, detailed explanation of his preparation, in which he claimed it was his dream to commit mass murder by any means possible and said he was not a terrorist. On Monday morning, Bekmansurov entered Perm State University, the leading educational institution in the city just over 1,000km east of Moscow. According to reports, the 18-year-old killed at least six people and injured 28 more. Bekmansurov, a first-year student, had been at the university for ten days, studying forensic science. Speaking to the TASS news agency, a representative from the regional medical service said the shooter is alive but wounded and is currently in intensive care.

Investigators said that gunman suffered from a brain disorder, but he was deemed fit to receive a license for the semi-automatic shotgun he used in the attack. On the day of that attack - one of the worst in recent Russian history - Putin called for a review of gun control laws. The age to acquire hunting rifles was increased from 18 to 21 and medical checks were strengthened.

No reason to doubt Taliban's intentions

'Despite difficulties, we have so far completed 90 percent fencing at the Pak-Afghan border'



MONITORING DESK

RAWALPINDI: Director General (DG) Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Major General Babar Iftikhar on Monday said that they were in constant touch with Taliban in order to safeguard the interests of Pakistan. In an interview with a local news outlet, the DG ISPR said that currently they have no reason to doubt the intentions of Taliban and are bringing improvement in border management. "We will soon secure our border and despite

difficulties, we have so far completed 90 percent fencing at the Pak-Afghan border," he said adding that Taliban have reiterated multiple times that Afghan soil would not be used against any country. Speaking regarding fake news being propagated by Indian media, Lieutenant General Babar Iftikhar said that their outlets have promoted fake news, which has become a source of ridicule for them on international platforms. "There are even some Indian journalists who have condemned fake news propagated by their local media outlets," he said. The DG ISPR had previously said in a presser soon after the Taliban takeover that Pakistan reached out to assist the Afghan government on a number of occasions, including offering their military help with training, because the peace in Afghanistan is directly linked with that of our country. Major General Babar Iftikhar said the Pakistan military top brass called on the Afghan government about seven times while it was still in power. Our army chief visited Afghanistan four times and we even offered them an intelligence-sharing deal but Afghanistan preferred to train thousands of its troops from the Indian army, DG ISPR said.



PERM, RUSSIA: Students jumping from the windows to escape university building during a shooting incident. DNA

Top TTP commander killed

Safiullah was also involved in the target-killing of FWO engineers

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces gunned down a notorious and key Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) commander Safiullah in North Waziristan's Mir Ali area, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Monday. Safiullah hailed from Mir Ali and was involved in the murder of four women who belonged to a non-governmental organisation, said the military's media wing. Safiullah was also involved in the target-killing of Federal Works Organisation (FWO) engineers, confirmed the ISPR, adding that he had also conducted IED attacks on security forces and was planning attacks on them. The notorious TTP commander was also involved in kidnapping for ransom, extortion and other offences. Weapons and ammunition in large quantities were obtained from the notorious commander, said the ISPR.

Submarine row deepens France cancels talks with UK

NEWS DESK / DNA

PARIS: France's defence minister has cancelled talks with her UK counterpart amid the row prompted by a new security deal between Britain, the US and Australia. Paris is angry after Australia signed the Aukus pact to build nuclear-powered submarines, pulling out of a major contract with

North Korea condemns AUKUS submarines pact



LONDON: North Korea has condemned a new security pact between the US, UK and Australia, saying it could trigger a "nuclear arms race". A Foreign Ministry official said the Aukus deal would "upset

Continued on Page 06

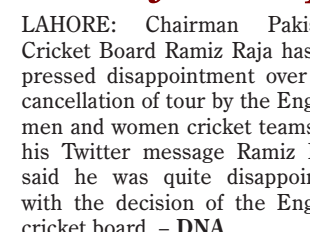
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England cancels Pakistan tour Chairman PCB Ramiz Raja disappointed

Men and Women teams were due to visit Pak in October

NEWS DESK

LONDON: The England Cricket Board (ECB) on Monday decided to cancel its tour to Pakistan days after New Zealand had



LAHORE: Chairman Pakistan Cricket Board Ramiz Raja has expressed disappointment over the cancellation of tour by the English men and women cricket teams. In his Twitter message Ramiz Raja said he was quite disappointed with the decision of the English cricket board. - DNA

Continued on Page 06

Positivity ratio declines below 4.5%

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The national tally of total COVID-19 active cases on Monday was recorded 63,724 with 2,167 more people tested positive for the deadly virus and 2,312 people recovered from the disease during the last 24 hours. Forty corona patients died during past 24 hours, 36 of whom were under treatment in different hospitals and four of them perished in their respective quarantines or homes, according to the latest update issued by the NCOC.

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Opposition striving hard for taking lead in telling lies - Page 03

Pakistan-Eurasian Heartland Connectivity moot starts today - Page 04

Australia pact first shot in US-China cold war - Page 05

NZ offer Pak to reschedule series at neutral venue - Page 06

Commitment to ASEAN 'steadfast as ever': Australia - Page 07

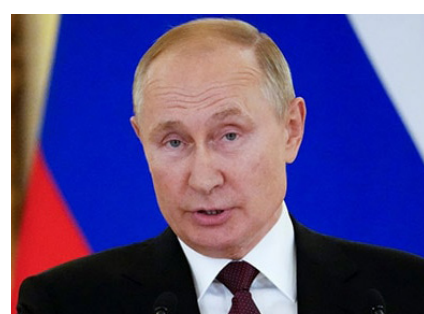
PM Khan praised for 'putting humanity before politics' - Page 08

Russian opposition claims fraud in election results

The ruling party claimed a two-thirds majority in Lower House

MOSCOW: Russia's opposition accused the authorities of mass voter fraud as election results on Monday showed the ruling United Russia party winning a sweeping majority in parliament. The three-day vote that ended on Sunday followed an unprecedented crackdown on critics of President Vladimir Putin and came with pre-election polls showing United Russia's popularity at a historic low. But the party still claimed a two-thirds majority in the lower house State Duma, with United Russia's Andrei Turchak saying it was a "convincing and clean victory".

President Putin thanks the voters for 'trust'



MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin thanked voters for their "trust" after the majority of ballots were counted. United Russia will

have more than two-thirds of deputies in the 450-seat lower house of parliament, known as the State Duma. While the pro-Kremlin force got a comfortable majority, it lost the ground it made in the 2016 elections, when it secured 54% of the vote. The Communist Party, which usually supports the Kremlin, garnered nearly 19% of the vote. The pro-Kremlin nationalist LDPR party and the Fair Russia party also each brought in around 7.5% of the vote. A new pro-Putin party called New People also managed to win seats in parliament for the first time, having garnered just over 5% of the vote. - DNA

Continued on Page 06

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ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a meeting on Breast Cancer Awareness virtually at Aiwan-e-Sadr. – DNA

Shelter homes' gaining popularity among people

The department said that the KP government would take every possible step for the welfare and protection of marginalized and vulnerable segments of society

DNA

PESHAWAR: People have widely appreciated the government's initiative of establishment of shelter homes, describing it a great relief for marginalized and poor segments of the society. "We were provided free facilities like night stay, dinner and breakfast when we stayed for a night in shelter of the city, in short I would say that establishment of these shelter homes is an important step towards Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision of making the country a true welfare state," a citizen Hidayatullah Khan said. Another citizen, Habib-ur-Rehman said that the Pakistan

Tehreek-e-Insaf government was committed for empowerment of the poor and provision of such wonderful facilities like shelter homes was testament to this fact. He said laborers or travellers, who had no place to live in a big city like Peshawar, could now reside at the model shelter home and none of the previous governments had thought of these poor people. He urged the government to build more shelter homes so that more people could benefit from them. A school teacher Nagibullah Khan observed "We should encourage such an initiative with open heart as provision of free bedding and foods at this time when prices

of commodities are high is really a blessing." He said the initiative would pave the way for economic development besides providing respectful living facilities to needy and homeless people. According to the social welfare department a number of people belonging to marginalized and vulnerable segments of the society are availing various facilities at shelter homes (Panagahs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It says that these shelter homes are providing free transportation facilities, night stay, dinner and breakfast, gas electricity, hot and cold water facilities besides provision of soaps, towels, hand sanitizers etc.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has earmarked the required budget under the ADP scheme for the establishment of Panagahain at the divisional headquarters level. The essential staff and vehicles are provided to pick and drop facilities and other equipment distributed to respective Panagah. The Model Panagah at Pajagi road has a dining room, dispensary, hujra, barber room, laundry, women and family rooms, recreational hall, and prayer place. The department said that the KP government would take every possible step for the welfare and protection of marginalized and vulnerable segments of society.

Transporters, malls fined over SOPs violations

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: The district administration imposed Rs 53,000 fine on various transporters and owners of shopping malls and plazas on the charge of violation of the corona-related standard operating procedures (SOPs) in Faisalabad during the past 12 hours. A spokesman said on Monday that during checking, the officials found violation of corona SOPs at five shopping malls, six plazas and seven vehicles. They imposed fine and warned the violators of strict legal action if they did not implement the corona SOPs in future.

Night elected unopposed FWCCI President

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD, Night Shahid has been elected unopposed president of Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FWCCI) for the year 2021-22. Member of FWCCI Election Commission Saima Irfan said here on Monday that Night Shahid had filed nomination papers for the slot of president, Sobia Aqeel for senior vice-president and Farhat Nisar for vice-president. After scrutiny, their papers were found correct, she said adding as only three nomination papers, one against each office, were received, therefore no polling would be held for these slots. However, the official announcement about election of these candidates would be made during annual general meeting of the FWCCI.

Coronavirus claims 11 lives; 990 new cases reported

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Coronavirus claimed 11 more lives while 990 new cases were reported in Punjab during the last 24 hours. According to the data shared by the spokesperson for the Punjab Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department (P&SHD) here on Monday, death toll reached 12,405 while total number of cases recorded 422,791 and recoveries 388,136 in the province. As per the data provided by the P&SHD, currently 22,250 patients were under treatment in different hospitals. The health department conducted 18,455 tests for COVID-19 during the last 24 hours which turned the total tests into 7.20 million so far. Talking about ongoing vaccination drive, Secretary Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department Imran Sikandar Baloch said that frequently increase in corona cases in Punjab was a matter of concern, adding that vaccination was the only and effective treatment against corona. He urged the people to immediately get themselves vaccinated and ensure implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The Punjab health department also urged the masses to follow SOPs for their protection and cover their faces with masks. The people should wash their hands with soap several times in a day to protect themselves from COVID-19.

FPCCI KP for facilities at Torkham border

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: A delegation of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa held an important meeting with Imran Zahoor, Project Director, Khyber Pass Economic Corridor, on Pak-Afghan bilateral trade issues. The delegation included FPCCI Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Coordinator Sartaj Ahmad Khan, Former Vice President Fazel Elahi, Peshawar Chamber President Muhammad Adnan Jalil, All Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable President Malik Sohni, All Pakistan Commercial Exporters Association Chairman Mushtaq Ahmed, Central Organization of Traders. K Salman Elahi, Muhammad Omar of Sports Ending Hunting Association and others. The meeting discussed in detail the development of small and medium enter-

prises to boost Pak-Afghan bilateral trade, promotion of economic and industrial activities and obstacles in Pak-Afghan trade, says a press release issued here on Monday. Sartaj Ahmad Khan, Fazel Elahi, Malik Sohni, Muhammad Adnan Jalil and Salman Elahi Malik apprised the project director of the problems being faced by the business community and termed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Corridor as an important milestone for the promotion of Pak-Afghan trade. He said that the purpose of KPAC and the existence of such an important institution was a good omen for the business community of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and added work had been started on the KPAC project platform on this long-standing demand which would significantly increase trade between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan and neighboring Afghanistan

and provide employment opportunities for the youth. The delegation proposed to provide more facilities at Torkham Border Station and a separate and specific line for fresh vegetables and fruits to enhance regional trade. The delegation also proposed to set up cold storage at Border Station, Dry Port and Airport while urging to improve the infrastructure up to Torkham border station. The meeting agreed to hold a seminar soon to address the challenges facing Pak-Afghan trade while calling for the creation of a framework for providing loans on easy terms for the development of SMEs. Imran Zahoor, Project Director, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Corridor, said that Pak-Afghan would act as a bridge between the government and the FPCCI to increase trade and solve the problems of the business community through mutual consultation.

State institutions urged to respect parliament's supremacy

Devcom-Pakistan webinar suggests brainstorming sessions and discussion forums among parliamentarians on national issues beyond part-lines and engagement of citizens to strengthen parliament's supremacy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a webinar on Sunday evening urged the prime minister to follow the due process in the National Assembly for lawmaking rather than frequently promulgating Presidential Ordinances. The parliamentary process may be a lengthy one but it would be inclusive and owned by all stakeholders in the best interest of citizens. Government shall promote multi-stakeholders public hearings on the national issues, and re-launch citizens' engagement in the standing committees for direct inputs on a variety of issues. Military establishment shall refrain from political engineering. Parliament is the voice of citizens that shall be generated from local governments. The absence of local governments across Pakistan is the denial of citizens' voice at grassroots level. By undermining the local governments, we have deprived the citizens of their leadership training facility. Government and opposition shall work on it together to develop synergy for a positive and pro-people democracy in the country. Development Communications network (Devcom-Pakistan) and DTN organized the webinar on Sunday evening on the subject "Pakistan's parliamentary paralysis – challenges and remedies" in connection with the International Democracy Day (September 15). The panel of experts included former senator Farhatullah Babar, Member National Assembly Shandana Gulzar Khan, Member National Assembly Dr. Nafisa Shah, Convener Parliamentary Research Group

Zafarullah Khan, and Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed who also hosted and moderated the webinar. Other speakers included public policy expert Farhat Rana, faculty member National Defense University Dr. Imran Ashraf, Muhammad Akhtar, and Dr. Nilofar Jamil. Farhatullah Babar said parliament shall be run according to parliamentary principles laid down in the Constitution of Pakistan, not on the whims and wishes of a group. Institutions shall respect the mandate of the parliament. After military establishment and bureaucracy, now judicial activism is undermining the supremacy of the parliament. The recent Supreme Court decision in the case of restoration of sacked employees is out of wisdom. The parliament restored these employees by passing an Act. Military organizations and departments don't reply to the questions asked in the parliament. It is worrisome for all the political parties and citizens, even not a good sign for the parliamentary practices in Pakistan. hH suggested to improve communication between the mother-party and the parliamentary-party for more vigorous consensus on the national issues within the parliament. MNA Shandana Khan said lust for power by hook or by crook has destroyed the entire concept of democracy and parliamentary process. Leg-pulling, distortion of facts and undue opposition have become usual traits even of the learned politicians. In the absence of opposition's support, the government has no option but to promulgate Presidential Ordinances to address the urgent state matters. To stop military fiddling in politics, we need

to strengthen our economy to establish the writ of political government. Strangely, the opposition political parties invited the army when they could not reach a certain consensus on the national issues. Government is ready to take opposition on board on all sorts of parliamentary affairs in the best interest of the nation. Dr. Nafisa Shah said according to the Constitution of Pakistan, our parliament is mandated for legislation, approval of the money bills and accountability and oversight [by the opposition]. Government and opposition benches had developed a consensus after the charter of democracy to support parliamentary practices for a stronger democracy in Pakistan. But the present hybrid government is fast moving towards a centralized form of government instead taking steps to strengthen democratic practices. We are going through a parliamentary crisis. Zafarullah Khan mentioned that Pakistan is one of the few countries out of 193 that are still practicing legislation through Ordinances. Our parliamentarians need to understand the challenges we are confronting in the region and internationally and work in close collaboration. Standing committees and discussion forums would work better to create harmony among the parliamentarians from different parties. Dr. Imran Ashraf did not agree with the idea of parliamentary paralysis. He said several bills were passed in every parliament besides promulgation of Presidential Ordinances. However, he said parliament's sovereignty was compromised in many ways.

Over 2.5m vaccinated in Faisalabad

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: As many as 2,668,769 people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in Faisalabad district. District Health Officer Dr. Atau Mun'im said on Monday that 2,066,697 citizens had been given the first dose while 550,864 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He further said that 29,616 health workers were also given the first dose while 21,592 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of anti-coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As of now 207,787 first doses and 138,524 second doses were in the stock at Faisalabad.

36 criminals held, drugs, weapons seized

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Police on Monday arrested 36 criminals and recovered drugs and illegal weapons from their possession. According to police, raiding teams nabbed 7 drug pushers and recovered 0.6-kg hashish, 85 litres liquor from their possession. The police also held 6 gamblers with stake money of Rs 31,400. In a crackdown against illegal weapons, police arrested 23 persons and recovered 21 pistols, one gun, one repeater and a number of bullets from them.

Zia ul Haq elected as unopposed VP of PAJCCI

Sarhadi has previously served as Senior VP and twice Director of the Pak-Afghan JCCI and had also served as Senior VP of the NWFP CCI

DNA

PESHAWAR: President of Frontier Customs Agents Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi has been elected as unopposed Vice President (VP) of Pakistan – Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI). In this regard, a General Body Meeting of PAJCCI was held at its Head Office in Karachi under the chairmanship of Chairman Muhammad Zubair Motiwala, said a press release issued

here on Monday. Zia ul-Haq Sarhadi has previously served as Senior Vice President and twice Director of the Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Apart from being chairman of Pakistan Commercial Exporters Association (APCEA) and Gems and Geological Institute of Pakistan (GGIP), he had also held various positions. Addressing a post-election ceremony, he expressed resolve

to do his utmost efforts for addressing the problems of the business community across the country. He said that Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce has been working hard to promote Pak-Afghan bilateral trade, especially to remove obstacles in Afghan transit trade adding that as such, Pakistan would continue to strive not only to promote bilateral trade between Afghanistan but also to address the issues facing the business community on both sides.

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (ELECTRICAL DIVISION – II)

TENDER NOTICE

S.#	Name of work	NIT Cost	Earnest Money	Date & time Opening of tender
1	Repairing / Major Overhauling of QXS 15 G8 550 KVA CUMMINS Diesel Generator Set Installed at CDA Secretariat G-7/4/Isalabad.	3696667	107900	07-10-2021

2. Capital Development Authority, invites sealed bids on single envelope single stage from eligible firms licensed by the Pakistan Engineering Council in appropriate category and codes i.e.(ME-03) for the year 2021-22 who can prove their eligibility and qualification as mentioned in the bidding documents for the captioned work.

That the contract must be observed the following conditions before purchase of the tender documents as approved by the competent Authority.

- That deposit at call / earnest money should be generated from firms account.
- The general / Special Power of attorney may be attested through respective Court.
- That the attorney holder may not be the employee of Government / Semi Government institute.
- That only legitimate attorney holder may be allowed to get tender documents.
- Contractor should provide documentary evidence of similar nature of work at least three number of completion certificates from the government / semi government organization in last five financial years before issuance of tender documents will be observed.
- That the bid security of all bidders would be deposited in the CDA bank account and same shall be returned after the acceptance of the contract with the successful bidder.
- The successful bidder shall provide a bank grantee/Insurance grantee equal AA+ rating company equal to NIT cost prior to signature the agreement which shall be released after one year successful defect liability period.

3. Interested Firms may purchase the bidding documents containing detailed terms and conditions method of procurement procedure for submission of bids, bids security, bid validity, opening of bid, evaluation criteria, clarification/rejection of bid, performance guarantee etc., from the office of Deputy Director Electrical Division-II, office No. No.7, Bazar No.8, Street-57, G-6/4, Capital Development Authority Islamabad in cash amount of Rs.2000/- (Rupees two thousand only) and bid Security/ Earnest Money (Refundable) amounting to Rs.107900/- (Rupees one hundred seven thousand nine hundred only) in the shape of deposit at Call in favour of Deputy Director Electrical Div-II up to 05.10.2021 during the working hours no application will entertained after closing date.

5. The bidding documents must be submitted in the office of Director E&M (Maint.), CDA at "P" Block Pak Secretariat Building Ground floor, Islamabad up to 11.30 AM on 05.10.2021 and will be opened at 12.00 PM on same date in the presence of tendered opening committee and representative of bidder.

6. In case the total bid amount is less than 10% below the NIT Amount, the bidder shall submit call deposit at performance security equal to the difference between NIT amount and total quoted amount less 10% of NIT amount. That is required performance security NIT amount total bid amount 10% of NIT amount. This call deposit shall be in addition to the earnest money for the work and shall be deposited at the time of submission of bids. Bids not carrying the performance security shall be rejected. The performance security of the successful bidder shall be released after completion of the work.

7. Bidder should visit the site and study carefully and bidding documents to assess quantum and scope of work before filling and submitting tender.

8. If the contractor or his authorized representative does not sign the tender opening register, their call deposit will be liable for forfeiture and their tender shall also be cancelled.

9. CDA may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal. The CDA shall upon request communicate the grounds for its rejection but shall not be bound to justify those grounds.

10. In case of any Gazetted / Occasional Holiday (s), the tenders will be opened on the next working days.

11. The advertisement is also available on CDA PPRAs website and leading news papers.

12. The following additional valid documents must be submitted along with application, otherwise tender will not be issued.

- Power of attorney.
- Partnership deed, if any.
- Program of work.
- Non relationship certificate.
- Income tax certificate.
- Non-judicial paper worth Rs.10/-
- PEC Registration certificate of firm.
- Professional Tax Certificate 2021-22

(Fique Ali)
Deputy Director
Electrical Div-II, CDA

PID (I) No. 1749/21

DC Faisalabad monitors auction process in Vegetable market

Ali Shahzad directed the market committee staff for regular monitoring of the auctions to discourage the unfair increase of prices of wholesale

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad visited the fruit and vegetable market Sadhar Jhang road early in the morning and reviewed the process of auction for different vegetables and fruit. AC Sadar Umar Maqbool, EADA M. Usman, CEO FWMC Kashif Raza Awan and Officers of Market Committee were also present on the occasion. The Deputy Commissioner went to different sheds and stalls and check the availability of vegetables and fruits. He directed the market committee staff for regular monitoring of the auctions to discourage the unfair increase of prices of wholesale. He



also inquired about the terms and conditions of the auctions and said that unjustified price hike could not be tolerated.

He also interacted with the commission agents and shopkeepers and said that the district administration was very serious to control the prices

of the essential items. He directed the staff of market committee for issuance of price lists immediate after the auctions. He asked the ACs to inspect the cold storage and godowns for assessing the availability of the different items and said that special measures be taken for the supply in case of shortage any item. He went to farmer platform and checked the facilities and checked the record of Mandi App. He checked the cleanliness situation in the vegetable market and directed the CEO FWMC to make a necessary arrangements. He also checked the security arrangements. EADA briefed about the auction process and prices of Potato, Tomato and Onion prices.

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	04:31 am
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Asr.....	04:23 pm
Maghrib.....	06:10 pm
Isha.....	07:26 pm



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Shifa International.....	4603666



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RDA.....	5555864
TMA.....	5770886
Cantonment Board.....	9270151-3



Complaints

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11.....	9204654
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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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Opposition striving hard for taking lead in telling lies

The minister also regarded those opposition parties' senior leaders as 'spokespersons of absconders and kings of corruption'

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib on Monday chided spokespersons of opposition parties for being in a competition that was aimed at beating each other in feeding lies to the public about the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government.

He was reacting to statements of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb and Pakistan Peoples Party Senior Leader Sherry Rehman about concealing details of the gifts received by the PTI

leadership during their visits to various foreign countries.

The minister also regarded those opposition parties' senior leaders as 'spokespersons of absconders and kings of corruption'. Those parties' leaders had relentlessly looted and plundered the national wealth by resorting to money laundering through fake accounts that were allegedly operated in the name of their lower staff, he added. Farrukh said it was both the PPP and PML-N that had laid foundation of taking foreign loans on exorbitant interest rates to cover up their loot and plunder. The country came to verge of bank default due to bad policies



of both the parties and their corrupt leadership, he added. Commenting on the case filed against both the parties by the PTI in the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for perusal of their foreign accounts, he said both of

them had been creating hurdles to prevent access to their bank accounts for the last five years.

"It is most likely that they have used their parties' foreign bank accounts for the purpose of money laundering and that is why they are preventing access to them (accounts)," he added.

He said it was the only PTI which had submitted complete details 40,000 donors to the ECP. Those details were consisted of 16 volumes, he added. As regards to the proposed use of the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) in the next general elections, the minister said the initiative did not suit to the opposition parties as they

were in a habit of stuffing ballot boxes, stealing electoral stamps and abducting polling staff in a bid to come into the power.

About the Pakistan Media Development Authority's draft, he said reservations of all the stakeholders would be addressed before materializing the initiative.

Farrukh said it was the present government which had set a precedent of holding consultation with the stakeholders before enacting any law in the country. Whereas, it was a norm of the opposition parties that while being in power enacted the laws without consulting the concerned in a dictatorial manner.

Petition adjourned against vaccination

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday adjourned hearing till next date on a petition challenging forcible vaccination of COVID-19 in the country. The petitioner had named Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination, Drugs Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), National Command Operation Center (NCO) and Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) as respondents in the case.

The petitioner had stated in his plea that forcing citizen for vaccination was against the law and sharia as well. It prayed the court to stop forcible vaccination of citizens. The petition was filed by a citizen Shaheena Shahabuddin. The court adjourned this day hearing due to absence of the petitioner and instructed the registrar office to inform her about the next date of Tuesday.

Net metering clean, cheap source of electricity

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Chief Executive Officer of Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) Dr. Muhammad Amjad Khan said that net metering was clean and cheap source of electricity. He said the IESCO region was suitable for generation of solar energy and in this connection net metering was the best choice to get cheap and clean electricity throughout the year.

Sharing details, the IESCO Chief said that IESCO received 3944 applications for net metering connection so far and after necessary working, 3899 application were forwarded to NEPRA. The NEPRA has issued generation license against 3857 applications, he said. After issuance of net metering license IESCO field formation has installed 3725 net metering connections of different power capacity. He said world was also moving towards the alternative sources of energy generation.

The IESCO Chief directed all field offices to provide proper guideline to valued customers regarding procedure of net metering connection. For proper liaison between IESCO, NEPRA and customer, Net metering section was working in IESCO Head office, Islamabad and Assistant Manager Net metering having Cell No: 0305-8882192 was a focal person to promote net metering in IESCO region and to answer the queries of applicants. - APP

DC visits ICT vegetable, fruit markets

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ali on Monday visited Islamabad vegetable and fruit mandi early in the morning and personally monitored the auction process.

On the occasion, the Secretary Market Committee was also present. The DC checked the quality of fruits and vegetables and also spoke to the traders and talked about moderating the prices of fruits and vegetables.

On the occasion, Muhammad Ali said prices of fruits and vegetables in the markets and bazaars would be monitored and no one would be allowed to indulge in profiteering and strict action would be taken against the profiteers. He said all the magistrates had been mobilized and directed to personally visit the markets and check the prices of food items on daily basis. Action would also be taken against the price magistrates who would not perform their duties properly, he added. The DC directed the Secretary Market Committee to take steps to solve the problems of middlemen and traders. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Newly elected President ICCI Muhammad Shakeel Munir, Senior VP Jamshad Akhtar Sheikh and VP Muhammad Faheem Khan pose for group photo with Mian Akram Farid Chairman Founder Group after announcement of their election result. Zafar Bakhtawari, Khalid Javed, Ejaz Abbasi, Abdur Rehman Khan, Sheikh Amir Waheed, Ch. Waheed ud Din, Khalid Chaudhry, Naveed Malik and others are also in picture. - DNA

Efforts underway to bring down corona positivity rate to nil



RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Syed Gulzar Hussain Shah on Monday said provision of healthy environment to the residents was the top most priority of the government and all available resources were being utilized to bring down COVID-19 positivity rate to zero percent.

Chairing a meeting to review the corona situation, he said though corona positivity rate has been decreased as compared to previous days at 5.6 percent but there was need to vaccinate more people to check spread of the deadly virus. The commissioner said coping with the COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge for the provincial government which had been tackled successfully with the help of divisional administration and the Rawalpindi health department.

On the occasion, the health officials briefed the meeting that so far 2,492,196 people including 41,246 health workers and 2,450,950 people aged above 18 years have jabbed themselves against the lethal coronavirus (COVID-19) across the district. He informed the meeting that 32,822 people had been discharged so far from the district hospitals out of the total 35,011 positive cases reported in the district while 51 more cases were reported during the last 24 hours in the district with 14 belonged to Rawal Town, 12 from Potohar town, 11 from Rawalpindi Cantt, seven from Taxila, while one case was reported from Kahutta. - DNA

CTP driving licensing branch facilitates 17,516 citizens

KHAYYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: Licensing Branch of City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi and all the Khidmat Marakaz are at the forefront of serving the citizens where 17,516 applicants had been facilitated during August. In-charge Licensing Branch Azmat Hayat told that on the directives of Chief Traffic Officer, Rawalpindi Rai Mazhar Iqbal, strict implementation of Corona Standard Operating Procedures issued by Punjab government was being ensured. He informed that the CTP Headquarters Licensing Branch and Six Khidmat

Marakaz of the district facilitated 17,516 citizens and provided different licensing services. Around 12,897 driving learner permits were issued during the last month besides 1,493 new licenses and 2,584 old licenses were also renewed.

He further informed that 70 duplicate licenses were issued to the applicants. As many as, 264 driving licenses of other districts were also renewed here besides endorsement of 110 licenses, he informed.

He further said that CTP made 38 international driving licenses during August. Computerized driving licenses were issued under

a transparent procedure, he said. Computerized test of signals while driving test of the applicant is taken through video automated system, he said adding, biometric verification facility helps in identification of criminal record holders.

He further said that drivers are the protectors of their own lives and the lives of others, therefore driving licenses are being issued only to the citizens who fulfill the merit. Chief Traffic Officer, Rawalpindi Rai Mazhar Iqbal advised the citizens to directly contact licensing branch of the traffic police and get all required informa-

tion in this regard so that they could not face any difficulty regarding issuance of driving license.

He informed that manual file system was eliminated and CTP launched one window operation system to facilitate the applicants. The CTO said that CTP was making all-out efforts to facilitate the citizens while the licensing services had also been provided at Khidmat Marakaz and 15 Liaquat Bagh Center. Mazhar Iqbal said that in order to ensure merit and transparency in the driving license branch, monitoring is being conducted through computerized cameras.

Huawei opens registrations for ICT competition

ISLAMABAD: Huawei in collaboration with the Higher Commission of Pakistan has opened registrations for the Huawei Middle East information and communications technology (ICT) Competitions 2021. This will be sixth event happening in Pakistan and through the competition, the company aims to provide students with a platform to compete and exchange ideas in order to enhance their ICT knowledge, practical and

application skills, and raise their innovation awareness.

The competition is also a platform that facilitates connections between international talent as well as the collaboration between governmental organizations, higher educational institutions, training agencies, and enterprises, thus promoting the education, growth, and employment of ICT talent.

National competitiveness will be increased through developing ICT talent in Pakistan. Upgrades of teaching methods and connectivity with the industrial development will be focused upon. This will direct the students to perceive employer's perspective by developing their ICT knowledge.

Throughout the Huawei ICT Competition stages, contestants receive the latest updates on emerging technologies that are reshaping Pakistan's digital economy. These include Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data, the Internet of Things (IoT), and most importantly 5G broadband—seen as a crucial digital-service enabler. The competition is a unique opportunity for students to test their abilities in these cutting-edge fields, and helps colleges and universities to better understand the talent requirements of today's top businesses and government leaders. Roadshows and awareness sessions are to be conducted at 50+ colleges and universities all around Pakistan. - DNA

USF board for broadband services worth Rs. 993m

"Access to broadband connectivity is a necessity, and therefore, improving rural access is of crucial priority"

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Universal Service Fund (USF) Board has approved four projects worth approximately Rs. 993 million to provide high speed internet services to approximately 0.66 million people in un-served and under-served areas of Sindh and Punjab.

On advice of Federal Minister for Information Technology (IT) and Telecommunication, Syed Amin ul Haque, the USF Board approved award of high-speed mobile broadband contracts to Jazz, said a news release issued here on Monday. The Federal Secretary for Ministry of IT and Telecommunication and Chairman of USF Board,

Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput chaired the 78th Board of Directors meeting of USF.

Addressing the meeting, Federal Secretary for IT and Telecommunication and Chairman of USF Board, Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput said, "Access to broadband connectivity is a necessity, and therefore, improving rural access is of crucial priority." He said, "We are contributing effectively towards the realization of Digital Pakistan vision and the development of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) sector to promote sustainable development. These projects will play a vital role in providing better access to education and healthcare facilities to



the marginalized communities." He added that 4G connectivity across the country would make a huge contribution in the socio-economic development of Pakistan. The Chief Executive Officer of USF, Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary apprised the Board mem-

bers about the projects.

He also shed light on meaningful and accurate representation of the financial and non-financial performance and position of the company.

In his opening remarks, he said, "FY 2020-2021 was indeed an exciting year for our Company, filled with challenges, successes, energy, and lots of learning". According to the details, the board approved award of high-speed mobile broadband contracts to jazz for districts of KambarShahd-kot, Larkana, Naushahro Feroze and Shaheed Benazirabad. These projects would serve an unserved population of around 0.66 million in 797 unserved muazas and an approximate un-

served area of 5,509 sq. km.

Furthermore, the board also approved award of high-speed mobile broadband for National Highways and Motorways contracts to Jazz for providing high-speed mobile broadband services to commuters on M3 and M5 motorways respectively.

On M3, an unserved road segment of 54.92 km in districts of Sheikhpura, Nankana Sahib, Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh and Khanewal would be provided with 4G connectivity. Similarly, on M5, unserved road segment of 78.85 km in districts of Multan, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Kashmir, Ghotki and Sukkur would be provided with 4G connectivity.

Briefs

HEC extends deadline for post-doctoral fellowships

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has extended the last date for candidates to apply for Batch-III of the Post-Doctoral Fellowships Programme (Phase-III) until September 26, 2021. Applicants are required to submit online applications through research.hec.gov.pk

The candidates must have a PhD degree from HEC-recognized local or foreign university and his/her maximum age on September 20, 2021 must be 45 years. The applicants must be regular employees of public/private sector HEC-recognized universities/degree awarding institutions or public sector R&D organisations as identified by Pakistan Council of Science and Technology (PCST), and must have five years work experience in Pakistan after obtaining foreign PhD degree. He/she must not have previously availed any Post-Doctoral Fellowship either funded or self-funded, and must have a placement letter in top 200 QS World Ranking universities from a relevant supervisor along with detailed CV of the host supervisor.

Exports increase by 24% in two months

ISLAMABAD: The exports from the country in rupee term witnessed an increase of 23.86 per cent during the first two months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding month of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. According to PBS provisional figures issued by PBS, the exports from the country during July-August 2021-22 were recorded at Rs742,259 million as against the exports of Rs599,255 million during July-August 2020-21. Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the exports from the country increased by 38.87% in August compared to the exports of August, 2020. The exports during August, 2021 amounted to Rs. 368,847 million against the exports of Rs. 265,600 million during August, 2020. On month on months basis, the exports increased by 1.22% when compared to the exports of Rs. 373,412 million in July, 2021. The main commodities of exports during August, 2021 were knitwear (Rs. 59,761 million), readymade garments (Rs. 46,565 million), bed wear (Rs. 43,448 million), cotton cloth (Rs. 30,880 million), cotton yarn (Rs. 16,987 million), rice (Rs. 14,765 million), towels (Rs.13,586 million), madeup articles (excl. towels & bedwear) (Rs.10,845 million), Basmati rice (Rs.8,285 million) and fruits (Rs.6,355 million). - APP

PGINM to be set up at cost of Rs 220 mln

RAWALPINDI: Vice-Chancellor, Rawalpindi Medical University(RMU)Dr Muhammad Umer on Monday said that a Post Graduate Institute of Nursing and Midwife(PGINM) would be set up at a cost of Rs 220 million aimed to improve the state of medical education. The VC told APP that PGINM, which will be built at the Holy Family Hospital with funding from the Higher Education Commission(HEC) will provide admissions to 500 nurses annually. Dr Umer who is also the Principal of Allied Hospitals said that HEC has transferred an initial amount of 50 mln out of the total Rs 220 mln for the project which would be completed in three years. He said that nurses and midwives were the largest group of healthcare professionals and were often the first point of care for individuals and families. According to World Health Organisation, the VC said there was a global shortage of health professionals and WHO estimated that an additional nine million nurses and midwives would be needed by 2030 for universal health coverage. - APP

Pak-Eurasian Heartland Connectivity moot starts today

Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan along with high level experts from academia from across Pakistan will participate

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Area Study Center (Russia, China & Central Asia), University of Peshawar in collaboration with University of the Punjab, Lahore, University of Sialkot, Sialkot and Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad is organizing a Two Day-International Conference on "Pakistan - Eurasian Heartland Connectivity: Towards Socio-Economic, Academic, and Legal Cooperation".

from 21st - 22nd September 2021 at the Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, Peshawar.

This is first of its kind Conference being organized with focus on regional connectivity to enhance closer cooperation and connectivity within Eurasian countries.

The Republic of Turkmenistan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan along with high level experts from academia from across Pakistan will participate.



The aim of the Conference is to deliberate upon the ways and means for enhancing trade, economic, cultural, educational, and industrial links between Pakistan and the Eurasian heartland for shared growth and prosperity. The Eurasian heartland i.e. Central Asia and adjacent surrounding regions, due to its geographical location and natural resource base, therefore, has gained added significance in this regard. Pakistan as a multi-regional country has bright prospects for linking major and different regions of Eurasia. Pakistan according to its potential endowed by geography has been making efforts to provide connectivity to various Eurasian countries and regions. Besides providing trans-regional connectivity, Pakistan also desires to connect itself within the Eurasian space effectively and efficiently as Pakistan has made closer cooperation and integration with the Eurasian countries the main pivot of its foreign policy.

Prof. Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman Vice-Chancellor of the university was the chief guest along with Muhammad Aqeel Sultan, Registrar and Nadeem Ahmad Malik, Director Network & IT Services Centre (NITSC) while all faculty and administrative staff were also present on the occasion. After inaugurating the UMS, Prof. Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman said that the university's NITSC department was working for many months on this system which is a smart, adaptable, and affordable IT-based solution that covers all aspects of the University. He said that UMS would not only reduce the workload of the staff but also enhance productivity with smooth communication and data security. He added that the UMS would empower faculty and the students to manage their regular tasks such as student enrollment, admissions, student records, faculty, attendance, fees, assignments, exams and mark sheets etc. While appreciating efforts of NITSC Dr. Zaman emphasized that its responsibility does not end here as the department would now train all the staff with up gradation of the system on a regular basis on staff and students' feedback which would keep the users' interest in the system. - APP

Around 10 million pilgrims performed Umrah

ISLAMABAD: The Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has announced that 10 million pilgrims have successfully performed Umrah since Oct. 4, 2020, following the launch of its "safe Umrah" procedures and the gradual return of pilgrims to the Two Holy Mosques. The ministry also revealed that more than 12,000 visas have been issued since the Kingdom began to welcome pilgrims from other countries on Aug. 10 this year. The ministry said it continues to make every effort to protect the health and safety of pilgrims, worshippers and visitors to the mosques. It urged everyone to follow all instructions and adhere to the precautionary measures designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Saudi Gazette reported. Officials aim to reach a capacity of 3.5 million pilgrims, visitors and worshippers a month. Abdulfattah Mashat, the deputy minister of Hajj and Umrah, said the current capacity is 70,000 pilgrims a day. He added that full vaccination is a prerequisite for the granting of permits to Umrah pilgrims and other worshippers who wish to

visit the Grand Mosque and Prophet's Mosque. The permits are issued through the Tawakkalna application. Health authorities in the Kingdom have approved the use of vaccines for all people over the age of 12 years old. Mashat said that the ministry reopened Umrah for pilgrims from other countries on Aug. 10. A system of procedures, controls and requirements for their arrival, including a recognized certificate confirming immunization with an approved vaccine, was prepared in coordination with all relevant authorities to ensure the safety of all pilgrims, he added. Authorities said they are continually updating the list of countries from which pilgrims can enter the Kingdom, based on pandemic developments and health indicators, and the minister said the number arriving from other nations is steadily increasing. International visitors are advised to register their vaccination status on an online platform 72 hours before traveling to the Kingdom. Pilgrims can also receive assistance from Ministry of Hajj and Umrah care centers. - APP

Pak to prepare South Asia's first ever advanced MRV

The global target it was aimed to limit world temperature well below 2 degrees Celsius, where all countries had to achieve net zero emissions to achieve the goal

ISLAMABAD: The experts at the two-day workshop on Monday aimed to launch web based platform of the country was going to prepare South Asia's first advanced measurement, reporting and verification system to gauge greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). Global Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC) which is the research arm of The Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) organized the two-day workshop in collaboration with German Development (giz) and CITEPA the French counterpart entitled "National Training Workshop on GHG Inventory Platform and Climate MRV System and Development of M&E Adaptation Tracking System in Pakistan during September 2021. Participants from National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA), Pakistan Forest Institute (PFI), Ministry of Industries and Production will learn the use of this online platform named as RISQ. The opening session was participated by Secretary MoCC Naheed Shah Durrani and Director General Environment MoCC Irfan Tariq who presented a detailed overview of countries efforts in mitigating climate change and adaptation initiatives. Ms Durrani emphasized that Pakistan had less one percent share in global emissions, adding, "however, we are leading vulnerable country due to climate change." She added that in order protect its population from the different impacts of climate change, Pakistan is a leading country taking climate friendly actions. GCISC Head Agriculture and Coordination Dr Arif Goheer who also heads the Centre's team responsible for developing the country's GHG inventories told APP that



under the Paris Agreement, all signatory countries were responsible for preparing their GHG inventories which was a comprehensive scientific document accounting the complete emissions data of a country. Dr Goheer said as per Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2006 guidelines all countries have to report GHG emissions spewed from four different sectors and submit it to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). He added that as per the global target it was aimed to limit world temperature well below 2 degrees Celsius, where all countries had to achieve net

zero emissions to achieve the goal to avoid massive environmental degradation due to temperature rise. In Pakistan, he said GCISC prepared the GHG inventory on behalf of MoCC, whereas the country had implemented various ecosystem restoration and conservation measures to cap GHG emissions. "Electric Vehicles Policy, Renewable Energy Policy, adding the share of renewables in electricity mix, Ten Billion Tree Tsunami plantation, Ban on Plastic Bags, Clean Green Pakistan Index and Movement are the key initiatives on ground that will help reduce GHG emissions drastically," he underlined. - APP

Dr Faisal visited Tarlai Health Center

Dr Faisal visits Tarlai Health Center

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination Dr. Faisal Sultan Monday visited the Tarlai Health Center to monitor the services being offered to the citizens.

Dr Faisal also received a briefing on COVID-19 vaccine situation and asked the citizens to vaccinate themselves against Coronavirus. Dr. Faisal expressed satisfaction over the arrangements and available facilities for incoming citizens for Corona vaccination. He assured further improvements in vaccination centers to properly serve the citizens. He said that keeping in view the interest of citizens for COVID vaccination, the government has increased the staff and the number of centers. He assured that the government will ensure the implementation of its health reform agenda to make positive changes in hospitals. Dr. Faisal personally met citizens to know the exact situation and heard their concerns related to the Corona vaccination. He urged the health staff to properly serve the patients at the center. - APP

DC visits Islamabad vegetable, fruit mandi

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ali on Monday visited Islamabad vegetable and fruit mandi early in the morning and personally monitored the auction process. On the occasion, the Secretary Market Committee was also present. The DC checked the quality of fruits and vegetables and also spoke to the traders and talked about moderating the prices of fruits and vegetables.

On the occasion, Muhammad Ali said prices of fruits and vegetables in the markets and bazaars would be monitored and no one would be allowed to indulge in profiteering and strict action would be taken against the profiteers. He said all the magistrates had been mobilized and directed to personally visit the markets and check the prices of food items on daily basis. Action would also be taken against the price magistrates who would not perform their duties properly, he added. - APP

Police arrest 1732 drug dealers, liquor suppliers

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police in their operations against drug dealers and liquor suppliers conducted raids in different areas of the district and arrested 1732 accused and recovered drugs from their possession. They recovered 663 kg charras, over 22 kg heroin, over 6000 grams opium, 500 grams Ice and 7675 bottles of liquor from their possession during this year. According to a police spokesman, Rawalpindi district police on the directives of City Police Officer, Rawalpindi, Muhammad Ahsan Younas had accelerated their operations against the drug peddlers besides bootleggers and registered 1702 cases against 1732 arrested accused. He informed that CPO had appreciated police performance and directed all the Stations House Officers to utilize all available resources to net the

drug dealers and liquor suppliers. The spokesman said successful operations were conducted against drug peddlers and liquor suppliers in different areas of the district and police arrested a number of notorious persons involved in this ugly business besides recovery of cache of narcotics from them. He said efforts had been accelerated to curb activities of drug dealers especially those supplying narcotics at educational institutions. The rate of recovery had increased in the police stations this year as compared to last year and also registered higher number of cases, he added. The CPO said it was collective responsibility of the every person of the society to remain alert against those involved in criminal activities in their surroundings and inform police for action against them. - APP



ISLAMABAD: MD Associated Press of Pakistan Mubashir Hassan presented a book on 3-years performance of the government to ambassador of Bulgaria to Pakistan, Irena Gancheva on her visit to APP headquarters. - APP

COMSTech, SAWiE join hands to combat climate

SAWiE uses open source earth observation data sets from European Space Agency and its community platform of farmer's network to help smallholder farmers to choose suitable time of sowing, irrigation application, pests and disease control measures and harvest planning to fetch better prices

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTech has joined hand with SAWiE, to address the climate change crisis affecting livelihood of millions of smallholder farmers in OIC member states. To achieve this milestone, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between COMSTech and SAWiE was signed online. Addressing to the MoU signing ceremony, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General, COMSTech, said, it is a matter of urgency to tackle climate change crisis. The entire OIC world including Pakistan are facing the dire water shortage. Pakistan is an agriculture economy with over 40% population employed in the agriculture sector. The agrarian sector contributes more than 20% in the GDP, and it is dominated by smallholder farmers - 90% farmers with less than 12.5 acres. Dr. Choudhary said that the collaboration with SAWiE will help develop sustainable

agriculture solutions to achieve improved food quality by supporting smallholder farmers through knowledge-based farm advisory. He said, this collaboration will develop capacity in agriculture supply chains, addressing food security, and improving income of OIC member states.

Ms. Nosheen Ramzan, Chairperson SAWiE said "linking research with the agriculture industry not only benefits the economy but also addresses societal grand challenges of climate change, food security, nutrition, healthy environment, and healthy planet".

She said, new innovation contributes towards achieving sustainable agriculture solutions through net zero emissions. This collaboration will address food security & help smallholder farmers. She mentioned that this has a direct link with the achievement of United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs). SAWiE uses open source earth observation data sets from European Space Agency and its community platform of farmer's network to help smallholder farmers to choose suitable time of sowing, irrigation application, pests and disease control measures and harvest planning to fetch better prices. COMSTech plans to work with SAWiE to popularize these applications in OIC region in different languages. The partnership entails sharing knowledge, developing collaborative projects, and organizing capacity building events of stakeholders in OIC member states.



Oil import bill

THE country's oil import bill continues to balloon as it has been reported that during the first two months of the current fiscal year (July and August) there was a massive increase of 102 percent. This is not sustainable at all because of the overall pressure this import bill will place on the economy. The oil import bill has been recorded at \$3.087 billion compared to \$1.523 billion in the corresponding period of last year. The rising food and oil import bill is significantly widening the country's trade deficit which may translate into uneasiness on the external side for the government.

The trade deficit has risen to \$7.8 billion as exports continue to lag—the ratio being a 74 percent import increase in contrast to a 27.5 percent export increase. As per the data released by the PBS, the food bill has gone up primarily because of increasing imports of wheat, sugar, edible oil, spices, tea and pulses. Part of this is also attributable to the situation in Afghanistan and severe food security issues because of which Pakistan has had to step in and help with essential food items.

Regardless of these caveats, the situation needs to be brought under control. The impact of this is going to spillover into multiple sectors and will of course disproportionately impact the working classes. One example of this is the fact that various cooking oil brands have increased their price to Rs. 330-360 per litre, which has affected every household in the country. Reports also suggest that imports projected by the central bank for the current fiscal year were off the mark which also reflects poorly when it comes to making macroeconomic estimates. Corrective measures are needed at the earliest, the government must look into what subsidies can be provided to ease the pressure and how operating costs can be reduced. Otherwise, the rise in oil prices could potentially cripple multiple industries and increase the cost of production to a level from where a recovery may be too uphill a task. Incentives need to be given to the relevant industries to improve our export levels as well and bring down the increasing trade deficit before it's too late.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 117

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



Dialogue with Taliban

PRIME Minister Imran Khan's decision to initiate dialogue with the Taliban leadership for an inclusive government in Afghanistan is being appreciated by all stakeholders. After important meetings at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Heads of State Summit, the PM tweeted about the dialogue which aims at getting the Afghan government to include Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Hazaras. This is a very mature approach because it will make the Taliban put their cards on the table on the one hand, and give the international community enough to resume the country's aid on the other.

This is a very crucial time for Afghanistan and the deadlock between Kabul and the west about the Taliban fulfilling their promises is not helping anyone. America's decision to freeze close to \$10 billion of the Afghan central bank's money, especially, has restricted the new government's ability to take care of its people. Pakistan's position is that the aid must be resumed immediately, so the country can avoid a catastrophe, and then future tranches can be made contingent upon the Taliban showing flexibility, forming an inclusive government, giving women their proper rights, etc.

It's unfortunate that Washington seems bent upon delaying aid money to Afghanistan for as long as possible. After having practically ruined the country over twenty years of war, and leaving it in a far worse condition, the least it could have done was help with the subsequent reconstruction. As things stand, the Afghan economy is shattered and there is a very real prospect of famines breaking out in parts of the large country. Whatever point the Americans are now trying to prove by making Taliban grovel for aid is only pushing Afghanistan closer to the edge. Pakistan is the most directly affected by whatever happens across its western border, and has at least 80,000 dead to show for it, therefore it understands better than most countries just how to guarantee lasting peace in Afghanistan. And the only shot the country has at it right now is the formation of an inclusive government, where everybody has representation, and enough aid money to get the ball rolling.

Australia pact first shot in US-China cold war

Mohammed Almezel

Biden had opposed Trump's 'America First' policy as isolationist, reckless and offensive to traditional allies. However, he started off on the wrong foot economically with his plan to increase the interest rate and phase out the financial incentives related to the Covid-19 impact. Those decisions led to slower growth and uncertainty about the economic recovery that began in the last few months of the Trump presidency. The Afghanistan debacle added fuel to the criticism that the Biden's administration is naive and weak despite the so-called dream team of foreign policy experts the president has assembled in his cabinet

DURING the days of Donald Trump's erratic reign, it was quite normal to see day in and day out a crisis in the relationship with US' traditional allies in Europe. The former President adopted a strict 'America First' policy that not only angered Washington allies but also raised questions about America's leading role in a theoretically more globalised, multilateral world.

Joe Biden was supposed to be different. He rode to the White House on the slogan of multilateralism and "restoring US leadership" on the world stage. The relationship with Europe, he said, has been strong for decades and will remain a key fundamental of US foreign policy.

However, it didn't take long before Biden stabbed France in the back. "We have a crisis," a French official told a media briefing on Friday. Here is what happened.

Australia was supposed to buy \$90 billion worth of military submarines from France — 12 of them — to shore up its capabilities in an increasingly tense area. The deal was signed in 2016. The two countries, normally good friends, met regularly to finalise the contract and the technical specification.

The latest meeting was held on Wednesday, Sep. 15, just few hours before the Australians announced publicly that they are scrapping the French deal in favour of a new deal nuclear powered submarines from the US.

The French were shocked. They were "betrayed" by Australia, according to Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian who two weeks ago held "optimistic" talks with Australian officials on the deal progress. On Friday, France angrily took the unprecedented step of recalling its ambassadors to the United States and Australia "for consultations." France didn't take that step even at the lowest point in its relationship with the US

during the Trump days when the former president frequently made fun of French leader Emmanuel Macron and other European leaders.

The French minister Le Drian said recalling the envoys was "justified by the exceptional seriousness of the announcements" made by Australia and US of the cancellation of the French submarines deal.

A French diplomat told the Associated Press that the whole thing raises "a strategic question concerning the very nature of the relationship between Europe and the United States about the Indo-Pacific strategy".

A crisis? Certainly. However, the French anger is not the main story. The deal cancellation is actually a sideshow that somehow overshadowed the real show—the security partnership pact for the Indo-Pacific signed on Wednesday by the US, Britain and Australia. The US submarines deal, which led to the cancellation of the French contract, is part of the new strategic alliance. It is an important part of it, but it is not the main thing.

Biden had opposed Trump's 'America First' policy as isolationist, reckless and offensive to traditional allies. However, he started off on the wrong foot economically with his plan to increase the interest rate and phase out the financial incentives related to the Covid-19 impact.

Those decisions led to slower growth and uncertainty about the economic recovery that began in the last few months of the Trump presidency. The Afghanistan debacle added fuel to the criticism that the Biden's administration is naive and weak despite the so-called dream team of foreign policy experts the president has assembled in his cabinet.

And that is why the Australia story is important. In an attempt to prove his tough-

guy credentials, Biden is going after the obvious target—China. And the US moves against China is ushering a cold war, Beijing has warned. The new security pact's main goal is confronting the growing Chinese influence in that region.

For the past two decades, US policy experts have been warning of an increased tension between the US and Russia that could lead to a new cold war. Until recently, few expected that cold war will actually be waged against the upcoming leading world power, China.

Trump tried to slow down the Chinese economic and technological advances by slapping unilateral sanctions on who's who in the Chinese tech industry. He started what is now known as the US-China trade war.

In response to what Trump described as "China's unfair economic policies," the US began in 2018 a series of punitive actions including new tariffs, restrictions on China's access to high-tech US products, restrictions on US investment in China's tech industry.

Biden victory in the 2020 elections raised the hopes of the US business community that Trump's anti-China policy would be scrapped, and the new administration would restore trade ties with Beijing.

However, what began as a trade war has developed under a new president desperate to improve his image into a cold war, "a battle between the utility of democracies in the twenty-first century and autocracies," in the words of President Biden. And the first shot in this battle was the security pact with the UK and Australia.

Biden calls the pact and the US nuclear submarines deal "the biggest strategic step that Australia has taken in generations." China called it "old cold war mentality."

The new cold war has officially begun. France meanwhile was just caught in the crossfire.

Courtesy: Gulf News

Developing maritime security and role of Pak Navy

Bakhtawar Munir

Pakistan is located in north of Indian Ocean, close to Strait of Hormuz, and has sovereign control over 290,000 Sq. Kms. of maritime area. The maritime area of interest of Pakistan stretches as far as Southern Indian Ocean. The security of regional SLOCs and Pakistan's maritime connectivity with rest of world is the key security objective of Pakistan Navy. Maritime security involves the security of maritime domain and all activities associate with it. This include security of national sovereignty, maritime economy...

THE Indian Ocean, the third largest ocean in the world, covers roughly 27% of global maritime space. The Sea Lines of Communications (SLOCs), transiting through Indian Ocean, are of fundamental importance as far as global maritime connect is concerned. The Indian Ocean is a relatively enclosed water body in comparison with Pacific and Atlantic Ocean. The periphery of this ocean is surrounded by several states which share competing interests in Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean centric choke points, stretching from Suez Canal in West, and Malacca Straits in East, are of pivotal economic and strategic importance. Strait of Hormuz, the choke pant in Persian Gulf, is the life line of global oil economy as the oil from oil-rich gulf nations enter into global market after passing through these strait. This strait is the core of regional power politics as it has the potential of shaping the global economy.

Pakistan is located in north of Indian Ocean, close to Strait of Hormuz, and has sovereign control over 290,000 Sq. Kms. of maritime area. The maritime area of interest of Pakistan stretches as far as Southern Indian Ocean. The security of regional SLOCs and Pakistan's maritime connectivity with rest of world is the key security objective of Pakistan Navy. Maritime security involves the security

of maritime domain and all activities associate with it. This include security of national sovereignty, maritime economy, marine environment and maintenance of law and order, in the maritime domain.

When it comes to the Indian Ocean, Pakistan is compelled to fulfil a number of obligations. It is critical to note that our geographic position is extremely crucial. It is also a meeting point for three different civilizations. It manifests itself as a result of this entry point into the area, which is quite significant. The fact that so many more regional troops are taking an interest in this area is due to the significance of this region. We are fortunate to have this location since it provides access to both the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea.

In terms of both energy supply and trade, Pakistan is completely reliant on the Indian Ocean, which accounts for nearly all of its imports and exports. We will suffer catastrophic repercussions if there is any disruption in either oil supplies or international trade. We also have a 290,000 square-kilometer of maritime area. Shortly put, there is a great deal at risk for Pakistan in this particular sector. It becomes extremely vital for the Pakistan Navy to play a role in such an environment. Pakistan is a developing country with limited resources to handle the country's rising geostrategic, political, social, economic, environmental, and technical concerns.

The Arabian Sea, which is part of the Indian Ocean, is secured by Pakistan's second biggest fleet in South Asia, which is also the world's second largest. The Pakistan Navy's (PN) mission has evolved drastically in the post-Cold War era. For a long period of time, the navy's principal duty was to serve as a formidable combat force that was always prepared to defend the country's territorial seas. The new strategic adjustments have expanded the PN's duties in order to address these issues.

India is increasing its position of power and control in the Indian Ocean region by deploying naval forces around the region and establishing favourable connections with states located within the Indian Ocean region. There are also a huge number of states that are continuously threatened by their neighbors. Pakistan also hopes to benefit from India's worldwide isolationist campaign against Pakistan. India has also developed strong connections with the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, both of which have previously aided Pakistan and maintain cordial relations with the country. Pakistan has occasionally taken the lead on collaborative projects, the most recent being the US\$20 billion project in the nation. Pakistan should also take this step, since it will benefit the country. Pakistan should strengthen its cybersecurity and maritime technology to overcome threats at Arabian Sea.

Briefs

Russian opposition claims...

FROM PAGE 01

He told reporters the party had taken 120 seats from the party list and 195 single-mandate seats – a total of 315 seats from 450. It was a drop from the 334 seats United Russia held before the election, but still enough for the party to enact major legislation including changes to the constitution.

With 95 percent of votes counted by 1000 GMT on Monday, United Russia was ahead with 49.6 percent of the vote followed by the Communist Party with 19.2 percent. Predictions by state-run pollsters had suggested United Russia winning only around 30 percent. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov hailed the “competitiveness, openness and honesty” of the elections, saying it was clear that “United Russia is the main preference of the voters”.

But allies of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny, Russia's leading opposition figure, called the results outlandish. “This is truly unbelievable. I remember the feeling in 2011, when they stole the election. The same is happening right now,” said Navalny's spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh. Claims of widespread fraud in 2011 sparked huge protests led by Navalny, who was arrested in January and jailed on old fraud charges following a poisoning he blamed on the Kremlin. His allies said the vote was being falsified on a massive scale, pointing especially to repeated delays in releasing the results of electronic voting in opposition-friendly Moscow. The European Union said the elections had suffered from intimidation and limited “credible” monitoring, while Germany called for fraud claims to be “clarified”. Navalny's organisations were banned as “extremist” ahead of the election and his top allies were arrested or fled and anyone associated with his groups was kept from running.

France cancels talks with UK

FROM PAGE 01

France in the process. UK PM Boris Johnson said France had nothing to worry about from the deal. But Florence Parly's meeting with UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace in London this week has been called off. Lord Ricketts, a former British ambassador to France who was due to co-chair the two days of talks, confirmed the meeting had been “postponed to a later date”.

Foreign Office minister James Cleverly told BBC Breakfast that “all bilateral relationships go through periods of tension”, but added: “I have absolutely no doubt that ultimately our relationship with France will endure.” He said the pact with Australia and the US was intended to “strengthen and deepen” the relationship with two long-standing defence partners and to support high-tech manufacturing and technology companies across the UK.

The Aukus agreement brokered last week, widely seen as an effort to counter China's influence in the contested South China Sea, ended a deal worth \$37bn (£27bn) signed by Australia in 2016 for France to build 12 conventional submarines. French foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian has described it as a “stab in the back” that constituted “unacceptable behaviour between allies and partners”.

And in a virtually unprecedented step among allies, French President Emmanuel Macron ordered the recall of the French ambassadors to Washington and Canberra. Speaking on a flight to New York, where he will take part in the UN General Assembly, Mr Johnson said France should not “worry” about the alliance, insisting that Anglo-French relations were “ineradicable”. The prime minister said Britain and France have a “very friendly relationship”, which he described as being of “huge importance”. “Our love of France is ineradicable,” he told reporters.

NZ offer Pak to reschedule series at neutral venue

New Zealand had pulled out of the limited-overs tour on the day of the opening fixture in Rawalpindi on Friday citing a New Zealand government security alert



SPORTS DESK

WELLINGTON: New Zealand Cricket (NZC) is hopeful about rescheduling Pakistan tour after the Kiwis abandoned their first visit of Pakistan in 18 years, recently, due to a security threat. Although, according to a report in Stuff, NZC Chief Executive David White admitted that the Future

Tours Programme is “pretty tight”. “I think what's important to point out is that for every tour we go on, whether it's Pakistan or England or anywhere, that we go through a very thorough process covering security, etcetera. This was no exception. In fact, it was probably more in this case,” said White. “I can't answer that question [touring Pakistan] at the moment, it's too early. But we'll

assess every tour on its merits,” he added. White was also keen on continuing New Zealand Cricket's close relationship with Pakistan cricket. “We've got a very close working relationship with Pakistan Cricket. We'd like to think that over the next few days, weeks and months that we'll work through this to ensure that we play the content that we've missed out on and we continue our close working relationship,” he concluded.

New Zealand had pulled out of the limited-overs tour on the day of the opening fixture in Rawalpindi on Friday citing a New Zealand government security alert. New Zealand had been visiting Pakistan for the first time in 18 years and also had been due to play three ODIs and five Twenty20 matches in Rawalpindi and Lahore.

No other option than playing in Pakistan

“PCB has made it clear, Pakistan will not play any home series abroad. If New Zealand wants to play, they will have to come to Pakistan”

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has given a clear response to New Zealand Cricket (NZC) that they will not play home series at a neutral venue, local media reported. PCB's spokesper-

son confirmed that NZC contacted them to reschedule the series as soon as possible at a neutral venue. But, PCB made it clear that Pakistan will not play any home series abroad. “PCB has made it clear, Pakistan will not play any home series abroad. If New Zealand wants to play, they will have to come to Pakistan,” the spokesperson told media. “Pakistan team is busy till December this year. So, playing at a neutral venue is not a possible option,” he added. Moreover, the PCB hasn't received any answer from England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) related to their tour to Pakistan next month.

Benzema strikes again as Real Madrid stun Valencia



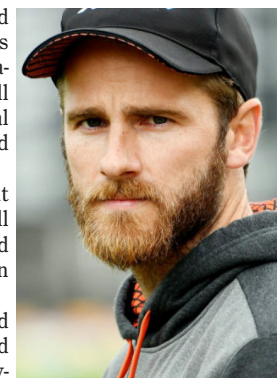
SPORTS DESK

MADRID: Real Madrid moved to the top of La Liga on Sunday after scoring twice in two minutes to pull off an incredible late comeback against Valencia. Valencia looked set for victory at Mestalla when Hugo Duro scored against his former club in the second half but the in-form Vinicius Junior equalised in the 86th minute before Karim Benzema headed home in the 88th for a 2-1 away win. Real Madrid remain unbeaten this term, having now won five and drawn one of their first six matches in all competitions under returning coach Carlo Ancelotti.

“We didn't win through quality, we won through spirit,” said Ancelotti. “I have a young team and I cannot say we are playing spectacular football - we have to improve our defensive game, be more aggressive - but I think with this spirit we will fix it.” Valencia, who stay third, have also enjoyed a strong start under new coach Jose Bordalas but leave hugely disappointed not to have taken three points from this game, let alone one. Madrid sit two ahead of Atletico Madrid after Atletico were held to a goalless draw by Athletic Bilbao on Saturday, and six in front of Barcelona, who have two games in hand, the first against Granada on Monday.

Benzema already has six goals this season but the real bonus for Ancelotti has been the form of Vinicius, who has five goals himself, already more than the 21-year-old managed in the whole of the last campaign. “They were both fantastic,” Ancelotti said. Both teams were hampered by early injuries as Real Madrid's Dani Carvajal had to be replaced by Lucas Vazquez while Valencia lost both Carlos Soler and Thierry Correia, with Yunus Musah and Toni Lato coming on. Valencia were faster and more aggressive and they had the better chances too, Gabriel Paulista going closest in the first half with a header from a free-kick.

Cricket in Pakistan is amazing, says Kane Williamson



ISLAMABAD: New Zealand Skipper Kane Williamson has believed that cricket in Pakistan was amazing and well supported saying it was a real shame that Kiwis abandoned their tour to Pakistan. Kane Williamson hopes that New Zealand's decision to pull out of its tour of Pakistan did not have a “lasting impact” on the game in Pakistan.

Even though Williamson did not travel for the series and will be leading Sunrisers Hyderabad in the second leg of the Indian Premier League, Williamson kept an eye on the development. “I don't know the details of yesterday. It was a sudden call, but obviously, a real shame. Cricket in Pakistan is an amazing thing and so well supported. There is so much passion there and I think the guys will be gutted to not have started and playing the whole series. But I am not sure of the details since I am in Dubai for the IPL. I will find out a bit more about it over the next few days,” Williamson told Sportstar.

Just before the start of the first ODI at the Pindi Stadium, Rawalpindi on September 17, New Zealand Cricket (NZC) decided to abandon the limited-overs tour after claiming to receive a security alert from its government. Williamson hopes that it is not the case. “I certainly hope not. You want to be playing the game in all countries. It is an international game and there is so much passion for it around the world, particularly in Pakistan. It was really exciting to see the series go back there and I know our team was looking forward to it. Players' safety is paramount and when you hear messages going through from the government, it is certainly above the players' heads,” he said. “They were obviously over there, ready to go to the ground. It is a sudden thing that happened. I certainly hope there is no lasting impact from it because it is a special place for cricket to be and there have been a lot of strides forward to see cricket go back into Pakistan and play there safely. We have seen that happen on a number of occasions, so hopefully, there is plenty more cricket there to come,” he said. – DNA

Italy defeat Slovenia to win Men's Euro Volleyball for seventh time



Pakistan win three bronze medals in Mas-Wrestling WC

ISTANBUL: Pakistani athletes shined at Mas-Wrestling World Cup second Stage by winning three bronze medals in three different categories. Mohammad Saad won bronze in the 60Kg category followed by Shiraz Ali in the 65Kg category and Aurangzeb Shah in the 80Kg category. Earlier, Pakistani athletes Rukhsar Gul, Majid Fareed, Basharat Ali, and Mohammad Rashid won four golds in the Mas-Wrestling event of the 5th International Cultural Festival Romania (Europe) 2021. – DNA

KATOWICE: Italy is the new European champion of volleyball after its men's team beat Slovenia 3-2 in Katowice last night, winning gold for the first time since 2005.

The victory comes two weeks after the Italian women's team beat Serbia 3-1 in the finals in Belgrade. It is the first time that both the men's and women's teams of a European country win the volleyball championship title in the same year.

News of the double triumph was welcomed by Italy's politicians and sporting associations in what has been an extraordinary summer for Italian sport.

The sporting success began in July when Italy's football team beat England to win the European Champion-

ships, and Rome tennis star Matteo Berrettini became the first Italian to reach a final at Wimbledon.

This was followed by a record 40 medals in the Olympic Games in Tokyo including the highlight of Italy's Marcell Jacobs winning the Men's 100m final, succeeding Usain Bolt as the new fastest man in the world.

Earlier this month Italy concluded the 2020 Paralympic Games in Tokyo with 69 medals, one of the country's best results ever. – Agencies



PCB announces National T20 Cup 2021 schedule

The tournament's first phase has been moved from Multan to Pindi after New Zealand withdrew from the Pakistan tour citing security threats

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has announced to start National T20 Cup from September 23 here at Pindi Cricket Stadium. According to the details, Pindi will host the event in the first phase from September 23 to October 3 whereas Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will host the second phase from October 6 to 12. The tournament's first phase has been moved from Multan to Pindi after New Zealand withdrew from the Pakistan tour citing security threats. Pakistan wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan will

lead defending champions Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, runners-up Southern Punjab will be captained by hard-hitting top-order batter Sohaib Maqsood. Babar Azam, Pakistan's all-format captain and second-ranked T20 batsman, will captain Central Punjab and Pakistan's ODI opener Imam-ul-Haq will lead Balochistan. Sindh have kept faith in former captain Sarfaraz Ahmed, while Pakistan white-ball vice-captain Shadab Khan will be in charge of Northern. Apart from Babar, Rizwan, Shadab and Sohaib, other members of the ICC T20 World Cup squad to feature in the 33-match National T20 are Azam Khan, Khush-

NCOC gives permission to PCB for crowd

RAWALPINDI: National Command Operation Centre (NCOC) has given permission to Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to host 25 percent crowd during the upcoming National T20 Cup. According to the sources, NCOC's meeting headed by Asad Umar gave PCB permission to host a limited crowd during the upcoming T20 tournament. PCB will be responsible to enforce COVID-19 SoPs. Only COVID-19 vaccinated fans will be allowed to watch matches live in the stadium. After the permission, PCB has started planning for tickets sell which is expected to start soon. Initially, the tournament was scheduled in two phases, the first one in Multan from September 25 to October 3 whereas the second one in Lahore from October 6 to 13. But, reports now claimed that the tournament has been shifted to Pindi Stadium. Also, players started reaching Islamabad but PCB is yet to officially announce the details of the event. – DNA

dil Shah (both Southern Punjab), Hasan Ali, Mohammad Hafeez (both Central Punjab), Imad Wasim (Northern), Mohammad Hasnain (Sindh), Asif Ali, Haris Rauf, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Nawaz (all Northern) and, Mohammad Wasim Jnr and Shaheen Shah Afridi (both Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Fakhar Zaman (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Shahnawaz Dahani (Sindh) and Usman Qadir (Central Punjab) will also be in action. They have been named as the traveling reserves. PCB Chairman Ramiz Raja: “Following the postponement of the New Zealand series, the National T20 provides an opportunity to our elite cricketers

to maintain their focus and composure, show the world that they have not been distracted by the events of last week and continue with their preparations for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup. “The participation of our finest cricketers in the National T20 will also enhance the reputation, value and significance of the tournament, while providing the next generation of cricketers a chance to rub shoulders with the national stars and learn the art of preparing and performing at the highest level.

“With your enthusiasm, wishes and backing, Pakistan cricket will continue to move forward. Pakistan Zindabad!”

North Korea condemns AUKUS...

FROM PAGE 01

the strategic balance in the Asia-Pacific region”. The deal will see the US and UK give Australia the technology to build nuclear-powered submarines. It is being widely viewed as an effort to counter China's influence in the contested South China Sea. The Aukus pact was announced last week and will also cover cruise missiles, Artificial Intelligence and other technologies. “These are extremely undesirable and dangerous acts which will upset the strategic balance in the Asia-Pacific region and trigger off a chain of nuclear arms race,” said a DPRK Foreign Ministry official referring to the security agreement.

England cancels Pak tour

FROM PAGE 01

pulling its team out at the last-minute ahead of its series due to “security” concerns. Expressing regret, ECB said “we understand that this decision will be a significant disappointment to the PCB”, who have worked tirelessly to host the return of international cricket in their country. But, the ECB said the “mental and physical well-being” of its players and support staff remains their highest priority, and this was even more critical given the times “we are currently living in”. England's men and women teams were due to play two Twenty20s 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.

The ECB said it had a “long-standing commitment” to tour Pakistan as part of the Men's Future Tours Programme in 2022, as it had agreed to play two additional T20 World Cup warm-up games in October, adding a short women's tour with double headers alongside the men's games.

“The ECB Board convened this weekend to discuss these extra England Women's and Men's games in Pakistan and we can confirm that the Board has reluctantly decided to withdraw both teams from the October trip,” the board said in a statement. The ECB acknowledged PCB's support over the last two summers, which it termed had been “a huge demonstration of friendship”. “We are sincerely sorry for the impact this will have on cricket in Pakistan and emphasise an ongoing commitment to our main touring plans there for 2022,” it added.

Houses ‘destroyed’ by Canary Islands volcano

LOS LLANOS DE ARI-DANE (SPAIN): A volcano in Spain's Canary Islands has destroyed houses, authorities said Monday, as it spewed lava and ash after coming to life over the weekend and forcing some 5,000 people from their homes. “A number of houses have been destroyed”, a regional government spokeswoman told AFP, adding that they were still surveying the area to determine precisely how many properties had been engulfed.

Sergio Rodriguez, a local mayor in a nearby village of El Paso said at least 20 homes were completely destroyed by the Cumbre Vieja volcano, which erupted Sunday for the first time in 50 years. He spoke of the volcano's indiscriminate destruction. “The lava left absolutely nothing in its path”, Rodriguez told TVE broadcaster, saying residents were living in uncertainty. They will “not be going home for a while, most definitely”, he added. Spanish media said as many as 100 homes might have been impacted by the eruption. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez cancelled a scheduled trip to New York for the United Nations General Assembly after the eruption. He arrived at the scene late Sunday evening to assess the situation. “Given the situation (on) La Palma island, the head of government has delayed his scheduled departure today for New York,” to attend the UN General Assembly, a statement said earlier. – Agencies

Briefs

Quarantine restrictions eased in Uzbekistan

DNA

TASHKENT: From today, family celebrations, weddings, celebrations and ceremonies at weddings are allowed for 100 people. (previously 50 were allowed). It is also allowed to hold performances, cultural and entertainment (theater, cinema, concert halls), public events and meetings, both in indoor and outdoor areas. Visitors to cultural, entertainment and public events (theater, cinema, concert halls) must:

- be in a medical mask;
- use antiseptics;
- it is necessary to strictly observe important sanitary and hygienic rules, including measuring the body temperature at the entrance.

At the same time, workers of cultural institutions and event organizers must be vaccinated with at least two doses of vaccines against COVID-19 and have a special QR code.

At the same time, it is recommended to admit to public events only those who have received a QR code on the passage of a course of vaccination against coronavirus.

Azerbaijan, Ukraine mull transport cooperation

DNA

BAKU: The Azerbaijani-Ukrainian international road transport's current situation has been the focal point at a Kyiv-based regular meeting of the joint commission of the two countries.

At the meeting, the parties discussed the problems faced by road carriers in freight and passenger transport and the exchange of statistical data. Moreover, they focused on the ways to solve the problems in question and provide cargo carriers from both countries with permit forms. The parties also exchanged views on prospects for transport development and other issues of mutual interest. Subsequently, they signed a corresponding protocol.

The Azerbaijani delegation at the meeting was led by State Road Transport Service Head Habib Hasanov and the Ukrainian delegation by the Infrastructure Ministry's Road Transport and Security Department Head Kateryna Onishchenko.

Azerbaijan and Ukraine cooperate in many different spheres of the economy.

On June 24, Baku and Kyiv signed an agreement on the establishment of the Ukrainian-Azerbaijani Business Council.

The council aims to further expand economic and investment ties between Azerbaijan and Ukraine, as well as cooperation between the two countries' businessmen.

SCO studying use of local currencies in settlement

DNA

BEIJING: Members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) are studying using local currency settlement while exchanging experience in financial areas, a move that experts said will be helpful to fend off US dollar hegemony. The SCO disclosed the plan in a document it rolled out during the 21st meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State. The meeting was held in the Tajik capital Dushanbe amid the 20th anniversary of its founding.

Dong Dengxin, director of the Finance and Securities Institute of Wuhan University, said that use of local currencies could help the SCO member countries to bypass potential US sanctions, thus securing the region's financial safety.

"By extending local currency settlements, SCO countries would lower the risk of being punished by the US via financial means, such as freezing US dollar assets involved in SCO countries' trade," Dong told the Global Times.

According to Dong, China and Russia are among the SCO members that are especially vulnerable to such risks, given the hostile political relations between them and the US at the current time.

Commitment to ASEAN 'steadfast as ever': Australia

AUKUS is "not a defense alliance or pact," Will Nankervis said in a statement, adding that the "enhanced security partnership" between the three nations "will allow us to better share technology and capability."

AGENCIES

JAKARTA: The Indo-Pacific security pact between the US, UK and Australia (AUKUS) does not change Canberra's commitment to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australia's envoy to the regional bloc said on Monday.

AUKUS is "not a defense alliance or pact," Will Nankervis said in a statement, adding that the "enhanced security partnership" between the three nations "will allow us to better share technology and capability."

"Our commitment to ASEAN centrality remains as steadfast as ever ... We are committed to continuing to foster a peaceful, secure region with ASEAN at its center, and to complementing and strengthening the existing ASEAN-led architecture," he said.

Under the AUKUS pact, the US

and UK will provide Australia technology to build nuclear-powered submarines.

However, Nankervis stressed that Australia has no desire to acquire nuclear weapons.

"While these submarines will be nuclear powered, they will not carry nuclear warheads. Australia does not and will not seek such weapons. Nor do we seek to establish a civil nuclear capability," the ambassador clarified.

"Australia remains steadfast in our support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Australia will work closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency to ensure full compliance with our NPT obligations as a Non-Nuclear Weapons State." He said Canberra is "ASEAN's oldest dialogue partner" and remains a strong supporter of the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific."

"We are committed to the principles in the Outlook, including ASEAN centrality, openness,

transparency, inclusivity, good governance, a rules-based framework and respect for sovereignty and international law," he added.

Since the alliance was unveiled, Indonesia has urged Australia to fulfill its obligations as an NPT signatory, with the Foreign Ministry



conveying that Jakarta "is deeply concerned over the continuing arms race and power projection in the region."

"Indonesia stresses the importance of Australia's commitment to continue meeting all of its nuclear non-proliferation obligations ... [and] calls on Australia to

maintain its commitment towards regional peace, stability and security," the ministry said in a statement last week.

Meanwhile, the announcement of a new strategic alliance between Australia, the US and UK (AUKUS) has caught many by surprise. Besides France, which reacted with fury over Australia's scrapping of a major submarine deal with a French company, few countries were as surprised as Australia's neighbors to the north, the ASEAN members.

In particular, Indonesia and Malaysia have come out strongly against Australia's plan to acquire a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines with the help of the US and UK. Even Singapore, Australia's most reliable ally in the region, has expressed concern.

The Afghanistan debacle has left a bad taste among many Indo-Pacific countries, and some are wondering if the timing of the AUKUS

announcement was intended as a show of US power in the region to reassure jittery partners.

To understand the deep anxiety in Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta and other ASEAN capitals requires some context on where they are coming from. First, many of them think there is no such thing as acquiring nuclear-powered submarines without the prospect of acquiring nuclear weapons in the future.

Australia has not joined the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which requires parties to agree not to develop, test, produce, acquire, possess, stockpile or threaten to use nuclear weapons. The Morrison government says the treaty would be inconsistent with its alliance with the US, a nuclear weapon power.

However, Australia did ratify the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1973 and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1998.

UK records another 29,612 corona cases

NEWS DESK

LONDON: Another 29,612 people in Britain have tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the total number of corona-virus cases in the country to 7,429,746, according to official figures released Sunday.

The country also recorded another 56 corona-virus-related deaths. The total number of corona-virus-related deaths in Britain now stands at 135,203. These figures only include the deaths of people who died within 28 days of their first positive test. The latest data came as the British government announced that a new antibody treatment for COVID-19 will be rolled out to the National Health Service (NHS) patients across the country from next week.

Ronapreve, an antibody cocktail developed by Roche and Regeneron, will be initially used to treat COVID-19 hospital patients who have not developed an adequate antibody response.

The antibody cocktail has been shown to reduce hospital stays by four days and cut the risk of death by a fifth. It will be provided to those without antibodies who are aged 50 and over, or those aged 12 to 49 who are immunocompromised, including people with some types of cancer or autoimmune diseases.

More than 89 percent of people aged 16 and over in Britain have had their first dose of COVID vaccine and more than 81 percent have received both doses, the latest figures showed.

Macron apologises from Algerian Harki fighters

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday asked "forgiveness" on behalf of his country for abandoning Algerians who fought alongside France in their country's war of independence.

More than 200,000 Algerians fought with the French army in the war that pitted Algerian independence fighters against their French colonial masters from 1954 to 1962. At the end of the war - waged on both sides with extreme brutality, including widespread torture - the French government left the loyalist fighters known as Harkis to fend for themselves, despite earlier promises that it would look after them.

Trapped in Algeria, many were massacred as the country's new masters took brutal revenge.

Thousands of others who escaped to France were interned in camps, often with their families, in degrading and traumatising conditions. - APP

New Zealand reports 22 new cases of Delta variant

WELLINGTON: New Zealand reported 22 new community cases of Delta variant of COVID-19 on Monday, which brought the total number of cases in the country's community outbreak to 1,071.

The new cases were in the largest city Auckland and nearby Whakatiwai, according to the Ministry of Health. Of the current community cases, 16 cases are in hospital, including four cases in intensive care units (ICUs) or high dependency units (HDUs), said a ministry statement.

Auckland, including three cases in Whakatiwai, has 1,051 community cases and the capital Wellington has 17 cases, the statement said. There are 1,039 cases that have been clearly epidemiologically-linked to another case or sub-cluster, and a further 12 cases for which links are yet to be fully established, it said.

According to the Ministry of Health, New Zealand also reported one case in recent returns. The case has remained in a managed isolation and quarantine facility in Auckland.

The total number of confirmed cases in New Zealand since the start of the pandemic is 3,725, according to the ministry.

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



VIENNA: Pakistan ambassador to Austria Aftab Ahmad Khokhar along with Chairman PAEC inaugurated Pakistan stall at annual general conference of IAEA in Vienna. Stall exhibits Pakistan's success of nuclear power generation as well as applications of nuclear technology in the fields of human health and agriculture. - DNA

Poland says Belarus and Russia behind migrant wave

WARSAW: Poland on Monday accused Russia and Belarus of orchestrating a wave of illegal immigration at its land border, a day after four migrants were found dead at its Belarusian frontier.

Thousands of migrants - mainly from the Middle East - have been trying to cross from Belarus into EU members Latvia, Lithuania and Poland in recent weeks.

The EU suspects the influx is being orchestrated by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko in retaliation over sanctions on his regime.

"We're dealing with a mass organised, well-directed action from Minsk and Moscow," Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki told reporters in Warsaw, adding that up to 7,000 migrants had

been spotted on the border since early August.

"It's clear that on the Belarusian side, on the Russian side - because probably nobody believes that this is an independent action by Lukashenko - there is great determination and tens of thousands of people have already been brought to Belarus" from the Middle East and Africa via visa-free travel, Morawiecki said. Those migrants are being used to apply the "pressure of illegal immigration to the EU's external border", he added.

Four people were found dead on Sunday on the Belarus-Polish border according to officials from both countries, a week after Warsaw imposed a state of emergency because of the migrant influx. - APP

Conference of the Valdai Int'l Club opens in Tashkent

DNA

TASHKENT: A conference of the Valdai International Discussion Club and the Institute for Strategic and Interregional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "Russia and Uzbekistan facing the challenges of development and security at a new historical stage of interaction" has opened in Tashkent.

Among the Russian speakers who opened the event were Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia Andrei Rudenko, Chairman of the Council of the Fund for Development and Support of the Valdai Club Andrei Bystritsky.

On behalf of the host, the



participants were greeted by the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Farkhod Arziev and Director of the Institute for Strategic and Interregional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Eldor Aripov.

From the speech of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Andrei Rudenko at the Uzbek-Russian conference in Tashkent:

- Russia's policy in Central Asia is as open as possible, we have no secret agenda and, unlike other countries, we have no ideas or plans to put the countries of the region in front of a geopolitical choice: who are you with - with Russia or against Russia

- We are preparing for the state visit of Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Russia, which is intended to become a historic milestone in our relations. A very serious package of documents has been prepared, primarily in the trade and economic sphere, but also in other areas, including defense

- Although Uzbekistan suspended its participation in the CSTO back in 2012, we view Tashkent as a reliable and loyal ally.

Turkey to open first nuclear power plant by 2023

The Akkuyu nuclear power plant as one of the symbols of Turkey's 2023 goals. Erdogan stressed that the project will significantly contribute to the country's electricity production and reduce carbon emissions to the atmosphere

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said that Turkey will open its first nuclear power plant by May 2023.

Erdogan made the remarks at an opening ceremony in Turkey's Mersin city, following the inspections made at the Akkuyu nuclear power plant.

He described the Akkuyu nuclear power plant as one of the symbols of Turkey's 2023 goals. Erdogan stressed that the project will significantly contribute to the country's electricity production and reduce carbon emissions to the atmosphere.

"Nuclear power plants are increasing in importance in the period when the discussions on climate change are increasing. Our aim is to take the steps to get hold of second and third nuclear power plants. Mersin has proven to be at the forefront of building a great and power-

ful Turkey. I would like to congratulate those who contributed to the acquisition and construction of this strategic investment in our country," Erdogan said.

Highlighting the importance of the Mersin port and free zone, Erdogan underlined that the Turkish companies operating there make considerably contributed to the economy, employing 10,000 people and ensuring the 2.2-billion-dollar trade turnover in January-August.

Erdogan said that the government had provided 364 million TL (\$41 million) of credit and insurance for exporters and SMEs over the last 17 months and the state had supported nearly 26,000 tradesmen, producers and farmers, who suffered from the pandemic, fire and flood disasters in the city.

Commenting on the refugee crisis, the president said that Turkey had taken all necessary measures to overcome the problem.

"We have embraced millions of victims who took refuge in our country,



Mersin is one of our provinces that bears the burden of this great example of brotherhood and humanity," Erdogan stressed.

He added that Turkey will not be able to bear this heavy responsibility on its own and it is time for other countries, especially for Europe to share the burden and to take realistic steps.

Speaking about the government's achievements in the past 19 years, Erdogan stated that 2023 will be a turning point for

Turkey and Mersin will be one of the key provinces at this stage. The president noted that like all 81 provinces, Mersin had also received unprecedented services over the past 19 years. The government invested 38 billion liras (\$4.37 billion) in education, establishing Tarsus University with 5,617 classrooms, dormitories with a capacity of 4,726 for higher education students, and 61 sports facilities.

"We supported social aid with a total of 7 billion liras (\$800 million). We built 47 health facilities, 15 of which were hospitals. We brought Mersin together with our 1300-bed city hospital," Erdogan reminded.

Talking about the upcoming projects, he stated that the construction of 600-bed Tarsus State Hospital is underway and tenders for six health facilities, including the Mezitli State Hospital continue. Furthermore, the government offered 3,890 houses with their social facilities. It is building 262 houses in Mezitli and 588 houses

in Mut for the low-income citizens, Erdogan added.

"We have ended the construction of 205 residences, one mosque and trade center in Gulnar. The construction of 416 residences, 36 shops, mosques and trade centers continues within the scope of the urban transformation project in the Chay neighborhood of our Mediterranean district. We plan to deliver these residences by the end of the year. We have four national garden projects. We opened Mersin Nation's Garden and Muzaffer Yalchintash Nation's Garden. We accelerated our work in Mezitli and Aydinick gardens," he said.

Commenting on the road construction projects, Erdogan underlined that the Chukurova Regional Airport road junction nears the completion. He added that the construction of the Tarsus, Chamli roads, the Silifke-Mut separation road, the Tarsus Tourism Center road, and the Anamur-Kazanci-Ermenek road will end next year.

Rupee sheds 53 paisas against dollar

ISLAMABAD: The exchange rate of Pakistan rupee depreciated by 53 paisas on Monday against the US dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs168.72 as compared to the previous day's closing of Rs168.19. According to Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs169 and Rs170 respectively.

The price of euro was depreciated by 52 paisas and closed at Rs197.56 against the last day's trading of Rs198.08, the State Bank of Pakistan reported. The Japanese Yen gained one paisa to close at Rs1.53, whereas an increase of Rs 1.47 was witnessed in the exchange rate of British Pound, which was traded at Rs 230.71 as compared to its last closing of Rs 232.18.

The exchange rates of Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal increased by 15 paisas and closed at Rs 45.93 and Rs 44.99 respectively. - APP

Briefs

SBP increases policy rate by 25bps to 7.25pc

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced on Monday an increase of 25 basis points in the benchmark policy rate taking it to 7.25 per cent for the next two months effective from October 1, 2021. "Since its last meeting in July, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) noted that the pace of the economic recovery has exceeded expectations," the SBP said in a statement, adding that the robust recovery in domestic demand, coupled with higher international commodity prices, was leading to a strong pick-up in imports and a rise in the current account deficit. The SBP had reduced the policy rate on March 17 last year for the first time in four years, slashing it by 75 bps to 12.50pc, citing a declining inflationary pressure and a need to sustain the economy that was hit by the coronavirus crisis.

Exactly one week later, the central bank had again slashed rates by 150 basis points to 11pc on March 24, saying "substantial new information on global and domestic developments" showed the pandemic had caused major disruptions to economic activity and the IMF had also significantly downgraded its global growth outlook for 2020 from 3.3 per cent growth previously to below zero.

Taliban bans IPL telecast in Afghanistan

FOREIGN DESK

KABUL: Taliban have imposed a ban on telecasting the remaining Indian Premier League (IPL) in Afghanistan.

According to Afghan media, the ban has been imposed due to possible anti-Islam contents, girls dancing & the attendance of barred hair women in the stadium. Former Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) media manager, Mohammad Ibrahim also took to Twitter to share the news. "Afghanistan national tv will not broadcast the IPL, as usual as it was reportedly banned to live the matches resumed tonight due to possible anti-Islam contents, girls dancing & the attendance of barred hair women in the stadium by the Islamic Emirates of the Taliban," he wrote. The remaining IPL 2021 matches have already started in the United Arab Emirates.

US lifts Covid travel ban on EU, UK

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: The US is relaxing its Covid travel restrictions, ending an 18-month ban on UK and EU passengers.

From November, passengers will be allowed to travel to the US if they are fully vaccinated and undergo testing and contact tracing, the White House said.

Donald Trump introduced the travel ban in March 2020. There had been much speculation in recent months about when President Joe Biden would change the rules.

White House Covid-19 coordinator Jeff Zients announced the "new international air travel system" on Monday, explaining that the country would be opening up to fully vaccinated passengers. "This is based on individuals rather than a country based approach, so it's a stronger system," he said. He said vaccines were the "best tool we have in our arsenal" to keep people safe. The new rules don't affect land travel. The order restricting overland travel to the US from Mexico and Canada is still in place.

PM Khan praised for 'putting humanity before politics'

"His leadership of placing humanity before politics is a great example of inter-faith cooperation, bridged by the shared value of human compassion," Beck said in a series of tweets and a letter

DNA

ISLAMABAD: American broadcaster Glenn Beck has said that no other global leader but Prime Minister Imran Khan took an initiative to leverage his position in saving the innocent in Afghanistan and "putting humanity before politics". "His leadership of placing humanity before politics is a great example of inter-faith cooperation, bridged by the shared value of human compassion," Beck said in a series of tweets and a letter, sharing details of the support extended by PM Imran Khan in evacuation of the American and local people from Afghanistan.

Beck mentioned that in hours of desperate need, numerous leaders in political and civil society reached out around



the world for help, however the "silence was shocking". Some calls and requests received a simple yes or no, some went unanswered, he added. "But we received an immediate response to our requests from Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan, who then acted on his willingness to assist," he said, expressing a sense of gratitude. "PM Khan quickly asked his people to inter-

vene on our behalf and was able to make the difference between life and death for those onboard the first three aircraft to leave Mazar-i-Sharif in Afghanistan with nearly a thousand civilians on board," he said. "Many of them are Americans." He said PM Khan's "tireless leadership, supported by the military and civilian resources of Pakistan and their ability to cooperate with the Taliban, enabled the first two flights to depart Mazar-i-Sharif with FIFA female athletes and their families onboard". Beck said, "Collectively, we transcended religious differences, political divides, national boundaries and local dynamics - it was about a humanitarian effort aimed at saving innocent victims facing certain death if left behind in a war-ravaged country." "He [PM Imran Khan] took the lead to save innocent lives irrespective of politics, race,

religion or culture," he said. "He has been gracious with his time and never once questioned our motives." He said other media outlets may have their own agenda for criticizing Imran Khan over the last few days, but the leader should be recognized for the lives he helped save this weekend. "I sincerely thank him and pray he continues to help us work to build a bridge with the common interest of protecting innocent, precious lives during this humanitarian effort," said. He stressed that the United States should collectively recognise Pakistan's assistance at this juncture. "We will not forget this support that has enabled America and its allies to make good on their promises to those that helped them without pause or reflection," he said.

NAB Chairman's tenure is non-extendable

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Monday said that the tenure of the NAB chairman is non-extendable and the law is clear over it.



"The government intends to frighten the opposition by using this Chairman of the National Accountability Bureau, the PML-N leader said. "The government wants to see such head of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), who won't see its corruption," Abbasi further said. "Despite a clear law his tenure is being extended. Passing an ordinance won't fulfill the legal requirement as consultation with the opposition is compulsory," he said. Repeating a question about the party's show cause notice to a senior PML-N leader Javed Latif, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that show cause notices don't serve without any reason.

"Any comment, which malign a person or his conduct demands explanation call," he said. Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan and other accused earlier appeared in an accountability court in Karachi for hearing of a NAB reference on illegal recruitment in Pakistan State Oil (PSO). The court adjourned further hearing of the case until Oct. 28 with instructions to the witness and accused to ensure their presence in the next court hearing.

Man kills 5 when evicted from Kazakh home

ALMATY: A man shot dead two police officers and three other people on Monday when the authorities evicted him from his home in Almaty, Kazakhstan's biggest city, police said. A police statement carried by Russian news agencies said that a man served an eviction notice "opened fire" on court bailiffs, police officers and emergency ministry officials before being detained and disarmed. In addition to the two police officers, the shooter killed the "new owner" of the property, another civilian and a court bailiff, Almaty's deputy police chief Rustam Abdrakhmanov told journalists near the crime scene. The man fired at his victims with a hunting rifle, said Abdrakhmanov, adding that women and children had been in the property at the time. - APP

Afghan women outraged by new curbs

NEWS DESK

KABUL: The Taliban Monday tightened their grip on women's rights, slashing women's access to work, and denying girls the right to secondary school education. After pledging a softer version of their repressive regime of the 1990s, the group has been stripping away at freedoms one month after seizing power. "I may as well be dead," said one woman, who was sacked from her senior role at the foreign ministry.

"I was in charge of a whole department and there were many women working with me... now we have all lost our jobs," she told AFP, insisting she not be identified for fear of reprisals. The acting mayor of the capital Kabul has said any municipal jobs currently held by women would be filled by men.

While the country's new rulers have not issued a formal policy of outrightly banning women from working, directives by individual officials have amounted to their exclusion from the workplace. That came after the education ministry ordered male teachers and students back to secondary school at the weekend, but made no mention of the country's millions of women educators and girl pupils.

Azam Swati terms CEC a 'puppet' in the hands of Sharifs

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Accusing Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja of speaking the language of the opposition, Federal Minister for Railways Azam Swati asked him on Monday as to how many notices he had issued to Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz or Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman for making 'hate speeches', media reported. Addressing a press conference along with Adviser to Prime Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Babar Awan, he said all that Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) government

wanted was free, fair and transparent elections, in the light of Supreme Court order. "We want such kind of system in the country which does not give an excuse to anybody to doubt the election results," he clarified. Making it clear to Sikandar Sultan Raja that he knew how CECs were appointed in the country, Swati accused him of being a puppet in the hands of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif and his brother party President Shehbaz Sharif. The minister told him it was because of the constitutional requirement and the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) prestige that the government had made his appointment.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs meeting of Mineral Development Program. - DNA

Peace in Pakistan linked with Afghan peace: Sh Rashid

Pakistan evacuated 16,000 people including personnel of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund from Afghanistan after the Taliban's takeover

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid has said that Pakistan's peace is quintessentially attached with the peace in Afghanistan, reiterating Islamabad's position that it wants stability and tranquillity in the neighbouring Muslim country. Talking to a presser in Islamabad on Monday, the interior minister said that Pakistan evacuated 16,000 people including personnel of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund from Afghanistan after the Taliban's takeover.

He held that Pakistan's borders were secure. He maintained that the enemy had started a hybrid war against Pakistan. He said India became the butt of a joke in Afghanistan. "Now Delhi wants to pour all the muck on Pakistan," Rashid added.



He derided India saying 'Delhi does not have anything to say except to talk only about Sh Rashid and Taliban.' He refuted the presence of any refugee camp in Pakistan. On religious schools (Madaris), the minister said there were 516 Madaris in the federal capital but one religious school was creating trouble. He stated that the government wanted to settle

things through dialogue. "We do not want to vitiate the peaceful atmosphere," he maintained. It is pertinent to mention here that after the Taliban's success in Afghanistan, Jamia Hafsa's people raised the Taliban's flag on the minarets of their mosque. Rashid informed that on the eve of Shuhda-e-Karbala Chehlum, the mobile phone service would remain suspended on the request of provinces and the Army men and Rangers would be deployed to maintain peace. The minister predicted that Pakistan was going to assume an important position in the world. He said that Pakistan had made a plan to sell warplanes to Argentina. The interior minister warned the holders of two passports and two identity cards. He asked them to surrender extra documents and gave them a 40-day moratorium till Oct 30. On the cancellation of the New Zealand cricket team tour, Rashid said that the Pak army was providing the best security to the Kiwis 'even our security force outnumbered the Kiwis' force.' Rashid invited the opposition to sit with the government on the matter of Electronic Voting Machines. He said that the opposition was preparing for elections as it was taking out rallies.

Govt ready to talk with Opp. on reforms, EVMs

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Babar Awan on Monday said that government would ensure legislation for transparent elections in future and was also ready to talk with opposition on electoral reforms as well as electronic voting machines (EVMs). Speaking here at a press conference along with Minister for Railways Azam Khan Swati, he said that a joint parliamentary committee had been proposed for negotiations on electoral reforms which would include the members from both sides of aisle. He said that a motion would be moved in the Senate and National Assembly requesting the Chairman and Speaker to nominate members of the respective Houses in this committee. He said the government had contacted with the opposition last week following the directions of Prime Minister Imran Khan and was ready to take confidence building measures on electoral reforms.

The formation of Joint Parliamentary Committee is the part of these measures and electoral reforms will be ensured through it. However, the advisor clarified that electoral reforms were the fate of the nation as the government wanted to give a transparent election system to the people. Dr. Babar Awan said that EVMs had been used in 72 countries while credibility on these machines increased from 35 percent to 89 percent during the last three elections in Philippine having the population of around 111 million people. Advisor to Prime Minister said that PPPP government talked about EVMs in 2009 while the ECP and the previous governments from 2014 to 2016 also deliberated on it. He said that a parliamentary delegation including PPPP leader Syed Naveed Qamar, PML-N leader Murtaza Javed Abbasi and the then opposition member and incumbent President Dr. Arif Alvi also conducted a foreign visit in the past to witness election conducted through EVMs.

EU ministers to discuss nuclear subs deal fallout

France recalled its ambassadors to the United States and Australia in a ferocious display of displeasure at not just losing an agreed contract worth more than 30 billion euros (\$37 billion) but especially at the "stab in the back" it received from allies

AGENCIES

BRUSSELS: EU foreign ministers will meet on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly on Monday to discuss the AUKUS pact that scuppered a submarine deal between France and Australia. "This is the first opportunity for the EU foreign ministers to discuss the implications and consequences of the whole deal," EU foreign affairs spokesman Peter Stano said. He added that the meeting was an opportunity to discuss "not only the issue between France and Australia but the implications of the whole AUKUS alliance". The meeting was previously scheduled - a usual occurrence for EU countries to coordinate and consult on many topics before their representatives took the stage at the annual UN event. But with Australia, the United

EU chief says France's treatment 'unacceptable'

BRUSSELS: France was treated in an "unacceptable" way when Australia, Britain and the United States secretly negotiated a defence pact ditching its contract to supply submarines to Canberra, EU chief Ursula von der Leyen said Monday. "There are a lot of open questions that have to be answered," von der Leyen told CNN, according to a tweeted video extract of her interview. "One of our member states has been treated in a way that is not acceptable." Australia, the United States and Britain last week unveiled a new defence pact negotiated secretly over several months, to the detriment of France, the is-

sue has leapt to the top of the agenda. The Aukus agreement is widely seen as an effort to counter China's influence in the contested South China Sea, ended a deal worth \$37bn (£27bn) signed by Australia in 2016 for France to build 12 conventional submarines. French foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian has described it as a "stab in the back" that constituted "unacceptable behaviour between allies and partners". And in a virtually unprecedented step among allies, French President Emmanuel Macron ordered the recall of the French ambassadors to Washington and Canberra. - APP

France recalled its ambassadors to the United States and Australia in a ferocious display of displeasure at not just losing an agreed contract worth more than 30 billion euros (\$37 billion) but especially at the "stab in the back" it received from allies. Its minister for Europe, Clement Beaufort, has said a trade pact with the EU that Australia has been working towards since 2018 could