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Russia says in contact with Pakistan, US, China on Taliban

Detailed News On Page-01

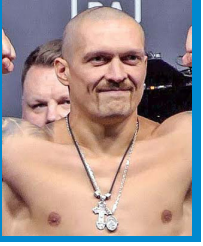
CJCSC in Russia highlights Pak peace efforts

Detailed News On Page-07



Oleksandr Usyk becomes new HW champion

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

KCZ inclusion into CPEC hailed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Sunday while lauding efforts of the ministry of Maritime Affairs, termed inclusion of Karachi Comprehensive Coastal Development Zone in China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a 'game changer'. He expressed the hope that it would help in cleaning up marine habitat for fishermen, develop low income housing units and creating investment opportunities. "Inclusion of Karachi Comprehensive Coastal Development Zone in CPEC is game changer."

Turkey to buy more Russian equipment

WEB DESK

ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey was still intending to buy a second batch of missile defence systems from Russia, a move that triggered US sanctions and deepened a rift with Washington. In an interview aired on Face the Nation with Margaret Brennan on CBS News, Erdogan said nobody can interfere with what defence systems Ankara, a NATO ally, would buy.

FM in London on official visit

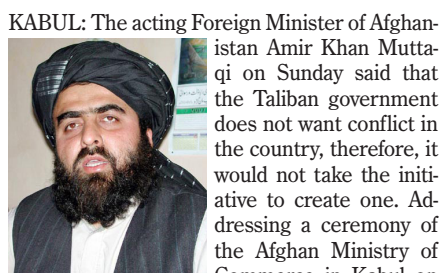
DNA

LONDON: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi arrived in London on a three-day visit to the United Kingdom on Sunday. On arrival at Heathrow Airport, Pakistan's High Commissioner to the UK Moazzam Ahmad Khan and Deputy High Commissioner Dr. Faisal Aziz and senior officials of the High Commission welcomed the Foreign Minister. Shah Mahmood Qureshi will have a bilateral meeting with his British counterpart Elizabeth Truss. The meeting will focus on bilateral relations, bilateral cooperation in multilateral fields and important regional and global issues.

Taliban says don't want any conflict

"We will not let anyone use the Afghan soil against any other country," announced the IEA Foreign Minister

NEWS DESK

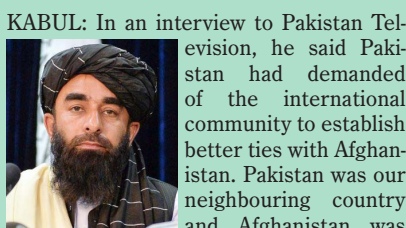


KABUL: The acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Amir Khan Muttaqi on Sunday said that the Taliban government does not want conflict in the country, therefore, it would not take the initiative to create one. Addressing a ceremony of the Afghan Ministry of Commerce in Kabul on Sunday, the acting FM said that anyone who engages in divisive politics will be left alone. "We will not let anyone use the Afghan soil against any other country," said the FM. Speaking about the past, he said that an alliance of 50 countries had entered Afghanistan to oust the Taliban government in the past but when it came to establishing peace, "no foreign fighters came to fight in Afghanistan". "The credit for establishing peace in the country solely goes to the local people," said Muttaqi, adding that the Taliban government would be ready to take steps ahead if another country even takes one step towards establishing friendly ties with Afghanistan. Muttaqi admitted that while the newly-established government is facing difficulties at the moment, its main focus is the welfare of the people. He said that the government will create such conditions that "no one will leave the country."

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Zabihullah lauds Pakistan's support

DNA



KABUL: In an interview to Pakistan Television, he said Pakistan had demanded of the international community to establish better ties with Afghanistan. Pakistan was our neighbouring country and Afghanistan was thankful for Pakistan's stance regarding Afghanistan, he added. The minister said Afghanistan wanted good relations with the international community and desired to expand trade and economic ties. "We hope that neighbouring countries will continue to extend support to Afghanistan before the international community." He said many countries had raised voice in our favour before the international community and the United States. Qatar, Uzbekistan and other countries had also adopted a positive stance towards Afghanistan, he said adding six days back China and Russia talked in our favour at the United Nations General Assembly. The relations of Afghanistan will its neighbours and the international community were important, he noted.

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Avenfield flats bought through looted money

Sharifs did not spend a single penny of the looted money on the masses, rather laundered abroad to build palatial flats in London, Fawad says



SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Sunday said the Sharif family had purchased Avenfield flats in London after committing massive corruption in the Lahore-Islamabad

Motorway (M-1) project. "It is pertinent to note the timing of purchase of Avenfield flats and construction of the motorway. The Sharif family was purchasing the Avenfield flats in the UK on the same time when the most expensive agreement of the region for construction of a motorway was being signed

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in the country by the then Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government [with a company]," he said while addressing a news conference. Flanked by Minister for Communications and Postal Services Murad Saeed, Fawad said public should know that the then PML-N government did massive corruption under the cover of such expensive contracts for constructing the motorway. They did not spend a single penny of the looted money on the masses, rather laundered abroad to build palatial flats in London, he said adding, the money spent on such expensive projects by the PML-N government was borrowed from different international financial institutions.



MOSCOW: Pakistan Army won Bronze Medal in 58th World Military Boxing Championship held at Moscow, Russia. Sepoy Bilawal Zia, Pakistan Army clinched bronze medal at world military boxing championship. - DNA

Russia says in contact with Pak, US, China

AGENCIES

NEW YORK: Russia, China, Pakistan and the United States are working together to ensure that Afghanistan's new Taliban rulers keep their promises, especially to form a genuinely representative government and prevent extremism from spreading, Russia's foreign minister said Saturday. Sergey Lavrov said the four countries are in ongoing contact. He said representatives from Russia, China and Pakistan recently traveled to Qatar and then to Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, to engage with both the Taliban and representatives of "secular authorities" -

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Germany votes to replace Angela Merkel

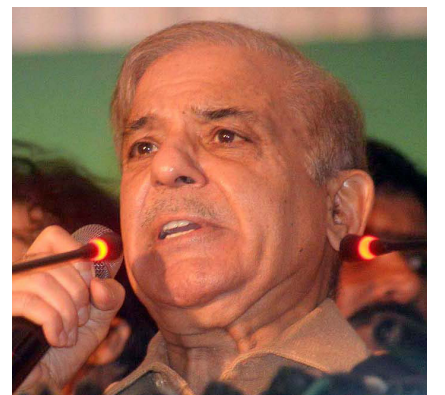
BERLIN: Germans headed to the polls Sunday to vote in a closely fought federal election that will, in the coming days or weeks, result in a new chancellor taking the helm of the world's fourth-largest economy. Chancellor Angela Merkel, 67, has been a symbol of stability in Europe since she took on the role in 2005. But after almost 16 years in the top job, she will step down once it becomes clear who her successor will be. Polling predictions on Saturday suggested the race was too close to call, with the center-left SPD holding a small but narrowing lead over Merkel's party, the center-right CDU. - APP

PML-N will bury PTI in 2023 elections

The Opposition leader said that Pakistan "has no respect" and has been left "penniless"

NEHAL MIRAZ

RAWALPINDI: PML-N President Shahbaz Sharif on Sunday boldly claimed that his party will "bury PTI forever" in the 2023 general elections. Addressing a PML-N workers convention in Rawalpindi, the Opposition leader, congratulated the party for achieving significant success in the recently held cantonment board elections. In the polls held on September 12, PTI managed to secure 63 seats while the PML-N won 59 seats from across the country. "Our success in the cantonment board elections is not ordinary," he said, noting that the party had performed even better in Rawalpindi than Lahore, a city considered their stronghold. "We wiped out the PTI," he declared. Speaking of the 2023 elections, he demanded that they be held transparently, adding that he holds these expectations from Election Commission of Pakistan, the judiciary and all institutions. Shahbaz said that three years ago, when the PTI came into power, "having this select-



ed prime minister selected destroyed Pakistan". He said now, after 3.25 years, the people's "eyes have opened" to the truth. The Opposition leader said that Pakistan "has no respect" and has been left "penniless". "They have ruined the economy with the loans they have taken," he added. "And this selected prime minister then says 'you must not panic'." Shahbaz urged the people to "take a stand" against soaring inflation.

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Covid-19 positivity rate falls below 4% after 4 months

Pakistan last reported Covid positivity rate at 3.9% on June 3

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan continues to report a decline in coronavirus infections, with the positivity rate going below 4% for the first time in almost four months on Sunday. Pakistan last reported COVID-19 positivity rate at 3.9% on June 3. According to the latest statistics by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC), the country's positivity rate currently stands at 3.98% as of Sunday morning. As many as 44,712 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours across the country, of which 1,780 came back positive. Meanwhile, 42 more people

Travel bans boost Pak domestic tourism

MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: Worldwide coronavirus travel bans, exploration of new tourist destinations and infrastructure development have boosted Pakistan's domestic tourism, with millions of local visitors thronging to the country's scenic north and northwest this summer. A record of more than 5.5 million tourists, mainly local, visited the majestic mountains, lush-green plateaus and picturesque valleys in the northern Gilgit-Baltistan region, which borders neighboring China, and northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, bordering Afghanistan, despite the coronavirus pandemic during this tourist season. In KP alone, nearly 4 million tourists visited the famous tourist destinations of Swat, Chitral, Nathiagali Abbottabad, Kaghan and Naran in Mansehra from May to September, according to Latifur Rehman Khan, a spokesman for the KP tourism department.

succumbed to the coronavirus during the same period in the country, pushing the death toll from the virus to 27,566. As per the NCOC data, with the addition of 1,780 new infections, the total caseload of the country has risen to 1,238,668. A day earlier, the number of active coronavirus cases in Pakistan had gone under 60,000 for the first time in nearly two months, official data showed Saturday morning. The country's active number of cases had fallen to 52,042. The country last reported 59,761 active cases on July 29. The active cases had fallen consistently for more than a week with

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PTI to resolve issues at ground level: Senator Saifullah

Saifullah says that PM Imran Khan has especially directed him to visit Faisalabad and analyze the party as well as public issues so that it could be reinvigorated to participate

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) is working to ensure coordination between its workers and public to resolve the chronic issues at the ground level. This was stated by Senator Saifullah Niazi Chief Organizer PTI while talking to media persons at Circuit House Faisalabad.

the same. He said that the problems which could not be addressed at district level would be communicated at the higher forum so that the party and public could join hands to resolve the issues and pass on maximum relief to the masses. Responding to a question that PTI workers are being denied their rights, Niazi said that forum of DCC has been provided where the PTI workers could openly discuss and thrash out their issues within the given framework.

question, he said that the PTI has lack of coordination in cohesion and ultimate objective of his visit is to bring all cadres of his party on one page. About Rs.30 billion package for Faisalabad, he said that necessary funds of this package could not be released due to economic crisis. However, he will take up this matter in the notice of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar so that funds could be released for the approved development projects.

it in the right direction and PTI is also making sincere efforts to bring qualitative improvement in the governance in order to ensure a corruption free society. About wrong distribution of tickets during elections of cantonment boards, he admitted and said that the party was serious investigating this issue. About foreign funding case, he said that the PTI has already submitted all necessary documents and there is nothing to hide from the court and public.



FAISALABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib is addressing a public meeting after inaugurate the Development Work in CC-99. - APP

Dengue cases surged in Punjab

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Dengue is pitching deep in Punjab as during the last 24 hours over 100 new cases were reported in the province and Islamabad with Lahore on the forefront having 60 dengue patients. A total of 992 cases have been reported in the province so far. Reportedly, 60 patients of dengue were reported in the provincial capital during the last 24 hours. A total of 48 patients were admitted to different hospitals in Lahore. Twelve dengue patients were admitted to Lahore's Ganga Ram Hospital; 5 in Mayo Hospital; while 3 patients were admitted to Fatima Jinnah Memorial Hospital, Jinnah Hospital and Doctors' Hospital.

Shelter-homes restore self-respect of people

"Currently, we have 100-bed capacity and efforts was on to increase it before harsh winter season"

PESHAWAR: The shelter homes established under the Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision to restore dignity and self-respect of shelter-less and destitute people have started delivering in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where hundreds of thousands underprivileged and vulnerable segments were benefited who were most vulnerable to extreme weather conditions. About 19 model shelter-homes working under the supervision of Social Welfare Department government of KP and Pakistan Baitul Mall was unique project of the PTI government facilitating large numbers of poor and homeless people, senior citizens, needy women and children in the province since 2018.

any heed to the plights of homeless people," Younas Afridi, District Officer, Social Welfare Department told APP on Tuesday. He said that KP has taken a lead role by establishing 19 model shelter homes including eight by Pakistan Baitul Mall in different districts of the province and has started delivering to poor. "In line with PM's vision, the KP government has setup a model shelter home at Pachagai Road Peshawar where all modern facilities including free breakfast, meal, transport and others services are being provided to shelterless since 2018. "Currently, we have 100-bed capacity and efforts was on to increase it before harsh winter season," he said. "Pachagai shelter homes is a prime choice of shelter less, destitute and underprivileged segment of the society where free services

including night accommodation are also being provided to passengers of other districts and easy accessibility," he said, adding over one lakh people have benefited only from Pachagai shelter home established three years ago in heart of Peshawar City. Thousands of neglected persons, who used to sleep under bridges, flyovers, road dividers and shrines, have been provided free accommodation and meal services at this dignified place during their stay, he added. He said the KP government and Pakistan Baitul Mall have recently inked an agreement for establishing shelter homes in the province. As per the agreement, he said eight new shelter homes would be established including two in Peshawar and one each in all divisional headquarters of KP. - APP

Mobile services to remain suspended

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab government Saturday announced to shut the mobile phone services on the eve of Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and Urs of Hazrat Data Ali Hajveri (RA) on Monday and Tuesday. According to a private television channel report, the government would shut the mobile phone services down partially on the eve of Chehlum and the next day on September 27 and 28 for security reasons.

Faisalabad Expo crucial for exports to global markets

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Expo Centre will play a proactive role in introducing and enhancing exports of quality products of "Made in Faisalabad" to the global markets, said Mian Aslam Iqbal, Provincial Minister for Industry, Commerce & Investment. He was addressing a ceremony after unveiling a plaque for the ground breaking ceremony of Faisalabad Expo Centre at Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here today. He said that the Government

has laid full focus on reinvigorating industrial and commercial activities. "In this connection fully equipped industrial estates are developed across the province," he said and added that in Faisalabad M3 industrial estate and Allama Iqbal Special Economic Zones are already under the process of expeditious colonization. He said that Expo Centre will attract foreign buyers to visit and personally participate in exhibitions to be organized in this state of the art Expo Centre. He said that despite the pandemic, the Government

adopted a prudent policy of smart lockdown which helped to gear up the industrial activities. About the Expo Centre, he said that it would be completed under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode. The Provincial Minister also inaugurated industrial facility lounge and in this connection he particularly appreciated the innovative and creative approach of Engineer Hafiz Ihtasham Javed President FCCI who has devoted himself for the welfare of the business community and taken bold steps to facilitate the FCCI members.

پاکستان ایئر فورس

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Table with 2 columns: 'اسامیوں کی تعداد' (Number of Vacancies) and 'تفصیلی تفصیلات' (Detailed Details). It lists various job positions such as Painter, B&R, Lab Man, ASK-LD, LDC, Medical Asstt, Librarian, and others, along with their respective requirements and application details.

Footer section containing contact information for various departments, including phone numbers and website links. It also includes a note about the newspaper's registration and publication details.

Defence exports

AFTER having been impressed with Pakistan's defence equipment at the exhibition in Baghdad earlier this year, the government of Iraq placed an order for 12 JF-17 Thunder Block III fighter jets that are manufactured by the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC). This is a monumental step forward as it signifies that we have the technology and expertise to export high quality equipment across the world. Argentina also bought 12 of the same fighter jets, as did Nigeria. This indicates a gradual increase in our defence exports.

Iraq's delegation in Pakistan, led by Major General Muhammad (pilot) Majeed Mahdi Mahmood, is negotiating a deal through which \$664 million could potentially be funnelled into the country. Hopefully, we can harness this potential and materialise it. This inflow of money will certainly help our struggling economy but it will also allow for the PAC to conduct research and development that is targeted towards improvement and innovation in the defence sector. We have the potential to expand our capabilities to other weaponry beyond just fighter jets. Within the next few years, we could be exporting more equipment to a larger portion of the world.

Most of this development is courtesy of the technological transfers made to Pakistan by China. It has helped increase our capacity to produce advanced gear that meets international standards. We now have the avenue to explore the production of tanks, combat drones and other artillery that can be used domestically as well. In fact, the millions of dollars we are saving through utilising locally produced equipment can be reinvested into the industry to strengthen our own defence strategy.

As we move forward, we must explore the untapped markets that are available through improving upon our offering to the international community. Becoming a significant exporter of defence technology could be a game changer for us.

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

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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



Population time bomb

THE Imran Khan administration deserves credit for raising issues like the country's unhealthy population growth rate, stunted children, malnutrition, etc, at the highest level. Addressing the Kissan Card distribution ceremony in Dera Ismael Khan the other day, Prime Minister Imran Khan once again warned of widespread hunger, even famine, if crop production in the country did not match its population growth; which it doesn't at the moment and will not unless pretty drastic measures are taken.

Now, just to keep our population fed and healthy, we have to import a lot more food than we would have had to if its growth rate weren't so high. And we also have to imprint a lot more fuel, medicines, and other things just to meet our needs. That runs into a lot of extra expenditure, of course, and bloats our current account deficit to unaffordable levels, especially in the current economic environment. In times of turmoil, like the ongoing bout with the pandemic when the economy is forced to shut down occasionally, the high population number puts a lot of additional burden on the exchequer when the government must sprinkle subsidies and stimulus packages over the lowest earning groups just to keep them fed and healthy.

It's already pretty shameful, and downright unforgivable, that we have come from an agri-surplus country to one which has to import a bulk of its food. And since the population has been growing at an out-of-control rate all this time, the problem becomes that much more magnified. The government's focus on this area, therefore, is appreciated. And it also explains why the ruling party has made agriculture such a priority for this fiscal year's budget. Improving productivity by embracing mechanisation, latest technology and modern seeds will make us produce more for our own consumption and give the trade balance some breathing space. At the same time, the government will also have to initiate a vigorous campaign that will make people realise the extremely urgent necessity of reducing our population growth rate. Dense population also means more poverty, so there's a lot to gain from such policies. But unless both these things are done in tandem, the results will disappoint.

UAE-Israel ties built on assumptions

James Dorsey

Mr. Netanyahu's successor, PM Naftali Bennett, has put those hopes to bed. He has unequivocally rejected the notion of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel, refused to negotiate peace with the Palestinians during his term, and suggested that the improvement of social and economic conditions would satisfy Palestinian aspirations

A YEAR of diplomatic relations between the United Arab Emirates and Israel has proven to be mutually beneficial. The question is whether the assumptions underlying the UAE's initiative that led three other Arab countries to also formalise their relations with the Jewish state will prove to be correct in the medium and long term. UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed laid out the strategic assumptions underlying his establishment of diplomatic relations, as well as its timing, in a conversation with Joel C. Rosenberg, an American-Israeli evangelical author and activist, 18 months before the announcement. Mr. Rosenberg's recounting of that conversation in a just-published book, *Enemies and Allies: An Unforgettable Journey inside the Fast-Moving & Immensely Turbulent Modern Middle East*, constitutes a rare first-hand public account of the Emirati leader's thinking. Mr. Rosenberg's reporting on his conversation with Prince Mohammed is largely paraphrased by the author rather than backed up with quotes. The UAE's interest in building good relations with American Evangelicals as part of its effort to garner soft power in the United States and project itself as an icon of religious

tolerance, and Mr. Rosenberg's willingness to serve that purpose, add credibility to the author's disclosures. Mr. Rosenberg's reporting, wittingly or unwittingly, has laid bare the potential longer-term fragility of the relationship that is evident in Prince Mohammed's timing for the UAE's recognition of Israel as well as the assumptions on which the Emirates has argued that relations would contribute to a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. What emerges is that the UAE and Israel have a geopolitical interest in cooperating to contain Iran and militias in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen that are associated with the Islamic republic. They also reap economic benefit from the formalisation of a relationship that has long existed de facto. When it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, however, the implication is that public support for the relationship could prove to be fickle even though comment on social media in a country that tightly polices freedom of expression was dominated by supporters of the Emirati government. Prominent Emirati political analyst Abdulkhaleq Abdulla described the public backing as "a show of support for the government rather than a show of support for 'normalization' (with Israel) as such." Mr. Abdulla was speaking in May as Israeli warplanes bombed the Gaza Strip in a conflict, sparked by protests in East Jerusalem, with Hamas, the Islamist group that governs the territory. He noted that "no matter what your national priorities are at the moment or regional priorities are at the moment, when stuff like this happens, the Palestinian issue comes back and hits you." It was this sensitivity that persuaded Prince Mohammed that the door would close on establishing diplomatic relations with Israel without a solution to the Palestinian problem if then Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu were to go ahead with his plans to annex parts of the West Bank occupied by Israel during the 1967 Middle East war. "The only way to stop Netanyahu from grabbing what the Emiratis saw as Palestinian land was to go full Godfather and make Bibi an offer he couldn't refuse," Mr. Rosenberg wrote referring to Mr. Netanyahu by his nickname. A proposal by the Trump administration that the UAE and other Arab states sign a non-aggression and non-belligerency pact with Israel without establishing diplomatic relations with the Jewish state gave Prince Mohammed the opening to push his plan. "MbZ was open to the idea, but he now realized it would not be enough to pull Netanyahu away from his desire to annex large swaths of the West Bank. The only way to get what he wanted, MBZ recognized, was to give Netanyahu what he wanted most - full peace, full recognition, full normalization. But MbZ would have to move fast" to pre-empt the Israeli prime minister Mr. Rosenberg summarised, referring to Prince Mohammed by his initials. Quoting then Emirati minister of state for foreign affairs, Anwar Gargash, rather than Prince Mohammed, Mr. Rosenberg regur-

gitates hopes publicly expressed by Emirati officials that the establishment of diplomatic relations would reinvigorate moribund Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. The establishment of diplomatic relations promised to be "a 360-degree success, one that goes beyond trade and investment," Mr. Rosenberg quoted Mr. Gargash as saying. Emirati economy minister Abdulla Bin Touq said the UAE hoped to boost trade with Israel to US\$1 trillion over the next decade. Emirati officials were further banking on the fact that strong cultural and people-to-people ties - absent in Israel's initial peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan in the 1980s and 1990s - would put flesh on a skeleton of Arab-Israeli relations and ensure that Israel refrains from acts like annexation that would upset the apple cart. Mr. Netanyahu's successor, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, has put those hopes to bed. He has unequivocally rejected the notion of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel, refused to negotiate peace with the Palestinians during his term, and suggested that the improvement of social and economic conditions would satisfy Palestinian aspirations. That could prove to be a risky bet given a shift to the right in Israeli public opinion, the growing influence of conservative religious segments of society, and the fact that some 600,000 Israelis who populate settlements built on the West Bank and in East Jerusalem make a two-state solution de facto impossible. That would leave a one-state solution as the only solution. For that to work, Palestinians would have to buy into Mr. Bennett's approach that is informed by the concept of "shrinking the conflict" that seeks to marginalise the Palestinian problem, put forward by Micah Goodman, an Israeli academic who chose to build a home in a West Bank settlement. "Twenty per cent of Israelis are on the extremes, for either withdrawing from the territories or annexing them," Mr. Goodman says. "The remaining 80 percent who don't want to rule over the territories or relinquish them don't have a way to talk about the conflict, so they just don't think about it. Which is the tragedy of the Israeli center." Shrinking the conflict, rather than solving it, is what Mr. Goodman calls "replacing indifference with pragmatism." He suggests that initiatives such as the creation of corridors between Palestinian enclaves on the West Bank and a border crossing to Jordan "up to the level that the Palestinians feel they are ruling themselves, without the capacity to threaten Israel" would tempt Palestinians to buy into his concept. Mr. Goodman's plan would ensure, in his words, that Palestinians "don't get anything like the right of return, a state or Jerusalem." Prince Mohammed appears, based on Mr. Rosenberg's account of his conversations with the UAE leader and other Emirati officials, to have adopted the approach. "MbZ believed that by breaking the mould and making peace with Israel without giving the Palestinian leadership veto over his freedom of move-

ment, he could open the door for other Arab countries to see the benefits and follow suit," Mr. Rosenberg wrote. Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco were quick to follow the UAE's example. Some 300 Iraqi tribal and religious leaders, activists and former military officers called last week for diplomatic relations with Israel in a gathering in the Iraqi Kurdish city of Erbil.

"Just as we demand that Iraq achieve federalism domestically, we demand that Iraq join the Abraham Accords internationally. We call for full diplomatic relations with Israel and a new policy of mutual development and prosperity," said Wisam Al-Hardan, a spokesman for the group and onetime tribal militia leader that aligned with the United States to fight al-Qaeda in 2005. Mr. Rosenberg noted that "as more Arab states normalized relations with Israel, MbZ and his team believed it could create the conditions under which the Palestinians could finally say yes to a comprehensive peace plan of their own with Israel."

That may prove to be over-optimistic. Addressing the United Nations General Assembly this week, President Mahmoud Abbas warned that the Palestine Authority would withdraw its recognition of Israel and press charges against Israel in the International Criminal Court if Israel did not withdraw in the next year from the West Bank and East Jerusalem and lift the 14-year-long blockade of the Gaza Strip.

The assumption underlying Prince Mohammed's hopes that Palestinians as well as Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon for that matter, would ultimately fall into line, creates a false equation between most Arab states and those bordering on Israel or under Israeli occupation. Most Arab states like the UAE have existential issues with Israel that need to be resolved, which makes public opinion the potentially largest constraint on recognition of the Jewish state. There is no doubt that for Palestinians the issue is nothing but existential. The same is true for Jordan that has historic connections to the West Bank and whose population is more than half of Palestinian descent. Similarly, Lebanon and Syria host large numbers of Palestinian refugees. Syria, moreover, has its own issues with Israel given the latter's occupation of the Golan Heights since 1967. Improving the social and economic conditions of the Palestinians are unlikely to satisfy their minimal needs or those of Israel's immediate neighbours. Not to mention what the accelerated prospect of a de facto one-state solution to the Palestinian problem would mean for an Israel confronted with the choice of being a democratic state in which Palestinians could emerge as a majority or a Jewish state that sheds its democratic character and claim to be inclusive towards its citizens.

— Dr. James M. Dorsey is an award-winning journalist and scholar and a Senior Fellow at the National University of Singapore's Middle East Institute.

Russian focus on the Central Asian region

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The Russian measures and security agreements with regional States demonstrate that Russia is also worried about post United States withdrawal Afghanistan situation. It shows that Russian anxiety and its lack of trust on the capability and potential of regional states

RUSSIA has significant influence in Central Asia region through its soft power. Russian mass media, TV, film, theaters are very popular in the region. Some Central States like Russian political model and legislation trends. The central Asian Countries have also passed bills against extremism, blasphemy and extremism that are identical to Russia. Present Russia is growing influence in Central Asian States because it wants to promote security, military and technical cooperation to modernize their armed forces.

Today, United States and NATO are moving back to their home from Afghanistan. The security situation of Afghanistan is alarming to the neighboring countries particular Pakistan and Central Asian states. The Central Asian state had begun to embrace Afghanistan as a regional economic partner and involved in infrastructure projects. In September 2020, Mullah Abdul Ghani made a statement that Taliban would never attack on their neighbors of Central Asia. Central Asian states have also been focusing on peace process and reconstruction in Afghanistan. Therefore, Russia has been concerned about Afghanistan's uneven and indefinite security situation which is possible threat to the regional stability. United States withdrawal from Afghanistan reinvigorated Russian consideration in Cen-

tral Asia. Russia has multifaceted defense relations with the regional states particular Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan under the framework of Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). These countries also have signed additional agreements to ensure stability in the region. Tajikistan has also signed an agreement to establish joint air defense system that may counter air attack from Afghanistan. Mr. Shoigu the defense minister of Russia had also discussed security matter with the counter part of Uzbekistan and sign an agreement to fight against terrorism. Both the countries also have prepared a Strategic Partnership Program for 2021-2025.

On April 2021, Russia organized joint military exercise with Tajikistan to build a scenario of joint reaction on the border with Afghanistan. Military exercises have also taken place on the border of Uzbekistan and Afghanistan by Russian and Uzbek armies in Late December 2020. The exercises were framed to counter the serious threat from the international terrorist activities in the region. Russia realized that the stability in Afghanistan is due to presence of international forces and drug trafficking. The terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS come to Afghanistan from the other countries because they think Afghanistan is a safe asylum for them. The Russian measures and security agree-

ments with regional States demonstrate that Russia is also worried about post United States withdrawal Afghanistan situation. It shows that Russian anxiety and its lack of trust on the capability and potential of regional states. The withdrawal of United States from Afghanistan may lead to possible terrorist attack on the regional states borders. In that circumstance Russia may assume her responsibility to protect their borders with Afghanistan. In this way, Russia wants to present itself as a regional and global leader. Putin administration focuses on regional security as well as on to improve socioeconomics. Russia also wants to form largest reprioritize its national and security interest in the region. Moscow thinks that post withdrawal of USA from Afghanistan, a vacuum of influence and porosity of border may empower criminal and fundamentalist structure, something that threaten the security of region and indirect Russian. Central Asian States are also following Kremlin to secure from any fundamentalist structure and terrorist activities.

Summing up, in the contemporary time, Moscow has well-maintained special political and security relations with Central Asian States, chasing both old and new cooperation. It can be confidently, said that Central Asia region is still very important for Russia and it may grow and expand over time.

Briefs

Vietnam logs
9,706 new
Covid cases

AGENCIES

HANOI: Vietnam reported 9,706 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, including 9,682 locally transmitted and 24 imported, according to the country's Ministry of Health.

The new infections brought the country's total tally to 746,678, with 18,400 deaths, the ministry said. Most of the community cases were detected in southern localities, including 4,046 in the epicenter Ho Chi Minh City, 3,629 in Binh Duong province, and 996 in Dong Nai province.

As many as 516,449 patients have recovered, up 10,590 from Friday, while nearly 37.6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered nationwide, according to the ministry.

As of Saturday, Vietnam has registered a total of 742,174 locally transmitted cases since the start of the current wave in late April, the ministry said.

Saira Peter's
performance
stuns
audience

KONYA: Pakistan first sufi opera singer Saira Peter has captivated the hearts of audience at International Mystic (Music) Festival in Konya, Turkey, where she performed to pay tribute to Maulana Rumi, the great Sufi poet.

The unique colours of Saira's own sufi compositions, particularly a qawwali of Maulana Rumi's poetry in Persian and Turkish, dazzled listeners, instantly increasing her fanbase, who quickly uploaded her performances onto Turkish social media, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

The British composer Paul Knight from London joined her on stage on piano, whilst her husband Stephen Smith provided harmonium accompaniment.

She sang sufi and spiritual songs in seven languages (Urdu, Farsi, Turkish, English, French, Latin, Italian), many composed by her, as well as a range of western and Pakistani classical styles, including her recently released aria 'Marvi's Marsiya' from upcoming sufi opera 'Marvi's Tears'.

She also sang sufi poet Shah Abul Latif Bhittai's kalam 'Morey Mann Main Aas' in Urdu, and 'Resplendent' in English, the latter a translation of Latif's Sindhi poem 'Tou Habib, Tou Tabib'.

After her 80 minute performance, which culminated with long applause and a standing ovation, a long queue of well-wishers gathered for selfies.

Saira Peter was honoured to receive a special shield from Madam Esin Bayru Celebi, a direct descendant of Maulana Rumi and a traditional 'ney' (Turkish reed flute) of Rumi from Yasar Sancan, Assistant Manager Konya Ministry of Tourism and Culture. It was fascinating to observe a new form of cultural exchange taking place between Pakistan and Turkey. - APP

SCO membership can help Iran evade sanctions

The expansion of regional cooperation and convergence especially with neighboring states is one of the most important priorities of the 13 administrations in Iran

DNA

RASHT: Iran's permanent membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) can open a new horizon for the Islamic country to nullify the US-imposed sanctions and improve its economic situation, a political expert believes.

Ruhollah Puresmaili told Iranian state media on Saturday that following the takeover of power by the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi and a switch in the Islamic Republic's foreign policy, new avenues for improving the political and economic condition of the country have been opened, which can develop the livelihood of the Iranian people.

The expansion of regional cooperation and convergence especially with neighboring states is one of the most important priorities of the 13 administrations in Iran, Puresmaili noted.

The member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization reiterated that they are not allowed to accept permanent membership of observer states, who are under international sanctions, but they have reached the conclusion that they can pro-

Iran ready for outcome-oriented talks

NEW YORK: Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said on Saturday that despite the US misdeeds as well as European inaction, Iran is committed to diplomacy and ready for outcome-oriented talks that will protect the interests and rights of the Iranians.

On the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, Amirabdollahian attended a meeting of a group of researchers, academics, and senior representatives of the US think tanks last night. While describing the foreign policy of the new Administration of the Islamic Republic of Iran during the meeting, he answered the ques-

tion, he argued. Pointing to Iran's significance for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, he said that the Islamic Republic is an integral part of the economic and energy corridor in the region and the whole world particularly in the eyes of the SCO member states.

tions on various topics, including the foreign and regional policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the future of its nuclear deal. Pointing to Iran's determination to adopt a foreign policy based on prioritizing its neighbors and Asian countries, Amirabdollahian described Iran's views on regional issues, including the situation in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, and other regions during the meeting.

He reiterated that although the new government in Iran has prioritized the development of relations with its neighbors and Asian countries, it will also maintain a balance in its foreign policy. - DNA

tion, he argued. Pointing to Iran's significance for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, he said that the Islamic Republic is an integral part of the economic and energy corridor in the region and the whole world particularly in the eyes of the SCO member states.

According to the international relations expert, China as the emerging economic power of the world requires Iran in order to reinvigorate the ancient Silk Road.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization consists of one-third of lands, 42 percent of the population, 25 percent of gross domestic products, 21 percent of oil reservoirs, and 46 percent of gas reserves in the globe, he said.

The change of Iran's status in the SCO can also pave the way for improving security cooperation among member states, he added, noting that it can help resolve regional crises especially recent developments in Afghanistan.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is an effective regional and intra-state organization, which was established by leaders of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan in 2001.

The Islamic Republic has been an observer member in the SCO since 2005. Iran accepted as a permanent member in the SCO by eight main members in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on September 17.

The SCO is able to facilitate peaceful relations among member states and protect their security and interests.

Turkish language attracts Arab students

ISTANBUL: Aiming to improve Turkish language skills among Arab students in Turkey, a group of Yemenis took the initiative to establish the Lisan Club, a voluntary initiative affiliated with the Academic Committee of the Yemeni Students Union in the country.

Ahmed al-Amri, the club's head, told Anadolu Agency that it was established in April in the Selcuklu district of Konya province, south of the capital Ankara.

The club has organized online lessons for a period of two months, as well as in-person classes, to improve the Turkish skills of Arab students amid restrictions imposed to stem the spread of the coronavirus pandemic. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed spends Sunday, fishing at Freedom House. - APP

PFC to participate actively in Dubai Expo: Mian Kashif

LAHORE: Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) is all set to ensure active participation in Dubai Expo commencing from October 1 to display world-class handcrafted vast range of Pakistani furniture.

Talking to a delegation of furniture exporters led by the Chaudhary Muhammad Ashfaq Kamboh here on Sunday, the PFC Chief Executive Officer Mian Kashif Ashfaq said that Dubai Expo would not only attract international buyers and investors but also help explore foreign markets for Pakistani furniture.

He said the UAE (United Arab Emirates) furniture market was expected to reach around AED 11,000m in terms of revenue by next year. Although PFC would face tough competition both

from unorganised sector and organised furniture markets, it tries to capture its share by showing top class collection of luxury brands of Pak handmade furniture suitable to every clients.

The PFC chief said the rise in number of online market players catering to the demand for wooden products and accessories was also expected to have an impact on furniture markets.

He said the Dubai Expo would also provide opportunities to young designers and architects to study the new trends in furniture industry.

The furniture council, he added, firmly believed in Pakistan's economic potential and investment opportunities, and would continue to work towards a sustained economic and social uplift of the country. - APP

Gen. Nadeem Raza highlights Pakistan's role in global peace

DNA

MOSCOW: General Nadeem Raza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee visited Russia to witness Exercise Peace Mission-2021 in the ambit of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Chairman JCSC also attended meeting of the Chiefs of General Staff of the Armed Forces of SCO member states where forum discussed international and regional geo-political environment with emphasis on Afghanistan situation.

Activities of transnational terrorist organizations in various regions of the world were also discussed. Chairman JCSC while addressing the forum stated that Pakistan will continue to work with SCO to advance the shared objectives of peace, progress and stability in the



region, and beyond. Chairman JCSC also highlighted the unparalleled contributions of Pakistan Armed Forces towards global peace and immense sacrifices in war against terrorism. General Nadeem Raza said that peace in Afghanistan is a collective responsibility and complete region will be its biggest beneficiary.

On the sidelines, Chairman JCSC also had bilateral engagements with General Valery V. Gerasimov, Chief of General Staff, Russian Federation and General Li Zuoqiang, Chief of Joint Staff, PLA China.

Chairman JCSC said that Pakistan attaches great importance to furthering bilateral defence cooperation with Russia and China and believes that these countries would develop meaningful and long-term strategic relationship through enhanced cooperation.

UK records another 31,348 corona cases

AGENCIES

LONDON: Another 31,348 people in Britain have tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the total number of coronavirus cases in the country to 7,631,233, according to official figures released Sunday.

The country also recorded another 122 coronavirus-related deaths. The total number of coronavirus-related deaths in Britain now stands at 136,105.

These figures only include the deaths of people who died within 28 days of their first positive test. The latest data came as England's Deputy Chief Medical Officer Jonathan Van-Tam said that COVID-19 still posed a risk to the country.

He urged the public to listen to health experts, saying: "If your gaming PC develops a fault, don't take it to a plumber and ask them to fix it."

On Friday, official figures showed that the country's coronavirus reproduction number, also known as the R number, fell slightly to between 0.8 and one. The R number indicates the average number of people each COVID-positive person goes on to infect.

India records 28,326 new Covid cases

NEW DELHI: India's COVID-19 tally rose to 33,652,745 on Sunday, as 28,326 new cases were registered during the past 24 hours across the country, showed the federal health ministry's latest data.

Besides, as many as 260 deaths due to the pandemic since Saturday morning took the total death toll to 446,918.

Most of the new cases and deaths were reported from the southern state of Kerala. There are still 303,476 active COVID-19 cases in the country as there was a rise of 2034 active cases during the past 24 hours. The number of active cases has been on the rise for the past two days, after falling for several days in the country. A total of 32,902,351 people have been successfully cured and discharged from hospitals so far, out of which 26,032 were discharged during the past 24 hours. - APP

Azerbaijan reports 1,099 new cases

BAKU: Azerbaijan on Sunday reported 1,099 new COVID-19 cases, taking its total to 479,814, according to the country's Task Force under the Cabinet of Ministers on COVID-19 prevention and control.

Data from the Task Force showed that 2,404 more patients have recovered in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of recoveries to 449,047.

Meanwhile, 18 people died in the last 24 hours, raising the death toll to 6,433.

As of Saturday, the country had administered a total of 8,293,590 doses of COVID-19 vaccines, according to the Task Force. - APP

Kremlin releases photos of Putin's Siberian fishing trip

DNA

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin spent several days hiking and fishing in Siberia in early September, the Kremlin said on Sunday as it published pictures of the president on the holiday.

A caption under one of the 20 pictures published on the Kremlin web site said the president stopped for a few days in Siberia after a working trip to Russia's Far East in early September. Several days later, in the middle of September Putin said he would have to spend "a few days" in self-isolation after dozens of people in his entourage fell ill with COVID-19. He had to cancel his trip to Tajikistan for a security summit.

Putin has cultivated a macho image, appealing to many Russians, and has



previously been pictured riding a horse barechested and in sun glasses, as well as carrying a hunting rifle and piloting a fighter jet. This time, his outings were more mundane. The Kremlin published photos of Putin standing in a river and catching a

fish, walking through lush meadows and talking to Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, his usual holiday companion. Putin, 68, has had two shots of Russia's Sputnik V vaccine. The Kremlin has said he was feeling healthy.

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11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165

