



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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The SCO Dushanbe Summit and aftermath; Opinion by V. Norov

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Iran urges US to unfreeze \$10 billion

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UK to accept Pak vaccination certificates

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Briefs

PM vows to investigate 'Pandora' names

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan pledges to take action against all the names mentioned in Pandora Papers. In a tweet, he said, "We welcome the Pandora Papers exposing the ill-gotten wealth of elites, accumulated through tax evasion & corruption & laundered out to financial 'havens'. The UN SG's Panel FACTI calculated a staggering \$7 trillion in stolen assets parked in largely offshore tax havens. My over-two decades struggle has been premised on the belief that countries are not poor but corruption causes poverty because money is diverted from being invested in our people."

No secret talks with banned TTP

DNA

NEWSHERA: Minister for Defence Pervez Khattak issued a clarification on Sunday saying no secret talks are being held with the banned Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in Afghanistan or Pakistan. Speaking to the journalists, the minister said that the Afghan government has assured that its territory will not be used against Pakistan. He said that Afghanistan would be recognized only after consultation with all the countries of the region, adding that the whole world must cooperate for the establishment of peace in Afghanistan.

Govt working on special agenda

DNA

PESHAWAR: Jamiat Ulama-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has said the incumbent government is taking steps to repeal the law on a special agenda. Talking in Peshawar, Maulana Fazl said the assembly was being pressured to pass un-Islamic laws. He said the friendly neighboring countries were not happy at present because of the failed foreign policy of the incumbent government.



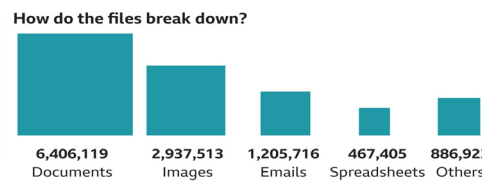
ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Tajikistan Ismatullo Nasredin hosted a reception on the occasion of Independence Day of his country. Seen in the picture are Ambassadors of Russia, Belarus, Austria, Korea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Over 700 Pakistanis' names exposed in Pandora's Papers

Finance Minister Shaukat Tareen name also included; various international figures also exposed; it took the ICIJ almost two years to organise this investigation that involved more than 600 journalists

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Over 700 Pakistanis including ministers, civil servants and ex military officials have been exposed in recently divulged Pandora's Papers details. According to details Finance Minister Shaukat Tareen, Provincial Minister Abdul Aleem Khan, PTI senior leader Faisal Vowda, PPP's Sharjeel Memon, Federal Minister Khusró Bakhtiar, Monis Elahi's names are included the Pandora's Papers. It may be mentioned here that to have an offshore company not a crime provided it is duly declared. The non-profit newsroom and journalist network based in Washington DC, International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), has received more than 11.9 million documents containing 2.94 terabytes of confidential information from service providers who helped set up and manage offshore companies and trusts



Year	Data	Files
2013	260 GB	2.5 million
Panama Papers 2016	2.6 TB	11.5 million
Paradise Papers 2017	1.4 TB	13.4 million
Pandora Papers 2021	2.94 TB	11.9 million

GB: Gigabyte, 1,000GB = 1TB, TB: Terabyte

in tax havens around the world. The ICIJ shared the data with 150 media organisations and has led the broadest collaboration in journalism history. It took the ICIJ almost two years to organise this investigation that involved more than 600 journalists in 117 countries, making it the biggest-ever journalism partnership. This leak has uncovered the finances of more leaders and public officials than the Panama Papers did and provided more than twice as much information about the ownership of offshore companies. The Panama Papers were based on the data of a Panama-based law firm called Mossack Fonseca that revealed offshore holdings of 140 politicians, public offshore and sports stars. Those documents were obtained by the German newspaper, Süddeutsche Zeitung, which contained records dating back 40 years.

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Pandora papers will discourage corruption: Fawad

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry expressed the hope that the Pandora Papers investigation will discourage corruption and open up more avenues for transparency. "The Panama Papers [investigation] brought to light various assets stashed abroad by a lot of corrupt people," tweeted Fawad Chaudhry. "Now, it is being said that another investigation led by the ICIJ is being released soon. Imran Khan has always pressed developed countries to discourage the practice of transferring looted money from poor countries to the developed ones," he said. "If Pandora Leaks confirms the transfer of looted money from third-world countries to others, then it will further validate Prime Minister Imran Khan's stance," he tweeted. "We hope this investigation will also open up new avenues of transparency and will prove to be another setback for corruption." - DNA

Tarin clarifies role in offshore companies

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance Shaukat Tarin on Sunday clarified his role in the opening of certain offshore companies. He said the offshore companies were opened when Tariq Fawad Malik, who worked for the UAE's Tariq bin Laden company, had obtained formal permission to invest in Silk Bank, of which he was a major stakeholder. Tarin clarified that no bank account of the companies was opened and no transaction took place. Later, when minds were changed regarding investment, the companies were closed, between 2014 and 2015, he said. He added that Tariq bin Laden is a major Saudi investor, while Tariq Fawad Malik worked for Tariq bin Laden's company in the UAE. In this regard, Malik - a key figure in the Broadsheet case - said that in 2014, he was associated with a Middle Eastern company that wanted to invest in Tarin's bank. He said that his company, wishing to invest in the bank, also held negotiations with the State Bank of Pakistan. - DNA

Taliban holds mass victory rally

"My advice to the world is that they leave Afghanistan to Afghanistan," said Khalil Haqqani, the new minister

NEWS DESK

KOHDAMAN: Taliban supporters and senior figures held their first mass rally outside Kabul on Sunday, in a show of strength as they consolidate their rule of Afghanistan. No foreign government has yet recognised the former rebels' rule, but their hold on power within the country is all but unchallenged seven weeks after they took the capital. Earlier protests against the Taliban's "interim government" - many led by women - have dwindled since a ban on unauthorised demonstrations, but Sunday's official victory gathering in Kohdaman township in the hilly outskirts of the capital was attended by 1,500 men and boys. "This is the day we waited for," said Khalil Haqqani, the new minister for refugees who in 2011 was named as a designated terrorist by the United States with a \$5 million bounty on

his head. He is a prominent leader of the Haqqani militant network founded by his brother Jalaluddin. "We have achieved our goal, but it requires protection," he said, with his rifle leaning against the lectern, boasting that the country has a "bright future" despite being shunned by international donors. "My advice to the world is that they leave Afghanistan to Afghanistan."

Flanked by Taliban fighters in combat gear carrying assault rifles, leading Taliban officials and commanders addressed an audience sat in rows of chairs under awnings, celebrating victory over the United States. One speaker urged the crowd to "respect elders" because they were the "mujahids who fought against the Soviets" in the 1980s.

Multiple killed in Kabul blast

KABUL: Taliban supporters and senior figures held their first mass rally near Kabul on Sunday, but their show of strength was overshadowed by a bomb blast near a mosque in the Afghan capital. An explosion killed at least two civilians and wounded several more outside Kabul's Eid Gah mosque. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid had said on Saturday that a prayer ceremony would be held at the mosque for his mother following her recent death. He made no reference to this on Sunday as he tweeted that the blast had killed civilians in the area.

Pak attaches great importance to ties with Korea: Shafqat

Shafqat Mahmood says Korea excellent place to visit; Mushahid Hussain calls for enhanced parliamentary ties; Ambassador Suh Sangpyo bilateral relations have developed rapidly

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education Shafqat Mahmood has said Pakistan and Korea enjoy excellent relations adding there existed huge scope of further expansion of bilateral relations. Shafqat Mahmood expressed words on the occasion of National Foundation Day and the Armed Forces Day of Republic of Korea. Guests hailing from all walks of life attended the reception. It was second formal diplomatic reception after relaxation in the Covid restrictions. Shafqat Mahmood further said he had visited Korea on a couple of occasions and found the country a must-visit place. He said the way Koreans have progressed in various fields especially in the field of technology, is simply remarkable. Senator Mushahid Hussain Chairman Senate Defence Committee also spoke on the occasion and extended warm wishes to the Korean government and people on the occasion. He said Pakistan wanted to have enhanced and deeper cooperation with Korea. Ambassador of Republic of Korea Suh Sangpyo in his address said, the first state of Korea, Gojoseon, was founded in 2333 BC, on 3rd October, and Korea celebrates the day as a Nation Foundation Day.

Continued on Page 06

UK to recognize Pak vaccination certificates: envoy

British envoy praised the National Command and Control Centre for doing a good job

DNA

KARACHI: The United Kingdom will soon recognize the vaccine certificates of NADRA from Pakistan, UK High Commissioner in Islamabad Christian Turner has said. Pakistan's vaccination certificates of the vaccines approved by the UK, will be acceptable to the country, British High Commissioner said on Sunday. The United Kingdom's Covid



rules will change from Monday (today), removing the 'Amber List' and allowing anyone vaccinated anywhere by one of the four vaccines approved by the UK, to travel to

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Disappointment in Qatar as no women candidates elected - Page 07

Palestine urges world bodies for protection to Palestinians - Page 08

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KARACHI: View of Royal Forces ship HMS Al Riyadh arriving at Karachi Harbour to participate in PN and RSNF bilateral exercise Naseem Al Bahr XIII. – DNA

GDA Chief expects to achieve annual Rs 2.5 bn revenue

ISLAMABAD: Director General, Galiyat Development Authority (GDA) Raza Ali Habib on Sunday hoped to increase the annual revenue target of GDA up to Rs 2.5 billion in the next two financial years by 2023 for achieving the self-reliance to support the local development. The government wants to make GDA a financially independent body that does not seek help from anyone for its expenses, the Director General, GDA told APP here. Raza said that "We spend Rs. 350 million on current institutional expenditure of GDA, including salaries of employees and other expenses." Thus, in the fiscal year

2020, GDA will go to a surplus of 550 million and similarly, "We are taking new steps for further financial autonomy and growth of GDA." The Director General said that in the year 2019, the annual revenue of GDA was Rs.360 million which increased to Rs. 900 million in the last financial year 2020 and also was about 150 percent revenue growth. Responding to a question, he said the two plans was finalized to increase the GDA's annual budget up to 2.5 billion by 2023 over the next two years, including the establishment of a five-star hotel in Nathiagali and the installation of a new state-of-the-art 'Australian

Chair Lift in Ayubia'. He said that Khyber Pakhtunkwa (KPK) province would become the first five star hotel in Nathiagali at a cost of Rs. 3 billion with 50 per cent jobs to be provided to the local people. Senior official further said that in this regard training would be provided to the local youth for hotel and hospitality industry one year in advance. He said that the initial talks for the said five Star Hotel were held in 2012 and eight years later it was implemented in 2021. In this regard, GDA sought bids from about 30 companies and each company paid a bid of Rs. 34.5 million and finally three companies were scrutinized, he said.

'Peace only after Kashmir issue resolution'

HYDERABAD: The Divisional President Kashmir Youth Alliance Muhammad Akhter has said that, Indian illegal intervention and stubborn policy is the main cause of unresolved Kashmir dispute. While, Pakistan wants to give Kashmiris their right to self-determination to decide their political future by themselves; and India, as habitual, simply putting blind eye over Kashmir issue. He emphasised that, International institutions should have to come forward and they have a duty to resolve this conflict and put serious action against Indian immoral, inhuman and unjust activities in Indian illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK). – DNA

'98 corona patients under treatment at LRH'

PESHAWAR: The city's big hospital, Lady Reading Hospital (LRH) has recorded 98 corona patients were under treatment of which 13 were at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The spokesman of hospital Muhammad Asim said 400 beds have been reserved for coronavirus patients at LRH. He said that eight new corona patients have been admitted in the hospital during last 24 hours. He said the hospital administration has made convincing arrangements to cope with any situation, adding thousands of people were administering corona vaccination on daily basis. – APP

CS for gearing up crackdown against hoarders

Those fleeing people by creating an artificial shortage of commodities would be dealt with iron hands

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Secretary Kamran Ali Afzal on Saturday directed the divisional commissioners to expedite action against profiteers and hoarders across the province. He said that mere fines over hoarding were not enough and the stern action would be a lesson for those involved in the illegal practice. He gave this direction while presiding over a meeting to review the price control measures here at Civil Secretariat.

The Chief Secretary said that those fleeing people by creating an artificial shortage of commodities would be dealt with iron hands. He directed the officers to sell the items recovered from hoarders in the market. He also issued instructions to address the causes of high prices of vegetables in Sialkot and Okara and to ensure the availability of flour at the officially fixed price in Faisalabad. He said the biggest problem of common man was price-hike, adding that the government officers would



have to perform their duties more efficiently to overcome the issue. He asked the officers that people should be sure that the government was taking steps for their welfare. He opined that prices could be brought down by improving the system of

agricultural markets. The Chief Secretary was briefed by all divisional commissioners regarding the price control measures. The CS while praising the performance of officers also directed them to maintain the continuity of administrative measures. The administrative secretaries of relevant departments including food, industries, and agriculture, commissioner and deputy commissioner Lahore attended the meeting while all divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners participated through video link.

IoBM incubation center hosts start-up meet

DNA

KARACHI: An informal meet-up between start-ups and mentors was held at IoBM on Saturday, October 02, 2021. The mentors were Syed Azfar Hussain, Dr. Owais Sheikh, and Mr. Aaqib Sayed. They shared insights on how the start-ups should pursue their activities related to marketing, finance, HR, logistics, IT, among others. They also discussed what strategies to use to market a product or a service. Present on this occasion were IoBM's Dr. Samra Javed, HoD ORIC; Dr. Imran Batada, CTO and Director, Center of Information and Technology; members of MARCOM and the team of Shahjehan S. Karim



Business Incubation Center (SSK-BIC).

The start-up ventures present were Creative 3D (Atif Baig, Bilal Afridi); Bridge-

Care (Momina Butt, Sami Butt); Asmeron (Ammar Baig); Healthitol (Yusra Kokab, Ayesha Kokab); Boltay Huroof (Umer Farooq).

These start-ups were the winners of the Dr. Ahmer S. Karim (ASK) Grant Challenge held at the SSK-BIC, IoBM in June 2021.

Vaccination against measles Rubella next month

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: The measles rubella catch-up campaign will be started in the district from November 15 to 27, during which 3.3 million children between the ages of 9 months to 15 years will be vaccinated against measles Rubella. This was informed during the review meeting under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Ali Shehzad. The representatives of UNICEF,

WHO and district managers were present. District Health Officer Dr. Bilal Ahmed informed that in this campaign all children from 9 months to 15 years of age will be vaccinated against measles and rubella. The rubella vaccine is being introduced for the first time and after this campaign it will become part of the EPI routine vaccine and then vaccinations against 12 diseases will be given to children. He said that just as measles and pox are dangerous, the rubella virus

is also serious. Earlier it was not vaccinated but now its vaccine has been added. He further informed that 2500 vaccinators would be the part of campaign and children would be vaccinated at fix center, hospital, dispensaries too. Deputy, Commissioner asked the health authorities to make a very important campaign successful and all out resources should utilize. He said that district administration would also provided administrative support in this regard.

Plane struck by bird before landing

ISLAMABAD: A passenger plane was struck by a bird before landing at New Islamabad International Airport on Sunday. A private airline's flight ER-500 flying from Karachi to Islamabad was preparing to land at the Islamabad airport when it was struck by a bird. However, the pilot of the aircraft managed to land it safely. Officials at the airport relayed the aircraft's landing gear was damaged due to the bird strike. It has been grounded for necessary repair work, the airline's management said. The plane was fly back to Karachi on Monday. The management said another aircraft is being arranged to take passengers to the port city. On August 2, a Karachi-bound plane had conceded a bird strike soon after taking off and thus made an emergency landing without suffering any loss to passengers. The plane suffered mechanical and bodily damage, sources familiar with the incident had said. – DNA

Govt mulls customized brand for tourism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Digital marketing holds promise for tourism promotion and that's what exactly the present government is doing by rolling out an inclusive project -Brand Pakistan- in coming days to transform the country's image by projecting its breath-taking tourist resorts at international level through online means. "The competent authority has already given approval for Brand Pakistan and now our focus is on its launch which is expected in coming month," a senior officer of PTDC said on Monday. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government, soon after coming into the power, tasked the PTDC with transforming the local tourism industry by developing a brand for local tourism industry at global level. He said the initiative, which includes Brand Pakistan, exclusive tourism portal, a ten-year road-map for tourism promotion, a five-year action plan and national minimum standards for hospitality sector, was meant to boost tourism activities in the country.

DC holds Awami Khidmat Service Katcheri

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shehzad held Revenue Awami Khidmat Service Katcheri on the second day and listened to the complaints and directed to grievances of the citizens regarding revenue department. Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Fazal Rabi Cheema, Assistant Commissioners Umar Maqbool and Sahibzada Muhammad Yousaf, officers of Revenue Department, Assistant Director Land Record City and Sadar, Tehsildar, Niab Tehsildar and Patwari were also

present. Deputy Commissioner closed off more than 20 applications by providing relevant record to the concerned applicants and said that revenue department relating applications of citizens are being resolving on priority basis which have increased their confidence. He said that courts are now being held for two consecutive days of every month. He asked the applicants about the conduction of revenue awami khidmat services and solution percentage of their issues and assured them that they would be provided relief as earliest.



FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad listening the public complaints during Revenue Awami Khidmat Services Katcheri. – DNA

Experts discuss the future of work in a virtual conference

DNA

KARACHI: The Future of Work Conference by EPIC-TDS was virtually organized on Sunday, October 3, 2021. The speakers were Dr. Qazi Tauseef Uddin Ahmed, corporate trainer; Nazia Kamran Kashif, online community leader; Sidrah Rashid, HR talent executive, and Samin Alam, content management expert. The moderators were Ahsan Umar, Pakistan's first social media reporter, and Muhammad Omar Iftikhar, Founder, EPIC-TDS. The host was Faiza

Zameer, a content consultant. The theme of the conference was Technology, People, and Outcomes. The speakers shared insights on how the hybrid work model has affected various sectors. Dr. Tauseef talked about the ethics of communication and relationships in a hybrid world. Nazia Kamran shared how to build a start-up with minimum investment. Sidrah Rashid mentioned insights on employee engagement and productivity in a hybrid work model. Samin Alam emphasized the prospects and challenges of getting published in Pakistan.

The views shared by the speakers may indeed help policymakers prepare strategic plans in the public and private sectors. This conference was organized by EPIC-TDS, which envisions sharing insights and experiences to build a knowledge base. EPIC-TDS is the abbreviation of Exchanging Perspectives, Inspiring Communities (EPIC) through Talks, Dialogue, Speeches (TDS). This webinar was the first in a series of such virtual events to follow. It plans to host physical events when the situation becomes appropriate.

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Islamabad Metropolitan

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Rawal Town.....5773343

Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....0331-5022125

RCCI voices concern over hike in POL prices and inflation

Due to increase in prices of Petroleum the prices of food and basic necessities have increased manifold over the past few months

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), has expressed deep concern over the rise in petroleum products and demanded immediate review of prices. Petrol is priced at Rs 127 and diesel at Rs 122 and kerosene at around Rs 100 Per liter. Nadeem Rauf, the newly elected president said in a statement that constantly rising inflation posed a serious threat to the economy as

the consumer prices, influenced by faster rupee depreciation and rise in energy prices, have increased to their highest level. Due to increase in prices of Petroleum the prices of food and basic necessities have increased manifold over the past few months. Rise in prices of milk, vegetables, fruits, pulses, edible oils, ghee and flour, sugar have affected the purchasing power of the common man, he further added. Pakistan's manufacturing sector is already facing a big challenge on cost competitiveness and giv-



en the rise in petroleum prices, it will badly impact the export targets, he said. He said that high speed diesel was widely used in agriculture and transport sectors and therefore an increase in its price would have a direct impact on the life of a common man due to inflationary impact. He said the petroleum price hike would increase the monthly budget of the common man. He said it would also have a negative effect on the industry and would send prices of different products

skyrocketing. RCCI President apprehended that the new wave of inflation would grip the entire nation with seizing purchasing power, which was widely feared to scale down business activities in the country. The move is going to crumble the local economy, adding that the small businesses would also fall flat to the inflation that would be unaffordable to any of the traders, said Nadeem Rauf. He demanded an immediate hold in Petro prices in the larger interest of trade, industry and economy.

PNCA organizes lecture on production

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) Sunday organized a special online lecture on one-year certificate programme in film production. Actor, musician, director and film producer Adnan Sarwar delivered a lecture in an online session on PNCA official page and shared his experience with the participants of the course about the understanding of film making. A group of eighteen students were participating in the lecture. Adnan Sarwar is a famous actor, director, musician screenwriter and film producer.

TAJIKISTAN DAY



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Tajikistan Ismatullo Nasredin hosted a reception on the occasion of Independence Day of his country. Seen in the picture are Ambassadors of Russia, Belarus, Austria, Korea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. – DNA

Govt determined to provide relief to people

ATTOCK: Minister for Revenue Col (R) Malik Muhammad Anwar Khan said on Wednesday that PTI government is determined to provide every possible relief to the people in accordance with the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar steps are taken in this regard. The minister Malik Anwar Khan said punjab government priorities health, education, energy sectors, clean drinking water, infrastructure and economic development. The Revenue Minister assured that PTI government will fulfill all its promises made with the people of the province. He said that our mission under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief minister Usman Buzdar is to serve the people of punjab with dedication. The minister told that the objective of the PTI government is to create employment opportunities for the unemployed youth besides providing health and education facilities. Minister for Revenue Malik Anwar Khan said that the prime minister imran Khan had promised to make Pakistan a country where equal justice would be available to both rich and poor. – DNA

Rubab teaching classes underway at Hunerkada

ISLAMABAD: A famous instrument among young generation Rubab' classes is in full swing at Hunerkada College of Visual and Performing Arts. The classes aim to refine the skills of young talent on playing the centuries old stringed musical instrument. Talking

to APP, Head of Hunerkada Amna Shah said, "We have offered various classes in a new session in which famous instrument 'RUBAB' was being conducting in two days a week (Friday-Saturday). She said the training session was being delivering by renowned instructors and musicians to the young artists that would help them comprehend the skill with mastery to showcase their hidden talent. Hunerkada is a place for learning classical music and various instruments like rubab, piano, guitar and many other instruments. – APP

Cantt Board chief wants encroachments removed

DNA

RAWALPINDI: President Cantonment Board, Rawalpindi Brig. Ijaz Qamar Kiani directed the authorities concerned to remove encroachments and hand-carts to provide relief to the citizens. According to a Rawalpindi Cantt Board (RCB) spokesman, President Cantonment Board issued orders for immediate operation against encroachments. He instructed the officers to form joint enforcement teams of Rawalpindi and Chaklala Cantonment Boards to monitor the situation 24 hours and after removal of encroachments ensure that no new encroachments could take place again particularly in the common boundaries of Rawalpindi and Chaklala Cantonment Boards.

During his surprise visit to Chungi No. 22 here, the President Cantonment Board also inspected the ongoing development works in the area. He directed the authorities concerned to further improve the quality and speed of work as well as general cleanliness of the area. To a question he informed that RCB, on the special directives of Executive Officer Cantonment Board Rawalpindi, Muhammad Umar Farooq Ali Malik, had accelerated its ongoing anti-encroachment drive and confiscated 132 truckloads of goods from different markets during first three months of current fiscal year. Encroachment material was confiscated from Tench Bhatta, Kamalabad, Saddar, Chor, Peoples Colony, Dhoke Saydian, Misrial Road, Bakra Mandi and other areas, adding that opera-

tion was being conducted on daily basis while permanent and temporary encroachments were being removed. He advised the citizens not to violate the rules otherwise, stern action would be taken against the violators and no relaxation would be given to anyone. He said Station Commander, Brig. Ijaz Qamar Kiani had directed the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) to remove encroachments along main roads. On other hand, the roads and streets in the jurisdiction of Chaklala Contentment Board (CCB) including Firdousi road, Scheme III, Bostan Road Mor, Lalazar, Lalkurti, Chungi no. 22, Tali Mohri, Khawaja Corporation, Adayal road and several other areas were still occupied by the encroachers.

Leadership workshop for New VCs concludes

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A two days leadership workshop for newly appointed Vice Chancellors successfully concluded at Kohsar University Murree. The workshop was organized by Inter University Consortium for Promotion of Social Sciences (IUCPSS), a largest network of Pakistani universities, in partnership with American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) and Kohsar University Mur-

ree. The workshop was attended by 16 newly appointed Vice Chancellors across Pakistan. Prof. Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman Chairman Prime Minister's National Task Force on Science and Technology inaugurated the workshop and delivered keynote talk on the topic "Future Directions of Higher Education". He was of the view that in order to emerge as strong nation, Pakistan needs to make education, science, technology. Innovation and entrepreneurship the key drivers for socio-economic

development. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary Coordinator General, COMSTECH Islamabad delivered talk as guest speaker on the topic of international academic linkages among OIC countries. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mujahid Rector, Pak Austria Fachhochschule Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology, Haripur spoke on the topic of innovation, National and International Linkages: A case study of Pak-Austria Fachhochschule Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology.



وزیر اعظم پاکستان کا خواب - ریاست مدینہ کی طرز پر فلاحی نظام

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• چھوٹے کاروباروں کو مدد کرنے کے لئے 5 لاکھ روپے تک باسٹرنے

کامیاب کسان

• 125 لاکھ کاشتکاروں کے لئے باسٹرنے

• فصل کی کاشت کے لئے 5 لاکھ روپے تک باسٹرنے کے لئے 27 لاکھ روپے تک قرضے

کامیاب ہنرمند

• نیشنل فنڈنگ اسکیموں میں نوجوانوں کے لئے کل میٹرنگ سٹراٹجی اور تربیت

نیپ پاکستان سستا گھر سکیم

• نیا پاکستان سکیم کے تحت اپنے گھر کے لئے 27 لاکھ تک سٹرنے

صحت مند پاکستان

• صحت کارڈ کے ساتھ لڑکوں کے لئے سٹرنے

• پاکستان، ہل سیل اینڈ گھاس ڈال کے تحت قرض لینے والوں کی میٹنگ سٹریٹجی

رہنمائی کے لئے پہنچائی گئی اور پھر ریاست مدینہ کی طرح

5771: وزارت خزانہ، حکومت پاکستان

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Briefs

PIDE initiates publishing 'sludge series'

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) has initiated the publication of 'the sludge series' under which reports on the sludge involved in different activities would be published.

According to press statement issued by PIDE here Sunday, sludge generally refers to frictions involved in completing different activities that are being carried out for the benefit to economy and society.

The PIDE sludge series specifically focuses on friction and delays due to over-regulations and bureaucratic red tape, it said adding these deter investment in the country, hence cause a heavy cost on the economy.

The institute plans to publish reports on over 50 activities in the sludge series out of which eleven have been published so far.

Giving examples of sludge, it said these include complicated and lengthy application forms, time consumed in seeking NOCs, waiting in queues to get a task done, doing manually what is possible digitally at little cost to stakeholders, securing attestations from officers, verifications, and fulfilling legal requirements like; agreements on notarized stamp papers.

According to PIDE, the objectives of publishing the sludge series were to highlight the sludge involved in different activities, to induce the concerned agencies to work for reducing sludge, and to pin down areas where sludge can be reduced. — APP

Sehat Card makes free treatment possible

ISLAMABAD: The Sehat Insaf Card, one of the flagship projects of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has proved no less than a blessing for millions of poor patients during testing times of their lives.

It is always difficult for people, especially those living below the poverty line to financially support critical patients with severe diseases. It is always impossible even for the average-income families to bear the charges of laboratory tests, x-rays, CT scans, medicines and hospital charges. Other than financial burden, the family also carries the load of psychological tension and physical labor to run after the tests and arrange medicines.

Looking into the sufferings of people, the incumbent government has decided to minimize the burden on public in health sector. Therefore, it has conceived a well-planned program of Sehat Insaf Card to address the financial problems of the patients.

Initially, the initiative of Sehat Sahulat program was launched in KP in September 2016 to provide free healthcare to families living below the poverty line. But later the service was extended to all segments of the society in the province. The project has won the hearts and minds of the people. — APP

Police arrest 1634 for possessing weapons

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Police in their crackdown against illegal weapons conducted raids in different areas and rounded up 1634 persons besides recovering 80 Kalashnikov, 66 rifles, 48 short guns, 1429 pistols and other weapons with huge quantity of ammunition from their possession during this year, said a police spokesman.

He informed that Rawalpindi District Police on the directives of City Police Officer, Rawalpindi Muhammad Ahsan Younas accelerated their campaign against illegal weapons and registered 1662 cases against the lawbreakers during the period.

He said CPO had directed the police officers to conduct raids in their respective areas and utilize all available resources to send behind the bars the lawbreakers possess illegal weapons.

ICCI for resolving issues of marble sector to boost exports

ICCI President said that the ocean freight cost for marble exporters has increased manifold and the government should provide volume-based freight subsidy or rebate to marble exporters to ease their problems

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that Pakistan has great potential to earn billions of dollars by promoting the marble sector exports and emphasized that the government should take necessary steps to address the key issues of this sector to harness its actual potential for improving the economy.

He expressed these views after administering oath to the newly elected Office Bearers of All Pakistan Marble Industries Association (APMIA) as Chief Guest. Shabbir Ahmed was sworn in as Chairman, Sattar Hussain Shah Senior Vice Chairman, Farooq Hameed Bhatti Vice Chairman (North) and Jamshed Khan Amzai Vice Chairman (South) of All Pakistan Marble Industries Association for the year 2021-22. All the candidates were elected unopposed.

Mohammad Shakeel Munir said that Pakistan has vast reserves of marble and granite, but due to the lack of modern technology and machinery, the country could harness its true potential



for economic development. He said that extraction of marble and granite by non-mechanized methods was wasting almost 70% of the precious stone and stressed that the government should allow duty free import

of marble sector technology & machinery to help this sector to produce value added marble products and boost exports. He said that the high electricity tariff for the marble sector is affecting its growth and urged that

the government should either provide subsidies on electricity or provide tax exemptions on electricity bills of the marble industry.

ICCI President said that the ocean freight cost for marble ex-

porters has increased manifold and the government should provide volume-based freight subsidy or rebate to marble exporters to ease their problems. He said that the government should also provide financial support to marble exporters for participation in international trade fairs which would significantly improve our exports. He said that marble products should be included in the preferential trade agreements.

He said that every investor should be given the legal right of quarry as at present the quarries are leased to those who do not work themselves, rather they give quarries on contract to investors. Giving legal rights to investors would yield more beneficial results for this sector.

Muhammad Shakeel Munir congratulated the newly elected Office Bearers of All Pakistan Marble Industries Association and hoped that they would play an effective role in the development of the marble sector. He assured that the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry would extend all possible cooperation to the Association in its efforts to resolve the key issues of the marble sector business community.

Thai ambassador meets President Islamic University

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand to Pakistan H.E. Chakkrid Krachaiwong called on Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotabi, President, International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIU) at his office at Faisal Masjid campus

During the meeting issues pertaining to mutual interests including promotions of education and enhancement of educational ties between higher education institutions were discussed. The Thai Ambassador lauded IIU for its services to promote higher education and also appreciated the university's vision of disseminating peace



and tolerance. He assured that he will be happy to strengthen bilateral edu-

cational ties between IIU and Thai universities.

The IIU President apprised the Ambassador of the university's scope, vision, new strategic plan, international students, recent activities and history. He said IIU is eager to welcome and facilitate more Thai students at IIU. He opined that IIU has a diversified cultural environment where a large number of countries are represented by foreign students.

Dr. Hathal also briefed the Ambassador about the role of International Islamic University, Islamabad in maintaining peace and quality higher education. He said that the university is pursuing the goals of internationalization and academic excellence.

HEC to enhance sports facilities in varsities under KJP

ISLAMABAD: The first Steering Committee of the project entitled, "Kamyab Jawan Sports Academies (High-Performance Sports Academies and Resource Centres) National Youth Games" was held at the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Secretariat. It was chaired by the Executive Director HEC Dr. Shaista Sohail.

During the meeting, the Executive Director HEC briefed the participants on the projects planned under the umbrella of Kamyab

Jawan programme. She underlined that the project is aimed to develop facilities and infrastructure of Sports Academies, including a separate lecture/meeting hall and hostel/dormitory facility for at least 50 to 60 players and six members of the coaching/support staff. These facilities, she added, will into full-time modern training and resource centres. She emphasised that the long-term objective is to develop HEC's team to compete at national and international competitions. — APP

Chambers of Commerce promoting trade

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General, United Business Group Pakistan, said that the Chamber of Commerce in every district was playing a key role in promoting trade and industry across the country and the establishment of the Sargodha Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry will further help in promoting the business friendly environment in Sargodha. He expressed these views during a visit to Sargodha Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry yesterday at a meeting at the chamber.

Sh Asif Iqbal, President,

Sargodha Chamber of small trade and small industry, said that our chamber has recently been set up and we need guidance and cooperation from other chambers for this. He further added that Sargodha has allot of potential for agriculture and fruit production it can become a source of foreign exchange by increasing agricultural and fruit exports. Ahmed Hassan Mughal Former President ICCI assured the all possible cooperation by his chamber being located at capital.

Khalid Ch Former senior vice president ICCI, former vice president Nisar Mirza, Malik Mohsin Khalid and Zia Chaudhry were also present at the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Sheikh Asif Iqbal, President, Sargodha Chamber of Small Trade and Small Industry, with Zafar Bakhtawari, Secretary General, United Business Group Pakistan, Ahmed Hassan Mughal, former President, ICCI, and Khalid Chaudhry, Senior Vice President at a Group photo during the visit of Sargodha Chamber of small trade and small industry. — DNA

COVID-19 recovery and South-South co-op discussed

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: In a world consumed by how it would recover from COVID-19 pandemic and what it would look like post-COVID-19, relevant actors of major parts of the world sat together over a virtual platform to discuss just that in the backdrop of South-South Cooperation. The event was held by the torch bearer of ST&I-led South-South Cooperation in the region, the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS), commemorating this year's United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation.

The Webinar entitled "South-South Cooperation: Creating headways for Post-Pandemic Inclusive Recovery" provided a forum to the representatives of international and development organizations to share their institutional experiences, lessons learnt and best practices in implementing S&T programs through South-South cooperation; discuss challenges and strategic approaches in promoting South-South cooperation; as well as recommend means for mainstreaming coop-

eration mechanism towards achieving SDGs in post-pandemic era. The event had participation of around 80 persons from Bangladesh, Benin, Canada, China, Colombia, Egypt, France, Gambia, Iran, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, USA, Venezuela, Yemen,

Zimbabwe. The Executive Director COMSATS, Dr. Akhtar Nazir (Federal Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of Pakistan) highlighted the importance and relevance of this event in his welcome remarks. "Overcoming emerging challenges would, inter alia, require enhanced global cooperation in the fields of science and tech-

nology. In this context, South-South and Triangular Cooperation in education, research, innovation, capacity building, policy making and infrastructure development is more important than ever before", remarked Dr. Nazir. The notable speakers included Dr. Adel Abdel Latif, Director United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UN-OSSC), New York; Dr. Car-

los M. Correa, Executive Director, South Centre, Geneva; Prof. Ai Likun, Assistant Executive Director, Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO), Beijing; Dr. Peter McGrath, Inter-Academy Partnership (IAP), Trieste; Prof. Mahouton N. Hounkonnou, President of Network of African Science Academies (NASAC), Nairobi; Dr. M. Sharif, Advisor

Science and Technology, Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), Rabat; and Mr. Adnan H. Aliani, Director for Strategy and Programme Management Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP), Bangkok.

The talks by these speakers and following Q&A sessions covered various aspects of the theme of the event, including challenges and achievements of these institutions and associated countries since the onset of COVID-19; policy directions relating to COVID-19 recovery; dynamics of South-South Cooperation and necessary synergies; importance of STEM education in the developing world for inclusive recovery; the role of Academies of Science in leveraging South-South Cooperation; development and implementation of effective S&T programmes for post COVID-19 world. Attended by scholarly minds from over 20 countries, the event resulted in building understanding and stronger resolve for exploring ways to enhance South-South Cooperation for achieving SDGs and building back better from COVID-19 Pandemic.



DNA

AIUO holds meeting of BASR

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIUO) held 59th session of its Board of Advance Studies and Research (BASR) yesterday and approved 15 and 22 research proposals of PhD and MPhil students respectively of various academic departments.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Prof Dr Zia Ul-Qayyum, Vice Chancellor, AIUO here at the main campus.

Prof Dr Syed Amir Shah, Director, BASR, presented the agenda and the members carefully analyzed quality standards of university's M Phil and PhD programs offered by various academic departments.

They showed satisfaction with the quality of education imparted and emphasized the need of further improvement. Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Prof. Dr. Syed Hassan Raza, Dean, Faculty of Science, Prof Dr Irshad Ahmad, Dean, Faculty of Education, Prof Dr Nasir Mehmood, and prominent educationists Prof Dr Qaisar Mushtaq and Prof Dr Yousaf Khushk also attended the session. — APP

ICT admin vaccination drive in full swing

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory's (ICT) health department has stepped up efforts to inoculate residents against coronavirus pandemic.

The health teams were encouraging the federal capital dwellers to get vaccinated at earliest, said an official of the department.

Talking to APP, he said several teams were formed to inspect schools, shopping malls, restaurants, markets, parks and guest houses to ensure compliance of COVID-19 vaccination.

Staff and teachers of approximately all the schools in ICT had been vaccinated against the virus, he added. Similarly, he said the civil administration was enforcing National Command and Operation Centre guidelines in letter and spirit across the city, encouraging people to vaccinate themselves. — APP

Police arrest 128 profiteers

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district administration under its ongoing campaign against profiteering and hoarding conducted raids in different areas of the district and arrested 128 profiteers while fines amounting to over Rs 1.3 million were imposed.

According to a district administration spokesman, the administration on the directives of Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Gulzar Hussain Shah was conducting raids and trying to control artificial price hike.

He informed that the administration received nearly 8000 complaints during last week through Qeemat App which were responded immediately.

He said during last one week (Sept 23 to Oct 1), 92 First Information Reports were registered against the violation of rules. The administration was closely monitoring the supply system of food items to control the prices and action in accordance with the law was also being taken against profiteers and hoarders, he added.

He said 55 price magistrates were actively discharging their duties in Rawalpindi and all price magistrates had been directed to increase field visits to review the prices of food items.

Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi and Assistant Commissioners were also visiting the fruit and vegetable markets to monitor the auction process and efforts were also underway to ensure price stability particularly of daily use items, he added.

The market committees at wholesale markets besides fruit and vegetable markets had also been activated so that relief could be provided to the citizens. Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Gulzar Hussain Shah had directed the Price Control Magistrates to visit markets and mandis on daily basis so that people could be provided relief and could get rid of artificial price hike.

Lingering disagreements

THE anticipation for the visit of US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman to Pakistan, one of the first high-level officials under President Joe Biden to visit Pakistan, that too after the Taliban took over in Afghanistan, was felt a month before the scheduled visit. However, as the visit draws closer, there are already negative signs that the talks planned for the visit will be facing a lot of hurdles and misconceptions between the two countries. The first indication of the continued misunderstanding is the US official's call on Friday for Pakistan to take action against all extremist groups. This is in contrast with the options Pakistan appears to be exploring—of reconciliation with militants both at home and in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan has repeatedly said that he doesn't believe in military solutions as the first option with regards to militancy and instead has actively encouraged the world to engage Afghanistan's Taliban and provide economic support, although he has stopped short of backing recognition. The US official's statement appears to be a direct response to the Prime Minister's UNGA address, where he spoke about the need for the international community to communicate with the Taliban in order to ensure peace and human rights in the region. The US officials' statement cuts to the heart of the misunderstanding between the US and Pakistan. It echoes the US misconception that Pakistan has not and is not doing enough in the war against terror, and that Pakistan must continue to fight militancy. Pakistan instead has always stressed that it has lost thousands of lives in the war against terror and accommodated American interests. The statement indicates that there will be no resolving these differences any time soon. Still, Pakistan must turn its attention towards delivering what's important—we must work towards ensuring US aid to Afghanistan to allow for the region to stabilise further.

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Water dispute

THE tussle between Indus River System Authority (IRSA) and the Sindh government continues, as it was reported that Sindh's representatives walked out of the advisory committee meeting in protest against the implementation of the three-tier formula for water distribution during the Rabi season. It is unfortunate that this issue has gone on for so long and that the meeting ended with no decision, especially at this crucial part of the season which will impact agricultural yield for the coming year. During the Rabi season—which commences on October 1—the country is likely to face up to 28 percent water shortage. The meeting was called on to determine the provincial share of water in light of this upcoming shortage, where representatives from Sindh chose to walk out because they felt that IRSA had already made up its mind regarding the implementation of the three-tier formula. The representatives from Sindh claim that the formula is in contravention to Water Apportionment Accord 1991 and IRSA Act. Another grievance of theirs has been regarding KP and Balochistan being exempted from cuts in the share, as they claim that these should be abolished and that the provinces must face water shortage along with the rest of the country. While the Sindh representatives perhaps should not have walked out of the meeting, and should wait for the Council of Common Interests (CCI) decision on the matter, there is some merit to their arguments and IRSA should earnestly engage with them to resolve the issue. The implementation of the three-tier formula would cause significant damage since Sindh is the low riparian province causing a shortage of 5.6maf water worth \$5 billion. This will of course have adverse consequences for the main cash crop of wheat during the Rabi season and also impact the food security of the country. Especially at this critical period for the agricultural sector of the country, state institutions such as IRSA must do better at forging a consensus and taking all stakeholders on board when it comes to such consequential decisions. Sindh's grievances vis-vis IRSA have continued throughout the summer, and such tussles also negatively impact inter-provincial harmony. It is imperative that a fair distribution formula is worked out at the earliest so that these issues do not rear their head on such a frequent basis.

The SCO Dushanbe Summit and aftermath

Vladimir Norov



The President of the Kyrgyz Republic noted the need to more actively use existing mechanisms, primarily through the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), the Ministries of Defense, law enforcement agencies and special services in order to prevent threats to security and stability in the region

THE Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit held on September 17, 2021 in Dushanbe marked the end of the successful chairmanship of the Republic of Tajikistan in the SCO in 2020-2021, within the framework of which, despite all the difficulties associated with the pandemic, effective measures were taken to further develop multifaceted cooperation within the Organization, painstaking, comprehensive work was carried out, effective measures to strengthen the SCO and increase its authority were effectively and effectively promoted. The meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State demonstrated the firm commitment of the member states to the "Shanghai spirit" and the common desire to deepen multifaceted cooperation in the fields of politics, security, trade and economy, as well as expand cultural and humanitarian ties. Summarizing the experience of the past two decades and assessing the prospects, the member States are firmly convinced that the successful activities of the SCO have contributed to the transformation of the region into a space of lasting peace and harmony. The anniversary summit was a historic event, which was confirmed by the signed solid package of documents, the number of which reached thirty for the first time in the history of the SCO. The decisions tak-

en by the leaders of our countries within the framework of the summit are of epochal significance and open a new milestone in the progressive development of the Organization, have multiplied its contribution to maintaining peace and stability in the region and in the world, to ensuring sustainable development and strengthening the dialogue of civilizations in the vast space of the SCO. The main document adopted at the end of the summit was the Dushanbe Declaration of the twentieth anniversary of the SCO, which reflected the main results of the twenty-year activity of the SCO, the common position of the member countries on key issues of regional and global policy. There is no doubt that the document will become an important reference point for the Organization in the near future and will point to new vectors of SCO development. The Member States reaffirmed an important principle of the SCO's activities – openness to cooperation with other States, international and regional organizations. The SCO is open for accession by interested States that meet the criteria and conditions contained in the SCO regulatory documents and undertake to comply with the goals and principles of the SCO Charter, as well as the provisions of other international treaties and documents of the Organization. During the summit, it was decided to start the procedure for accepting Iran to increase its status to a full-fledged SCO member state. Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Qatar have received the status of a dialogue partner. Thus, today the SCO membership has increased from 18 to 21 states. In his speech, Russian President Vladimir Putin stressed that the Russian side attaches great importance to the issues of cooperation between the SCO and those states that seek to establish an open and equal dialogue with the SCO, proposed to modernize and make more effective the participation of observers and dialogue partners in the work of the SCO, in particular by holding events at the highest and high levels in the so-called SCO plus format, with the invitation of partners, in parallel with the summits of the leaders of the SCO member states. In addition, decisions were signed on the establishment of SCO partnership relations with LAS, UNIDO, UNCTAD and INCB, the heads of the SCO Secretariat and the Eurasian Economic Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding. In addition, the candidates for the new SCO Secretary General, who will be a citizen of China, and the Director of the SCO RATS Executive Committee, a citizen of Uzbekistan, who will take up their posts from January 1, 2022, have been approved. Undoubtedly, the central theme of the last summit was the situation in Afghanistan. The joint meeting of the leaders of the SCO and CSTO countries in the "outreach" format held within the framework of the summit was also devoted to this issue. The Heads of State stated that one of the most important factors for preserving and strengthening security and stability in the SCO space is the early settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. They advocate the establishment of Afghanistan as an independent, neutral, unified, democratic and peaceful State, free from terrorism, war and drugs. The SCO member States consider it extremely important to create an inclusive government in Afghanistan with the participation of representatives of all ethnic,

religious and political groups of the Afghan society. Emphasizing the importance of the long-term hospitality and effective assistance provided to Afghan refugees by regional and neighboring countries of Afghanistan, the SCO countries consider important the active efforts of the international community to promote their dignified, safe and sustainable return to their homeland. The heads of State in their reports separately focused on the Afghan problem, in particular, the Prime Minister of India noted that the SCO should take the initiative on the issue of ensuring peace, tranquility and stability in Afghanistan. As the President of Kazakhstan noted, the Kazakh side is expanding cooperation with regional partners to prevent the flow of destructive ideology, drugs and uncontrolled migration outside Afghanistan. Kazakhstan is ready to provide all possible assistance to solve the urgent humanitarian and economic problems faced by Afghanistan. Taking into account the existing infrastructure and logistics opportunities, the leader of Kazakhstan proposed to organize a humanitarian "hub" of the SCO in Almaty to deliver international aid to Afghanistan. The Chinese President said that with the withdrawal of foreign troops, a new page in the history of this country opens. At the same time, Afghanistan still faces many difficult tasks, which require support and assistance from the international community, primarily from the countries of the region. From this point of view, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation between the SCO member states, to reveal the potential of such platforms as the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group, to promote a smooth transition of the situation in Afghanistan. The Chinese leader stressed the importance of promoting the formation of an open and inclusive political structure in Afghanistan, introducing a moderate and restrained domestic and foreign policy, conducting an uncompromising fight against terrorism in all its manifestations, so that Afghanistan can coexist amicably with neighboring countries for the sake of peace, stability and development.

The President of the Kyrgyz Republic noted the need to more actively use existing mechanisms, primarily through the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), the Ministries of Defense, law enforcement agencies and special services in order to prevent threats to security and stability in the region, maintain calm and public order in the countries. The Kyrgyz side expressed its readiness to provide all possible assistance in the settlement and to send humanitarian aid to the friendly people of Afghanistan, as well as to accept 500 Afghan students to educational institutions of the country. The Prime Minister of Pakistan noted that Afghanistan is in the center of attention of the republic, especially in the light of recent events. He called on the international community to provide stabilizing assistance to Afghanistan in order to avoid a re-escalation of the conflict, improve the security situation, and prevent a humanitarian and economic crisis. The Head of the Government of Pakistan stressed the importance of fulfilling the obligations assumed by the Taliban, first of all, with regard to an inclusive political structure in which all ethnic groups are represented. According to the Russian President, first of all, it is

important for the SCO countries to use the Organization's potential to provide all possible assistance to the start of an inclusive inter-Afghan peace process and at the same time do everything to block the threats of terrorism, drug trafficking, and religious extremism emanating from this country. The Russian leader proposed to encourage the new Afghan authorities to fulfill their own promises to establish peace, normalize public life, and ensure security for everyone. In this regard, he noted the importance of resuming the activities of the SCO – Afghanistan Contact Group, which was created at the time to work with Afghan partners.

The President of Tajikistan expressed particular concern about the situation in Afghanistan, where, in his opinion, along with the political, the largest humanitarian crisis in history is facing. He noted that Tajikistan wants to see Afghanistan free from terrorism and drugs, a peaceful, unified and developing state. According to the leader of Tajikistan, the situation in Afghanistan directly affects the situation in Central Asia. He called on the international community not to remain indifferent to the fate of the Afghan people and its neighbors, who will have to overcome difficult humanitarian and military problems caused by the withdrawal of the Western coalition forces. The President of Uzbekistan noted the need to develop coordinated approaches to the situation in Afghanistan, as well as to develop a dialogue with the new authorities of the country. In particular, he stressed the importance of achieving broad political representation of all segments of Afghan society in the state administration; to prevent the possible growth of extremism in the region and the export of radical ideology, the use of the territory of Afghanistan for subversive actions against neighboring states; to ensure respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms, including women and national minorities; to prevent a large-scale humanitarian crisis, an increase in the flow of refugees, to continue to assist this country in solving social problems. In this regard, the head of Uzbekistan proposed to consider the possibility of unfreezing the state assets of Afghanistan held in foreign banks. In order to consolidate the efforts of the SCO countries and widely discuss issues of a political settlement in this country, they were invited to regularly hold high-level meetings in the SCO-Afghanistan format with the involvement of observer states and dialogue partners. The Uzbek side expressed its readiness to organize the first such meeting in Tashkent.

In conclusion, the heads of state highly appreciated the results of the chairmanship of the Republic of Tajikistan in the SCO in 2020-2021, which contributed to strengthening mutual trust and mutual understanding, constructive and fruitful cooperation, good-neighboring relations and friendship between the peoples of the Organization's member states. At the end of the summit, the chairmanship of the SCO for 2021-2022 passed to the Republic of Uzbekistan. President Sh.Mirziyoyev invited his SCO colleagues to the next meeting of the Council of Heads of State, which is scheduled to be held on September 15-16 next year in Uzbekistan. – The writer is the Secretary General of SCO

Renaissance of tourism in Pakistan

Huma Arshad



Like Turkey, Pakistan can also thrive based on its ancient sites. We must remember that we have the remains of the Mughal civilization as well

PAKISTAN is focused on exploring tourism for generating handsome revenue and employment. Pakistan has great potential to become the center of tourism. Every area has its significance. We can develop tourism in our country keeping our cultural, moral, and Islamic ethics and values. If Pakistan achieves this goal, as a result, a large number of people both from the Western world and the Islamic world will start coming to our country. Tourism is science now. If we do not do it scientifically and strategically we would not be able to develop the tourism industry in this rapidly growing competitive world of travel and tourism. If we take the example of Switzerland we got to know that Switzerland has developed tourism as a science and introduced various courses in hospitality management. If we follow in their footsteps we can develop more revenue from our northern areas and different tourist spots of other provinces of Pakistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan is emphasizing a lot on developing tourism to get rid of the country's long debt. According to him tourism alone can that much money through which we could be able to become a prosperous country. For developing tourism we need to revamp the infrastructure with high-quality facilities for tourists. PTI Government is focusing on developing new destinations to promote tourism to generate opportunities for employment for local people. Education about tourism would help youngsters learn the right techniques to pursue a career in this rich sector. We all know that Pakistan's Northern areas, deserts, and areas of Balochistan can offer a diverse range of tourist destinations. Due to COVID-19 worldwide, the tourism sector has faced problems but at the same time, Pakistan is all set to develop this sector by the end of 2020 in full swing. The inau-

guration of Kohsar University was in the spirit of Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision to promote tourism in the country. Pakistan has great potential to become the center of tourism. Kohsar University would be offering courses in Sciences, Arts, Travel and Tourism, and Hotel Management, and would be affiliated with international universities. The government is planning other projects as well bring a renaissance in tourism for the sake of projecting a positive image of Pakistan in the world and simultaneously generating revenue. This can only be possible if we use modern ways of communication. Our successfully suppressing coronavirus government's prime focus is to promote multi-faceted tourism from across the globe. Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) has already announced that they are preparing to launch all initiatives which were delayed due to the closure of the sector in the wake of coronavirus. The PTDC has developed 'Brand Pakistan' with the help of international experts and would launch it soon to introduce the country as a tourism destination across the world. 'Brand Pakistan' has three main components which include brand identity development, musical score creation, and an interactive e-portal. This e-portal only via one click will provide exposure to Pakistan's tourist attractions. The portal will consist of a user-friendly interface through which tourists will be able to get a quick look to view Pakistan's tourism sites through virtual galleries, videos, and documentaries and could be able to use various available services. The government has finalized the process of the development of the National Tourism Strategy (2020-2030) which is meant to develop a harmonized framework for the tourism sector. It is based on four key areas including good The main focus of this strategy is based on four key areas including

good governance, tourism demand and supply, employment creation, and overall growth. Pakistan is also preparing to host the 'World Tourism Forum' in the coming year to showcase the country's tourism potential, attract investment and build Pakistan into an international brand. The government has also constituted the National Tourism Coordination Board (NTCB) with representation from all the provinces and stakeholders. Different working groups have been formed under NTCB, with each group assigned a specific thematic area such as policy and regulatory reforms, eco-tourism, culture, and heritage tourism, religious tourism, and so on. The board is responsible for coordination between federal, provincial, and regional tourism organizations and departments, and international tourism bodies for promoting the country's tourism. The government has also got measures to relax its visa policy for encouraging the influx of foreign tourists into the country. The e-visa facility is also being provided to over 170 countries. It is also encouraging that the Tourism Development Endowment Fund with the seed money of Rs 1 billion has been established after receiving concurrence from all stakeholders. This fund is being utilized to promote tourism in the country. In a nutshell, Pakistan has three areas of tourism – the mountains, the sea, and the coastal areas – adding the ancient sites like Mohenjo Daro and Harappa are also very important in terms of tourism for the country. Like Turkey, Pakistan can also thrive based on its ancient sites. We must remember that we have the remains of the Mughal civilization as well. So, by incorporating technology with our tourists' sites and places Pakistan can become one of the top tourist destinations in the world.

Briefs

Over 700 Pakistanis' names exposed in Pandora's Papers

FROM PAGE 01
The Pandora Papers are bigger in size and revelations about politicians and public officials are also more than what previously came to public attention. From Pakistan, there were more than 400 individuals who surfaced in the Panama Papers. The number of Pakistanis in Pandora Papers are way more than that, say reports. Many interesting names would make headlines. The secret wealth and dealings of world leaders, politicians and billionaires has been exposed in one of the biggest leaks of financial documents. Some 35 current and former leaders and more than 300 public officials are featured in the files from offshore companies, dubbed the Pandora Papers. They reveal the King of Jordan secretly amassed £70m of UK and US property. They also show how ex-UK PM Tony Blair and his wife saved £312,000 in stamp duty when they bought a London office. The couple bought an offshore firm that owned the building. The leak also links Russian President Vladimir Putin to secret assets in Monaco, and shows the Czech prime minister Andrej Babis - facing an election later this week - failed to declare an offshore investment company used to purchase two villas for £12m in the south of France. The examination of the files is the largest organised by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), with more than 650 reporters taking part. Among the other revelations in the Pandora Papers: Kenya President Uhuru Kenyatta and six members of his family secretly owned a network of offshore companies. They have been linked to 11 firms - one of which was valued as holding assets of \$30m. The law firm founded by President Nicos Anastasiades of Cyprus appears to have provided fake owners to disguise the real owner of a series of offshore companies - a former Russian politician who had been accused of embezzlement. However, the law firm denies this. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky transferred his stake in a secret offshore company just before he won the 2019 election. Ecuador President Guillermo Lasso, a former banker, replaced a Panamanian foundation that made monthly payments to his close family members with a trust based in South Dakota in the US.

UK to recognize Pak...

FROM PAGE 01
the country without quarantine or self-isolation, he said. The UK will accept vaccinations by Astra-Zeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Moderna and Pfizer vaccines of all travellers from around the world, British envoy said. Pakistan was taken off the red list on Sept 22 after being on the no-travel list for five months. British envoy praised the National Command and Control Centre for doing a good job. "I am just going through the process of formally allowing the two sides to recognise each other's vaccination certificates and that may take a couple more days next week," he said. "In October, you'd be able to turn up in London and, if you've had those vaccines, show your Nadra certificate. It doesn't matter where it's administered - you have very good certificates here - you show that and you'd be fine." The UK diplomat also acknowledged that Pakistan being on the red list had been "enormously frustrating." The UK was worried about the beta variant, which had originated in South Africa, and which "can undermine the Astra-Zeneca vaccine". "After talks between the two teams, which was led by Dr Faisal Sultan from your side, to really understand gave us the confidence to change the red list," he said. He also praised Dr Sultan led health team for "navigating the pandemic".

Algeria recalls envoy to France; bans military planes

Algeria's govt did not specify what prompted the recall of its ambassador, but it accused France of interfering in its internal affairs

MONITORING DESK

ALGIERS: Algeria accused its former colonial ruler France of "genocide" and recalled its ambassador from Paris in anger over what it said were "inadmissible" comments attributed to French President Emmanuel Macron. The Algerian government also banned French military planes from its airspace on Sunday. France's jets regularly fly over Algerian territory to reach the Sahel region of western Africa, where its soldiers are helping to battle armed groups as part of its Barkhane operation. "This morning when we filed flight plans for two planes, we learned that the Algerians had stopped flights over their territory by French military planes," an army spokesman, Colonel Pascal Ianni, told AFP news agency. He said the decision "does not af-

fect our operations or intelligence missions" carried out in the Sahel. Algeria's government and military were not immediately available for comment on the closure of airspace. The immediate recall of Algeria's ambassador from France for "consultations" was announced on Saturday in a statement from the Algerian presidency. The moves also came amid tension over a French decision to sharply reduce the number of visas it grants to citizens of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. "Following remarks that have not been denied, which several French sources have attributed by name to [Macron], Algeria expresses its categorical rejection of the inadmissible interference in its internal affairs," the statement said, adding the French comments were "an intolerable affront" to Algerians who died fighting French colonialism. "The crimes of colonial France in Algeria are innumerable and fit the strictest definitions of genocide," it said. French daily Le Monde reported that Macron made critical remarks about Algeria during a meeting on Thursday with French Algerian descendants of the Harkis, Algerians who fought on the French side during Algeria's war of independence. According to Le Monde, Macron said Algeria was ruled by a "political-military system" and described the country's "official history" as having been "totally re-written" to something "not based on truths" but "on a discourse of hatred towards France". The newspaper added the French president made clear he was not referring to Algerian society as a whole but to the ruling elite. The Algerian government did not specify which Macron comment prompted the recall of its ambassador, but it accused him of interfering in Algerian internal affairs. Macron was also quoted ques-

tioning whether there had been an Algerian nation before French colonial rule. Algeria won its independence from France in 1962 after a bloody military struggle. A source in the Algerian government said the comment about Algeria's existence as a nation had caused particular anger. Algeria's ruling elite since independence has been largely drawn from veterans of its war of liberation from France. "We understand Macron is on [an election] campaign and that he wants to get far-right support by all means, such as insulting Algeria's history... This is unacceptable to us," a former Algerian minister said. France holds a presidential election next April. France said the decision to reduce visas for Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, which it announced last Tuesday, was made necessary by the former colonies' failure to do enough to allow asylum seekers rejected by France to return.

On Wednesday, the Algerian foreign ministry summoned French Ambassador Francois Gouyette and handed him a "formal protest" note concerning the visa ruling. It called the visa reduction an "unfortunate act" that caused "confusion and ambiguity as to its motivation and its scope". Morocco's Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita has described the French move as "unjustified". Tunisian President Kais Saied expressed disappointment with the decision in a telephone call with Macron Saturday, his office said, adding that the French leader had said it could be revised. Saturday's decision is the second time that Algeria has recalled an ambassador from France. Algiers also recalled its ambassador in May 2020 after French media broadcast a documentary about the Hirak Movement, which emerged out of the popular protests that broke out in Algeria in 2019.

Pakistan attaches great importance to ties with Korea: Shafqat

FROM PAGE 01

So this year falls on 4353rd anniversary of the Republic of Korea. He added, the diplomatic ties between Korea and Pakistan were established in 1983. Since then, relations of the two countries have increased rapidly in manifold areas. In particular, this year we have witnessed many concrete outcomes in our relations. In just a couple of minutes we watched a video clip on what has been done this year between Korea and Pakistan. In Political area, last Wednesday, two days ago, Korean 1st Vice Minister came to Islamabad and held the bilateral Political Consultation meeting with Foreign Secretary. And in the current Afghan issues, Korea and Pakistan are closely cooperating with each other. A month ago, the two foreign ministers had a consultation by telephone and with full supports from the Pakistani government, 390 Afghan nationals were safely moved from Kabul through Islamabad to Korea.

In economic area, Korean companies are increasing investments to Pakistan. In hydropower sector, already two hydropower plants are under operation producing electricity in Pakistan and the hydropower projects which account 2 billion in total are ongoing. In automobile sector, Korean cars, Hyundai and Kia, are locally produced. In mobile phone business, Samsung electronics are establishing an assembly line Karachi and once established as planned by December, the factory will produce 3 million units of mobile phones a year and creating 800 local employees. And some of Korea-Pakistan joint ventures are already in Special Economic Zone.

The ambassador said, Culture is one of the sectors that have expanded the cooperation. Korea and Pakistan soon to conclude MOU to preserve and promote Gandhara Buddhist heritage, which includes 4 million USD grant. This MOU is expected to facilitate the Korean Buddhist tourism project which was discussed when the president of Jogye order (i.e. biggest Buddhist sect in Korea) came to Pakistan in 2019. Korean music, dancing and drama are also popular in Pakistan. So they could be in Korea with more contacts and cooperation. Development cooperation is also expanding this year. When the Korean delegation from Ministry of Finance visited in July, Korea announced the provision of the Economic Development Cooperation Fund of one billion USD for 5 years starting from next year. This fund is a soft loan to assist developing countries. The previous EDCF was 500 million USD for the years. Now in terms of the committed volume of EDCF, the number is doubled up. Grant assistance from the Korean development agency, KOICA, is also active now, 5 projects ongoing amounting 40 million dollar and next year 2 more projects amount 15 million US dollar will be added up.

'In academic and research area, this year we harvested some concrete results. Based on the MOU between Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security of Korea IFANS and Islamabad Policy Research Institute of Pakistan IPRI, which had been inactive since the signing of MOU in 2011, the 1st seminar was organized in last June. In August, we signed a new MOU between Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security of Korea and Institute of strategic studies Islamabad ISSI. Before the end of this year at least two more seminars will be organized among IFANS and IPRI and ISSI'. Ambassador Suh said there were still many areas where both countries can further expand relations. For example, Senate and Parliament play key role for enhancing the bilateral relations, by giving an impetus and even make legislation for promoting relations. So strengthening cooperation between Parliaments of the two countries should be also an area of priority to the both countries.

I'm sure that relations between Korea and Pakistan will be even more strengthened in the years to come, he concluded.



RAWALPINDI: Players of KPK Cricket team expressing jimjams during their match with Sui Gas team, at Rawalpindi Stadium, on Sunday. - DNA

PSG suffer first Ligue 1 defeat

MONITORING DESK

PARIS: Paris St-Germain's 100% start in Ligue 1 was ended by Rennes as Lionel Messi suffered his first defeat since arriving at the club. The hosts scored two quick goals either side of half-time through Gatetan Laborde and Flavien Tait. Mauricio Pochettino's side did not have a single shot on target, despite Messi, Neymar and Kylian Mbappe all starting. The defeat is PSG's first in Ligue 1 since April, when they were beaten by last season's eventual champions Lille. Rennes opened the scoring on 44 minutes when Laborde converted from Kamaldeen Sulemana's superb cross. Tait added a second soon after the restart with a sweeping finish into the bottom corner. After slicing an effort high over the bar in the first half, Mbappe thought he had pulled a goal back for Pochettino's side midway through the second half, only for it to be ruled out for offside by the video assistant referee (VAR). The Frenchman is now on a run of five games without a goal in all competitions.

UK in period of adjustment after Brexit: Boris

LONDON: Boris Johnson says the UK is in a "period of adjustment" after Brexit and Covid as the country faces petrol shortages and supply chain issues. A lack of HGV drivers and high demand plunged the UK into a fuel crisis last week, with lengthy queues and closures. Worries persist about the cost of living, as food and energy prices rise, alongside cuts to universal credit. But the PM insisted his plan for a higher wage, higher skilled economy would offer a long-term solution. Speaking to the BBC's Andrew Marr on the first day of Conservative Party conference, Mr Johnson said: "There will be a period of adjustment, but that is what I think we need to see." He would not say if supply issues would affect Christmas, but later told reporters he was "very confident" the festive season would be "considerably better" than last year. A few thousand people held an anti-government outside the event in Manchester on Sunday, where the Tories will be hosting party members until Wednesday. The PM also refused to rule out raising taxes again just three weeks before Chancellor Rishi Sunak announces his annual Budget. He said he was a "zealous opponent of unnecessary tax rises", but warned the pandemic had hit the UK's economy like a "fiscal meteorite". Last month, the government announced it would be raising National Insurance to pay for health and social care. At the time, when asked whether he would rule out additional taxes, Mr Johnson said he could give an "emotional commitment" that he did not want to introduce further rises. Earlier this year Mr Sunak also froze income tax thresholds - leading to more people paying the levy - and the extra £20 weekly universal credit payment, brought in during the pandemic, is due to end this week. Asked on Sunday by Andrew Marr if he would raise taxes again, Mr Johnson replied: "If I can possibly avoid it, I do not want to raise taxes again." The PM added: "I can tell you that you have no fiercer and more zealous opponent of unnecessary tax rises than me, but we have had to deal with a pandemic on a scale which this country has not seen before in our lifetimes and long before. - DNA

Five arrested over killing of Rohingya leader

WEB DESK

COX'S BAZAR: Five Rohingya men have been arrested over the killing of a prominent community leader in a refugee camp in Bangladesh, police said Sunday, adding that they were probing links to a militant group. Mohib Ullah - a high-profile figurehead for the more than 800,000-strong Muslim minority who fled the

Myanmar military in a mass exodus - was killed by gunmen late Wednesday in one of the sprawling camps in southeast Bangladesh. His family blamed militants from the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), a group behind several attacks in Myanmar, with activists claiming they were enraged by his growing popularity in the camps. "We have arrested five people over the murder of Mohib Ullah," the commanding officer of the police unit in charge of camp security, Naimul Haque, told AFP. Two of the men were remanded in custody for three days for questioning, authorities said. The other three have not yet appeared in court. A 28-year-old Rohingya man was also arrested over the murder last week. All six are being investigated for links to ARSA, which has instead blamed "unidentified criminals" for Ullah's death.

A member of the rights group that Mohib Ullah headed up alleged that one of those arrested, 35-year-old Mohammad Elias, was a member of ARSA and had threatened the popular leader in June. The member, who asked to remain anonymous as he feared for his safety, said at least ten leaders of Mohib Ullah's group were in hiding as they were afraid of more attacks.

US concerned by 'provocative' Chinese action near Taiwan

WASHINGTON: The United States on Sunday slammed China for "provocative" and "destabilizing" military activity, after Chinese fighter jets and bombers made their largest-ever incursion into Taiwan's air defense zone. "The United States is very concerned by the People's Republic of China's provocative military activity near Taiwan, which is destabilizing, risks miscalculations, and undermines regional peace and stability," US State Department spokesman Ned Price said in a statement. "We urge Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure and coercion against Taiwan." Beijing marked its National Day on Friday with its biggest aerial show of force against Taiwan to date, buzzing the self-ruled democratic island with 38 warplanes, including nuclear-capable H-6 bombers. That was followed by a new record incursion on Saturday by 39 planes, said Taiwan, which accused Beijing of "bullying" and "damaging regional peace." "It's evident that the world, the international community, rejects such behaviors by China more and more," Premier Su Tseng-chang told reporters on Saturday. Democratic Taiwan's 23 million people live under the constant threat of invasion by China, which views the island as its territory and has vowed to one day seize it, by force if necessary. Beijing has ramped up pressure on Taipei since the 2016 election of President Tsai Ing-wen, who has said she views the island as "already independent" and not part of a "one China." Under President Xi Jinping, Chinese warplanes are crossing into Taiwan's air defense identification zone (ADIZ) on a near daily basis. - DNA

National Hockey League-2021 starts today

Teams which would take part in the competition would be Peshawar Falcons, Malakand Tigers, Dera Ismail Khan Stallions, Hazara Warriors, Bannu Panthers, Mardan Bears, Tribal Lions and Kohat Eagles

DNA

PESHAWAR: Eight teams comprising international players would participate in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hockey League-2021 to be commencing from Monday (October 4) here at Lala Ayub Hockey Stadium. Director General Sports, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Asfandyar Khan Khattak while addressing a media briefing here on Sunday said all arrangements had been completed for the smooth

conduct of the first ever National Hockey League-2021 involving top eight teams comprising international players. He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mahmood Khan would officially inaugurate the largest hockey league. Teams which would take part in the competition would be Peshawar Falcons, Malakand Tigers, Dera Ismail Khan Stallions, Hazara Warriors, Bannu Panthers, Mardan Bears, Tribal Lions and Kohat Eagles. Under the league, all matches would be played on dif-

ferent Astro Turfs in the province, including Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Kohat, Peshawar at Lala Ayub Hockey Stadium and Islamia College Hockey Ground, Charsadda and Mardan. The players would be provided transport, food, accommodation, kits and other facilities, Asfandyar Khattak said. He said, apart from cash prizes, the winning teams would also be given trophies, medals and certificates. The winner team would get prize of Rs 1 million while the team which would get second position would get Rs 500,000,

and the third place team would get Rs 300,000 whereas the fourth place team would get Rs 100,000, he said. In addition, each player would be provided Rs 15,000, international standard hockey sticks and hockey kits, he added. Asfandyar Khan Khattak said in each team of the league two international senior and two junior players would also take part while other players from their respective regions including Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Kohat, Mardan, Hazara, Malakand, Peshawar would also

participate besides one team from merged tribal areas. The aim of the tournament was to give a chance to the teams to play with international players to improve their skills, he said. He added that purpose of organizing the National Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hockey League-2021 would prove a milestone for reviving the national game of hockey in the province. He said the efforts of Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief Minister Mahmood Khan would help in the revival of hockey besides helping to find out new emerging talent.

Briefs

'A stronger private sector can help Pak'

ISLAMABAD: President SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry Iftikhar Ali Malik Sunday said that a stronger private sector could help Pakistan realise its economic potential. Talking to a 10 member women traders delegation led by Ms Ayesha Shafique he said that only private sector play key role in pushing economic growth upward, generating job opportunities, providing oxygen to domestic industry besides boosting export in addition to promotion of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

National expert on SME and founder Secretary General SAARC Chamber Rehmat Ullah Javed was also present on the occasion who also shared his expertise based on his life long experience. Iftikhar said Pakistan has tremendous untapped economic potential that needs to be fully exploited through prudent key policy actions to help create new marketing opportunities, mobilise private investments to create more jobs and help the country in coping with the impact of covid 19 on its economy. He stressed the urgent need for reforms in the wake of pandemic impact on country's private sector especially on SMEs that drive so much of Pakistan's economy. — APP

Panama fears could be hit by new ICIJ Pandora leak

AGENCIES

PANAMA CITY: Panama fears the publication Sunday of a new expose about financial secrecy in global tax havens could again taint its reputation, which was seriously damaged by the "Panama Papers" scandal, according to a government letter released by local media.

"The damage could be insurmountable," the Panamanian government said in the letter, sent through a law firm to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ).

The letter warns that "any publication" reinforcing "a false perception" of the country as a possible tax haven "will have devastating consequences for Panama and its people." The ICIJ tweeted that it would release Sunday 1630 GMT its "most expansive expose of financial secrecy yet," based on the leak of 11.9 million documents "covering every corner of the globe." The "Pandora Papers" investigation is the result of work by more than 600 reporters in 117 countries, the ICIJ said. The letter from the Panamanian government also references some of the reforms that the Central American country has made in recent years, although it remains on the EU list of tax havens. It also indicates that since 2016 the registration of more than 395,000 companies and foundations has been suspended, around half of those existing at that time.

Australian travel curbs causing distress

CANBERRA: Australia's international border closure has caused "extreme levels" of distress among people separated from their friends and families, a survey has found. Researchers from the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) and Flinders University surveyed about 4,000 people on mental health linked to travel restrictions in a study published recently. It found that 84 percent of respondents reported "high or very high levels of psychological distress" and 75 percent had "poor mental wellbeing."

International travel to and from Australia has been heavily restricted by the federal government since March 2020 to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Participants in the survey identified being separated from partners and family as the most common source of grief. — APP

Disappointment in Qatar as no women candidates elected

Qatar touts the level of representation enjoyed by its women with the health ministry led by a woman and the foreign ministry represented by a spokeswoman

AGENCIES

DOHA: Women voters voiced disappointment Sunday after none were elected in Qatar's first legislative polls with all eyes on whether the emir will use his powers to appoint 15 lawmakers to boost representation.

Thirty men were elected to Qatar's Shura Council at Saturday's polls despite more than two dozen women standing for the body which is seen as a nod to democracy rather than a fully-fledged parliament. "I'm not happy because all of them (winners) are men — some of them are old. To be honest, I was surprised. It's not fair,"

said voter Shamma who declined to give her full name. "We are really sad." She said she was hopeful that the emir would choose women among his 15 direct appointments to offset the imbalance. It is not known when the emir's appointments will be announced or when the council will meet.

"Five seats for women will be enough because I believe one woman can change the world," Shamma told AFP. Of the 284 hopefuls who went into the race for the 30 available council seats, just 28 were women although the final proportion after a number of eleventh-hour candidate withdrawals has not been published. "You lost the battle of victory, but you

won the war of participation!" popular Qatari author Ebtessam al-Saad wrote on Twitter.

Several analysts had suggested the emir could directly appoint women "to improve the gender balance" if none were elected — similar to what happened in Bahrain's legislative election.

Official sources had confirmed to AFP this was a likely outcome in the event no women succeeded at the ballot box. The final voter turnout was 63.5 percent according to official data.

Qatar touts the level of representation enjoyed by its women with the health ministry led by a woman and the foreign ministry represented by a spokeswoman.

Women also hold prominent roles in the World Cup organising committee as well as philanthropy and the arts, medicine, law and business.

But in March, Human Rights Watch accused Qatar of restricting the lives of its female population through unclear "guardianship" rules requiring adult women to obtain male approval for everyday activities.

The constitution of Qatar, a conservative Muslim Gulf state, provides for "equal opportunities for all citizens".

The Shura will be allowed to propose legislation, approve the budget and recall ministers, but the all-powerful emir will wield a veto.

Massive protests in Brazil

NEWS DESK

RIO DE JANEIRO: With Brazil's presidential election one year away, tens of thousands of demonstrators marched Saturday in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and dozens of other cities around the country to protest President Jair Bolsonaro and call for his impeachment over his government's handling of the pandemic. The protests, smaller than those in support of Bolsonaro last Sept. 7, were promoted by leftist parties and some union movements linked to the former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's Worker's Party. Da Silva is widely expected to run against Bolsonaro in Brazil's Oct. 2, 2022 presidential election.

Saturday's protest targeted the president for his mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic. Bolsonaro, who is not vaccinated and doesn't usually wear a mask, has underestimated the severity of the virus and promoted crowds during the pandemic. Some 597,000 have died of COVID-19 in Brazil, a country of 212 million people. Demonstrators also protested surging inflation in mainstays like food and electricity.

"It is very painful to see that health and education are being destroyed, and there are many starving people in the country," Marilena Magnano, a 75-year-old retiree, told The Associated Press. "We need Bolsonaro out of the government, his time has passed".

China assists building Matiari-Lahore HVDC

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: "Thank you Chinese brothers for supporting Pakistan's construction. Long live Pakistan-China friendship!" said engineers from Pakistan's National Power Construction Corporation (NPCC).

According to China Economic Net (CEN) they expressed appreciation to engineers of XJ Group Corporation (XJGC), China, responsible for supplying, installing and commencing core equipment for Matiari-Lahore ±660kV high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission project, under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

This set of core equipment includes converter valves, DC&AC control and protection, measuring system, and so on. "These can be regarded as the 'brain and heart' of the Matiari-Lahore HVDC project," said Hu Siqun, the general manager of XJGC Flexible Transmission Branch.

According to Liu Kun, a project manager of XJGC, the first team of XJ Group, over 10 engineers, reached the site of Matiari-Lahore HVDC project in January 2020, following the arrival of equipment.

With the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese engineers had to work while observing the rules and measures to fight against the pandemic.

To push ahead the HVDC project, ten engineers of XJ Group braved the coronavirus risk to arrive in Pakistan in June 2020. These engineers used to keep working nearly 13 hours a day in the intense heat in July.

Iraqis to elect new parliament

BAGHDAD: War-scarred Iraq holds parliamentary elections on October 10, a year early to appease an anti-government protest movement, in a nation that remains mired in corruption and economic crisis.

The country is emerging from almost two decades of conflict and insurgency since the 2003 US-led invasion toppled dictator Saddam Hussein, promising to bring freedom and democracy. Although security has improved in recent years, elections threaten new volatility in a nation still terrorised by militant attacks and where major political factions are heavily armed. It is feared turnout will again be low among the 25 million eligible voters, many of whom are deeply disillusioned and view the entire political class as inept and corrupt. — Web News



KABUL: Pakistan's ambassador to Afghanistan, Mansoor Ahmad Khan calls on Mayor of Kabul Hamidullah Noman. — DNA

French astronaut hails impact of Expo 2020 Dubai

DNA

DUBAI: The Expo 2020 Dubai is a meeting of minds from around the globe — but at the French Pavilion they took this one step further and held a 15-minute phone call with an astronaut on the International Space Station.

Speaking on Saturday from the International Space Station (ISS) Thomas Pesquet — who is also an ambassador for the French Pavilion — praised Expo 2020 Dubai, saying it offered countries a chance to collaborate on projects such as space travel and to tackle global issues such as climate change.

The long-distance call was part of the celebrations for the special Expo national day for France — Each exhibiting nation will have its own "national day" throughout the six-month-duration of

Expo 2020 Dubai. Pesquet hailed the "Light-speed Inspiration" theme of the pavilion and its message of progress, during his conversation with the French delegation, that included foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, who were visiting the France pavilion at the Al-Wasl Plaza Expo site. "Global issues require global solutions and countries engagements," he said, before adding that he hoped to visit the Expo 2020 Dubai site once his ISS mission is complete. He added that the upcoming Glasgow Climate Change (COP26) conference was the next opportunity to renew commitments to tackling the issue.

Pesquet also took the opportunity to congratulate the UAE on its "Hope" Mars probe, adding that he frequently met with his Emirati colleagues currently in training in Houston.

China-Pak Joint Research Center under CPEC in the offing

"This sector now will further develop and expand through technical collaboration with China"

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives directed reverent authorities to finalize action plans within 30 days for four mega-projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), including the establishment of China Pakistan Joint Research Center on Earth Science, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro.

In this regard, Federal Minister for PDSI Asad Umar presided over the review meetings of the newly constituted Working Groups on Science and Technology and Information Technology Cooperation at the 10th JCC of CPEC.

The minister directed

the action plans for four projects including the establishment of the China Pakistan Joint Research Center on Earth Science, the acquisition of Oceanographic Research Vessel, the establishment of the Institute of Smart Semiconductor and the establishment of Silicon Solar Cells, PV Panel Fabrication Facility of 500 MW/annum. These projects were made part of CPEC in the 10th JCC meeting. Minister for Science & Technology Shibli Faraz said that with the joint efforts of both countries, science and technology applications should be used to "accelerate the growth of the economy" and solve the problems of the citizens.

"We need to go for a proper plan & strategy with a regular monitoring system

so that Pakistan can obtain maximum benefit from technology and expertise of the Chinese side," Mr. Faraz added.

The newly formed JWGC on Information Technology, which was approved during the 10th JCC, was also discussed in another meeting. The participants discussed Broadband Connectivity, Technology Parks/ IT Parks, Cyber Security, Software and Hardware development in detail.

"Information technology is the future of Pakistan and in the last one or two years, Pakistan has witnessed rapid growth in this sector," said Federal Minister for Information Technology Aminul Haq and he added that Pakistan's software exports increased almost 47% in the information technology

sector.

"This sector now will further develop and expand through technical collaboration with China," according to Mr. Haq, adding there is also a need to launch new technical assistance programs for Pakistan to meet the professional requirements of the growing IT industry in the country.

Federal Minister Asad Umar directed the IT Ministry to submit concept notes on the above sectors to M/o PDSI within 30 days so that the fast-moving and strategic initiatives could be discussed in the upcoming JWGC.

"The role of the Ministry of IT must be appreciated as they are striving hard to meet the international standards of technological advancement and progress," Asad Umar added.

W. Sahara situation 'significantly deteriorated'

The "resumption of hostilities between Morocco and Frente POLISARIO is a major setback toward the achievement of a political solution," Antonio Guterres said in a report submitted to the Security Council

AGENCIES

UNITED NATIONS: The situation in Western Sahara has "significantly deteriorated" over the past year, the UN Secretary-General has said, citing the resumption of hostilities between Morocco and the Polisario independence movement in the disputed territory.

Morocco views Western Sahara as an integral part of its territory, but the Polisario — recognized internationally as the representative of the Sahrawi people — has long sought independence.

The "resumption of hostilities between Morocco and Frente POLISARIO is a major setback toward the achievement of a political solution," Antonio Guterres said in a report submitted to the Security Council. "There remains a clear risk of escalation while hostilities

persist," he added in the report, not yet published and obtained by AFP on Saturday. "I therefore call on the parties to de-escalate the situation and immediately cease hostilities."

Guterres said the two sides must agree on the appointment of a UN envoy to restart political dialogue on Western Sahara.

The Polisario fought a war of independence with Morocco from 1975 until a UN-brokered ceasefire in 1991.

The conflict has continued to simmer, and has been without an emissary since May 2019, with all candidates proposed by Guterres rejected by one side or the other.

In his report, Guterres noted that in November 2020, the Polisario had announced — after incidents with Morocco — that it no longer felt committed to the ceasefire.

In December 2020, then-president Donald Trump broke



with previous US positions and recognized Morocco's sovereignty over the whole of Western Sahara. President Joe Biden has yet to comment on that move. At the end of August, Algeria — Morocco's neighbor and rival, and a key backer of the Polisario — broke off diplomatic relations with Rabat, particularly over Western Sahara. Polisario wants a UN referen-

dum on self-determination, while Morocco — which controls more than two-thirds of the former Spanish colony — has proposed a plan for Polisario autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty. Earlier last month, Morocco's ambassador to the United Nations said that the regional dispute around the Western Sahara was definitely settled for the North African kingdom in

response to Algeria's ambassador to the UN's statement at the C24 seminar in the Dominican Republic.

"No offense to Algeria, the Moroccan Sahara was completely decolonized. The Moroccan Sahara returned definitively to Morocco. The Moroccan Sahara was reinstated thanks to international law, thanks to negotiations and thanks to the Madrid Agreement, of which the UN General Assembly took note in its resolution of December 1975," said Hilale.

"Let it be understood, the Sahara problem is closed. The people of the Sahara live peacefully in these Moroccan provinces and they fully enjoy all of their rights, as stated by Mrs. Ghalla Bahiya, vice-president of the Region of Dakhla Oued Ed-dahab, which participated in the seminar, at the invitation of the President of the C24, as democratically elected

representative of the Moroccan Sahara region," he added. The Moroccan diplomat said that Ms. Ghalla came from the 2015 regional elections in the Moroccan Sahara. "The Kingdom will organize the next elections, at the regional level, in 10 days, including in its southern provinces. There will be a renewal of elected officials. This is the Sahara, it is participatory democracy, generational inclusiveness. It is above all the right of everyone to take part in the daily life of the Sahara," said Hilale.

"The presentation made by the elected representative of the Sahara, Mrs. Ghalla, in front of the C24 is a very exhaustive photo, very concrete on the daily life of the populations, on their participation in the electoral process, in the economic development and in the flourishing of culture in general, but also of Hassani culture," he said.



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Briefs

German parties meet as coalition haggling begins

WEB DESK

BERLIN: German political parties will hold exploratory talks from Sunday as they jostle to form the next government after a close election, with the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD) battling Angela Merkel's conservatives for the chancellorship. The SPD and its candidate Olaf Scholz narrowly won last week's vote on 25.7 percent, with Merkel's CDU-CSU alliance plunging to an all-time low of 24.1 percent as she prepares to leave the stage after 16 years in power.

The result leaves the SPD in pole position to form a government, but conservative leader Armin Laschet has also vowed to begin coalition talks in a last-ditch effort to keep the ailing CDU-CSU in power.

In the complex calculations for a coalition, the makeup of the next German government essentially hinges on which of the two parties can persuade the Greens and the liberal FDP to sign up for a partnership.

First up in what Der Spiegel magazine has described as the "poker game for power" is the SPD, which will huddle with the FDP on Sunday afternoon and the Greens in the evening.

Their rivals, the CDU-CSU, will meet with the FDP on Sunday evening and the Greens on Tuesday.

PN, RSNF Naseem Al Bahr-XIII starts

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The major joint Naval Exercise Naseem Al Bahr-XIII between Pakistan Navy (PN) and Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF) commenced here on Sunday.

The exercise was aimed to consolidate the existing strong bilateral relations between Pakistan Navy and Royal Saudi Naval Forces, said a Pakistan Navy media release.

The exercise included joint conduct of maritime security operations across the traditional and non-traditional warfare domains thus enhancing interoperability between both the navies.

Earlier, the RSNF flotilla arrived at Karachi port and was warmly welcomed by senior PN and RSNF officers. Besides Naval ships of both Navies, aviation units including PN and RSNF helicopters embarked onboard ships and aircraft of RSNF would also participate in this exercise.

On first day of the exercise, various harbour evolutions were conducted to provide synergy in different naval operations. It also afforded opportunity for both navies to conduct operational planning for the joint naval operations to be conducted in subsequent sea phase of the exercise.

During the first phase, various training exercises were organized onboard PN and RSNF ships and harbour facilities.

ITALIAN HOSPITALITY



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of businessmen and Industry experts led by Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman ISE Towers RMC were invited by Ambassador of Italy, Andreas Ferrarese at his residence for dinner. Newly elected President of RCCI Nadim Rauf was also part of the delegation. - DNA

Palestine urges world bodies for protection to Palestinians

These settler militias carry out their crimes against the Palestinian people, with full impunity and under the collective protection of Israeli military, judiciary, and executive

AGENCIES

RAMALLAH: In the face of escalating and systematic settler terrorism, the State of Palestine urgently calls on the international community and the United Nations to assume their responsibilities and provide international protection for the Palestinian people. There is an unprecedented and severe protection crisis that cannot be ignored.

A statement issued by the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Israeli settler terrorism rests upon an illegal colonial foundation, rooted in land theft, assumed supremacy and exceptionalism,

discrimination and racism, to justify the subjugation and eventual displacement of the Palestinian people. To that end, settlers and the official Israeli establishment work hand in glove to advance their goals, sometimes exchanging roles and always working in ideological union.

These settler militias carry out their crimes against the Palestinian people, with full impunity and under the collective protection of the Israeli military, judiciary, and executive. Successive Israeli governments have willfully and deliberately ensured the entrenchment of this trend by deliberately not taking any measures to prevent or punish settler terrorism.

In this connection, the State of Palestine

affirms that rhetorical condemnations by Israeli officials are designed for public relations purposes. They ring hollow and must not be taken at face value nor awarded with political platitudes.

Instead, the international community must insist on not compromising with such terrorism and on fighting the infrastructure and culture that feeds it, including the illegal occupation and apartheid regime, and the so-called judicial system that legitimize them.

The State of Palestine thus calls on States to take proactive measures to protect the Palestinian people, including correctly identifying these settler militias as terrorist groups as well as ensuring that their domestic legislation forbids their di-

rect and/or indirect funding. The State of Palestine also calls on Secretary-General António Guterres to work on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions to establish an international mechanism of protection for the Palestinian people. This escalating settler terrorism also underscores the necessity for the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to expedite the ongoing investigation and to ensure justice for the victims.

The State of Palestine will resort to all political, diplomatic, and legal means to ensure the protection of its people. Justice must be served and the dignity, safety, and human rights of Palestinians must be respected and ensured.

Iran urges US to unfreeze \$10 billion

AGENCIES

TEHRAN: Iran's foreign minister has called on the United States to unlock \$10 billion of Tehran's frozen assets to clear the way for a return to a nuclear deal.

If the Americans have "true intentions, let them release some of our assets, for example \$10 billion frozen in foreign banks", Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said in an interview with state television broadcast late Saturday. "But the Americans are not prepared to unlock them for us to be assured that they've taken into account the interests of the Iranian people at least this one time over the past decades," he said.

On Thursday, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken renewed warnings that time was running out for Iran to return to the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers.

"The ball remains in their court, but not for long," Blinken told reporters. "There is a limited runway on that, and the runway is getting shorter."

Blinken reiterated that President Joe Biden was willing to return the United States to the accord in which Iran drastically scaled back nuclear work in return for promises of economic relief.

NCOC, civic admin visit M-2, E-11 marquees

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The NCOC and district administration teams late Saturday visited hotels, restaurants, marquees of the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) and Motorway-2 Toll Plaza to ensure strict enforcement of obligatory vaccination regime.

The district administration team along with Islamabad Police inspected vaccination status of staff and people visiting Guest Houses, hotels, restaurants, marquees in E-11 Sector and passengers at M-2 Toll Plaza.

The district administration sealed several hotels, restaurants, marquees in E-11 and surroundings, registered First Information Reports (FIR) against violators, imposed heavy fines on unvaccinated owners, staffers and visitors.

The people who were attending the marriages were also vaccinated single dose of Cansino.

French FM to hold talks with Blinken

Diplomatic relations between the US and France hit a low point last month, after Australia canceled a previous \$40bn French-designed submarine deal

NEWS DESK

PARIS: French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian will hold talks with United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Oct 5, in which the two will aim to work on restoring confidence between the two countries, said a statement from Le Drian's office. Diplomatic relations between the United States and France hit a low point



last month, after Australia canceled a previous \$40 billion French-designed submarine deal, to build instead at least eight nucle-

ar-powered submarines with US and British technology. In retaliation, France briefly withdrew its ambassador to the United States, although the ambassador has since returned to Washington DC. US President Joe Biden and French President Emmanuel Macron have also held talks since that row over the nuclear submarine deal broke out, and have pledged to begin "in-depth consultations" on the two countries' relations.

Pakistan sends 13 more trucks of aid to Afghanistan

DNA

KABUL: Pakistan on Sunday sent 13 more trucks of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan via the Torkham border. According to a statement by the Pak-Afghan Cooperation Forum, which made arrangements for the food trucks to be sent, 174 tons worth of flour, rice, and pulses were sent to the country. The aid was handed over by PACF's Habibullah Khan to Afghan Deputy Minister for Refugee Affairs Arsalah Khan at the Torkham border crossing point.

A handing over ceremony was also held which featured brief remarks by Habibullah Khan regarding the aid.

According to the statement, Afghan officials - in charge of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Molvi Sherzad, Police Chief Jalalabad Mohammad Nizami, and in charge of the Afghan Torkham Border S Ghazilullah Hashmi - were also in attendance.

"Afghanistan counterparts gratefully accepted the aid and prayed for better relationships with each other in future," the statement said.

India reports 24,354 new cases

MONITORING DESK

NEW DELHI: India's COVID-19 tally rose to 33,791,061 Saturday morning as 24,354 new cases were registered during the past 24 hours, the health ministry's data showed.

Besides this, 234 related deaths have taken place during the past 24 hours, which took the total death

toll to 448,573. Majority of the new cases, 13,834 infections and 95 related deaths, were reported from the southern state of Kerala. According to the ministry, there are still 273,889 active COVID-19 cases in the country. So far 33,068,599 people have been successfully cured and discharged from hospitals, out of which 25,455 were discharged during the past 24 hours.



TORKHAM: Pakistani officials handing over aid to Afghan officials at Torkham border. - DNA

Government to reduce import bill of food items: State Minister

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said that government has decided to bring maximum land under plough to reduce import bill of food items.

Addressing a PTI Workers' Convention at Model Colony No.2 at Sitiana Road here on Saturday night, he said that Pakistan had 220 million acres of land but crops were being cultivated over only 50 million acres. He said that PTI government had decided to bring maximum land under cultivation of various crops to cater domestic food requirements. In this connection, olive and palm oil trees were being planted over huge area to reduce import bill of edible items. The government had also earmarked Rs.1 billion for this project and now Pakistan will soon get place among top 10 countries

of the world where palm oil and olive trees were cultivated at a large scale. Farrukh Habib said that Prime Minister Imran Khan was committed to transform Pakistan into a welfare state on the pattern of Riyasat-e-Madina where basic amenities would be provided to the masses at their door steps.

He said that Pakistan was at bankruptcy stage when PTI came into power, adding only 15 days reserves were left by previous rulers. However, Prime Minister Imran Khan and his team worked day and night and overcome the deficit and now our economy grows 4 percent while national exports had reached at 25.5 billion dollars first time in the history. State Minister for Information and Broadcasting said that government had launched various programs for welfare and betterment of the masses. In this connection, Rs.60 billion had been allocated to provide easy loans

to the people for construction of their own houses and out of it Rs.20 billion had so far been doled out. Similarly, Rs.500,000 interest free loan was also being provided to the masses so that they could start their own business instead of running behind jobs. This loan will be repaid within 10-20 years on easy installments, he added.

Farrukh Habib further said that Prime Minister Imran Khan had introduced 'Kisan portal' to resolve issues and miseries of this community while an additional amount of Rs.1100 billion was doled out to lessen financial constraints of this segment. He said that government had started construction of dams which will help to add 10,000 megawatt electricity in the system. He said that previous rulers without proper planning spent huge money on power houses which not only increased a burden of Rs.1500 billion on the masses but also aggravated the electricity crisis in the

country. State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said that Prime Minister Imran Khan had adopted austerity and saved huge public money from various hedges to use it in public welfare projects.

He said that Imran Khan was a bold and brave leader who highlighted the Kashmir case at UN forum. He also made it clear before the world that Muslims could not bear blasphemy on any cost so global law should be framed to check profanity. He said that PTI government had dragged out country from multifaceted crises and put it on road to progress and prosperity. Now the people would start enjoying fruits of national development very soon, he added.

About Faisalabad, he said that repair and reconstruction work had started on its main roads while water filtration plant will be installed in each union council.

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