



Islamabad POST

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Govt cognizant of inflation's impact upon poor, says PM

Detailed News On Page-01

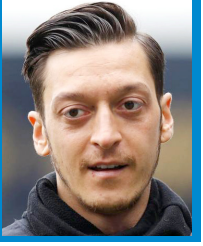
Efforts afoot to sabotage CPEC projects: Asad

Detailed News On Page-08



Ozil wants to support Asian footballers

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

PPP opposes the NAB Ordinance

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) backed Senator Saleem Mandviwalla announced that his party would oppose the promulgation of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Second Amendment Ordinance 2021. According to a private news channel, the President of Pakistan on Wednesday promulgated the ordinance sent by Prime Minister Imran Khan to him after getting the approval of the federal cabinet the same day. Reacting over the matter, PPP Senator Saleem Mandviwalla said that the federal ministers had come up with strange logic regarding the appointment of new NAB chairman.

UAE has overcome Covid crisis

WEB DESK

ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates has successfully overcome the COVID-19 crisis with life set to return to normal. Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan said, state news agency WAM reported. The United Arab Emirates recorded 176 new Covid-19 cases on Tuesday, representing the lowest daily figure since Aug. 3, 2020. 258 people recovered while one patient died, raising the death toll to 2,104.

NAB chief extension an NRO

DNA

LAHORE: PML-N Information Secretary Marriyum Aurangzeb on Tuesday lashed out at Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry after he advised the opposition to change their leader - Shehbaz Sharif - so that the government could hold talks on the appointment of the NAB chief. "He [Fawad] should keep his advice to himself as it was already clearly enshrined in the constitution that consultation with the opposition leader was a mandatory procedure".

Govt rules out consultations with Shehbaz

"Opposition has to change its leader, if they want consultation with the government on appointment of the NAB's chairman," says Fawad Chaudhary

Deputy Chairman NAB resigns

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi on Wednesday approved National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Deputy Chairman Hussain Asghar's resignation, days after he had reportedly sent it. President Alvi accepts resignation of NAB deputy chairman. The resignation's acceptance came as the president promulgated the National Accountability (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021, under which NAB Chairman retired Justice Javed Iqbal will continue to serve the post until a new chairman is appointed. As per the rules, after the resignation is received, it is sent to the law ministry with the recommendation of the NAB chairman.

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SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Wednesday ruled out the possibility of consulting opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif on the appointment of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman. "Opposition has to change its leader, if they want consultation with the government on appointment of the NAB's chairman," he said in a news conference. Flanked by Minister of Law and Justice Dr. Muhammad Farogh Naseem, info minister said, Prime Minister Imran Khan would not speak to Shehbaz Sharif at any cost. "Now its up to President of Pakistan, as I speak for Prime Minister," he said, adding neither he knowledgeable about the opinion of the President, nor consulted the President Office in this regard. The minister said consultation with Shehbaz Sharif on the appointment of NAB Chairman will be tantamount to assigning the investigator a thief on his whims and wishes. If Shehbaz Sharif has an iota of shame, he should step down from the position of opposition leader in the National Assembly.

Continued on Page 06

Chairman to continue until new successor

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: Former Justice Javed Iqbal will continue working as NAB chairman after President Dr Arif Alvi promulgated the amended National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) 2021. The ordinance states that the current NAB chairman will remain in his post until a successor is appointed. The appointment by the president for NAB chairman will be done after consultations are held between the prime minister and leader of the opposition. "However, if there is no consensus, then the president will refer the matter to a parliamentary committee," reads the ordinance. The committee shall consist of 12 members and will be formed by the National Assembly speaker.

Continued on Page 06



RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister for defense production, Zobaida Jalal presenting a souvenir to Uzbekistan Ambassador Oybek Usmanov. - DNA

EU mission to visit Pakistan in November

The GSP-Plus incentive provides many Pakistani export-oriented products duty-free access in the EU market

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The fourth biennial review (2020 - 2021) of the European Union's Special Incentive Arrangement for Good Governance and Sustainable Development (GSP-Plus) has commenced and Pakistan has submitted its responses to the EU on the list of issues and follow up questions on September 15, 2020, and September 15, 2021. According to a statement issued Wednesday, the EU monitoring mission is expected to visit Pakistan in November 2021. The GSP-Plus is a pivotal mechanism for improving economic relations between Pakistan and the EU, whereby Pakistan is given zero-rated tariff preferences on almost 91% of tariff lines to the EU market. The GSP-Plus incentive provides many Pakistani export-oriented products, including garments, bed linen, terry towels, hosiery, leather, sports and surgical goods, among other, duty-free access in the EU market. The EU GSP-Plus is linked with the implementation of 27 UN conventions on human rights, labour rights, climate change, governance, and narcotics control. After every two years, a review is carried out by the bloc to ensure the commitment of the beneficiary countries to effectively implement these 27 UN conventions. So far, three successful biennial reviews have been concluded in 2016, 2018, and 2020, respectively.

Pandora leaks Maryam slams NAB, SC's 'silence'

IHC overrules the registrar's office objections on Maryam's application in acquittal plea

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz questioned on Wednesday the "silence" of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and the Supreme Court on the Pandora Papers leaks. Speaking to reporters after a hearing in the Islamabad High Court

'Sharifs trying to hide corruption'

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib has regretted the PML (N) leadership is targeting the security institutions to hide their corruption. Addressing a news



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Lt Gen Nadeem Anjum new DG ISI

Lt. Gen Amir to head Gujranwala corps while Lt. Gen Asim Munir will be new QMG; Lt Gen Faiz Hameed appointed Corps Commnadr Peshawar

DNA

RAWALPINDI: In a major reshuffle in top brass of Pakistan Army, postings and appointments have been made, according to a press statement issued by the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Wednesday. According to the military's media wing, Lieutenant General Nadeem Ahmad Anjum has been appointed as the new director general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Outgoing ISI Director General Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed has now been appointed as Corps Commander Peshawar. The announcement came on Wednesday after



a meeting between Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the PM House in Islamabad where the two discussed a raft of issues including the appointment of the new ISI director general. Lt Gen Nadeem Ahmed Anjum previously had served as Karachi Corps Commander and Frontier Constabulary Inspector General (IG FC) and Commandant and Command Staff College Quetta and Brigade Commander Hangu Kurram Agency. He belonged to the Punjab Regiment. Meanwhile, the outgoing ISI DG and newly appointed Corps Commander Peshawar, Lt Gen Faiz Hameed, also paid a farewell visit to Prime Minister Imran Khan.

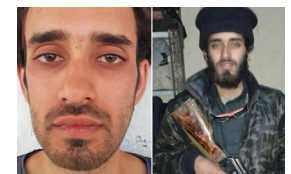
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UK national charged with terror offenses

Shabazz Suleman, 25, went missing on holiday in Turkey in 2014 after finishing his high-school exams

NEWS DESK

LONDON: A British man who allegedly joined Daesh after vanishing from a family holiday as a teenager more than seven years ago has been charged with terrorist offenses. Shabazz Suleman, 25, went missing on holiday in Turkey in 2014 after finishing his high-school exams and securing a university place in Britain. In the summer of 2013, Suleman traveled to Syria as part of an aid convoy, but stands accused of returning



to the region to serve Daesh and being trained by the terrorist group to use weapons. When concerns about his disappearance first surfaced in 2014, Suleman said he was caught up in a secret mass prisoner swap between Ankara and regional armed groups after

Continued on Page 06

COAS visits FFR Abbotabad

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) visited Frontier Force Regimental Centre Abbotabad, on Wednesday, on the occasion of annual Commanding Officers Conference. COAS laid floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada and addressed the participants. COAS praised the Regiment for its professional excellence, outstanding operational performance and war worthiness. Earlier on his arrival at the Regimental Centre, COAS was received by the Colonel Commandant FF Regiment; Lieutenant General Aamir Abbasi, Inspector General Arms; Lieutenant General Majid Ehsan and Commandant FF Regimental Centre.

Lowest covid cases in 3 months

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reported 39 deaths in the last 24 hours by novel coronavirus as the number of positive cases has surged to 1,253,868. The nationwide tally of fatalities has jumped to 27,986 on Wednesday. According to the latest figures by the National Command and Operation Center (NOC) 1,212 persons tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 24 hours. Punjab remains the worst-hit province in terms of deaths followed by Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Till now 12,724 individuals have lost their lives to the epidemic in Punjab 7,451 in Sindh 5,608 in KP, 930 in Islamabad, 738 in Azad Kashmir, 349 in Balochistan, and 186 in GB.

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'Govt cognizant of inflation's impact upon poor'

The Prime Minister says that Kamyab Pakistan, Sehat Sahulat Cards and Ehsaas are the flagship programs of the government aimed at poverty alleviation

CENTRELINE REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that the Government is cognizant of the problems faced by the poor due to inflation. It is for this purpose that targeted subsidies should be provided to the under-privileged segments of the society, said the Prime Minister. SAPM on Poverty Alleviation Dr. Sania Nishtar briefed the Prime Minister on provision of targeted subsidies to the eligible families under the umbrella of Ehsaas program. The Prime Minister said that Kamyab Pakistan, Sehat Sahulat Cards and Ehsaas are the flagship programs of the government aimed

at poverty alleviation and social uplift of the lower segments of the society. The Prime Minister directed that a comprehensive awareness program be launched to inform the masses about how targeted subsidies can be availed. The meeting was apprised that Ehsaas program has developed a mobile app in collaboration with National Bank of Pakistan. This application would be used by vendors to provide subsidized items to eligible Ehsaas beneficiaries throughout the country. It was informed that due care has been taken to eliminate chances of misuse of targeted subsidies under the Ehsaas program. The briefing was also attended by Minister Finance

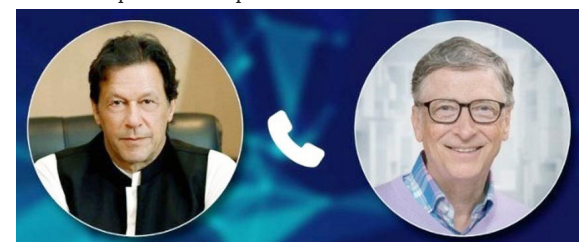
Shukat Fayaz Tarin, Minister Defense Pervaiz Khat-tak, Minister Information Fawad Chaudhry, SAPM Dr. Shehbaz Gill, Governor State Bank Dr. Raza Baqir, President National Bank and senior officers. Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Imran Khan directed to further strengthen regional linkages for the promotion of bilateral trade and commercial relations with Kyrgyzstan. The Prime Minister was talking to Pakistan's Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan Sardar Azhar Tariq Khanm, who called on him here on Wednesday. Ambassador Azhar Tariq apprised the Prime Minister of the prospects of economic diplomacy with the whole Central Asian region especially Kyrgyzstan.

- reiterates commitment to end polio in Pakistan

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has reaffirmed his government's commitment to end all forms of polio in Pakistan. In a telephonic conversation with co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Bill Gates, the Prime Minister said the country has reported only one case of wild poliovirus this year and the progress against polio virus is positive. Praising progress towards polio eradication, Bill Gates pledged his continued

support to Pakistan's polio program for ensuring that no child in the country is at risk of paralysis due to polio virus. The Prime Minister and Bill Gates expressed concern regarding the health system in Afghanistan. They discussed the importance of resumption of polio campaigns in Afghanistan to stop the disease and protect Pakistan's recent gains towards ending polio. Imran Khan highlighted that more than half of the population in Afghanistan was living below poverty line and in dire need of financial assistance.



Quality education is our top priority

Purpose of Counseling Seminar is to aware children of Lodhran about where to take admission after matriculation

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

LODHRAN: Tareen Education Foundation (TEF) organized a career counseling seminar in Government girls Degree College Lodhran. President Tareen Education Foundation Ali Khan Tareen participated as Chief Guest. CEO Education Islamabad Yousuf Almas participated as career counseling Train-

er while CEO Education Mian Abdul Razzaq, CEO Tareen Education Foundation and college administration also participated. While addressing Ali Tareen said that purpose of Tareen Education Foundation is to provide quality education comparable to education in schools of Lahore and Islamabad along with best facilities. Purpose of Counseling Seminar is to aware children

of Lodhran about where to take admission after matriculation or which institution have scholarship opportunities along with that children of Lodhran should also be made aware that what kind of education is being provided at LUMS and NUST like institutions. Ali Tareen said that alongside quality education opportunities for sports is also being provided to the children, we will make Girls

cricket teams in Schools and Colleges and their will have them trained on international level. CEO Education Lodhran Mian Abdul Razzaq said that Tareen Education Foundation Lodhran is nothing less than a blessing, we have always appreciated and supported the efforts of Tareen Education Foundation. Tareen Education Foundation's CEO Akbar Khan said that Career Counselling Session is the first of its kind in Southern Punjab, 124 High and Higher Secondary School teachers and students participated in the session.

Ali Tareen also distributed the prizes among the children who have gotten positions in Maths Competition held under Tareen Education Foundation earlier. Later Ali Khan Tareen visited Modern Information Technology Center established by Tareen Education Foundation in Government Girls Degree College.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Abdul Qayyum Niazi calls on Foreign Minister, Shah Mehmood Qureshi. – DNA

CDA conducts feedback survey from citizens

Sixty five percent people are satisfied about the rehabilitation of street lights, 60 percent people are satisfied with the steps taken by the CDA to end the occupation and encroachment on govt property

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The management of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has obtained public opinion on the steps taken to provide municipal services to the citizens through a survey. This is first time that CDA has conducted a survey for getting feedback from citizens on the authority performance in order to further improve service delivery. According to the survey, overall, 60 per cent people were satisfied with the various services, while 40 percent expressed their views on improvement in different segments. Sixty percent people ex-

pressed satisfaction over the question asked from the citizens regarding the maintenance of green areas of Islamabad and care of plants. Sixty five percent people are satisfied about the rehabilitation of street lights, 60 percent people are satisfied with the steps taken by the CDA to end the occupation and encroachment on government property, percent people are satisfied about the rehabilitation of sidewalks, lane marking. Forty-five percent said they were satisfied with waste disposal and timely collection while Seventy seven percent people were satisfied with the restoration and replacement of street lights, 64 percent with cleanliness and 34 per-

cent with road drainage and road repairs. The Member Administration said that CDA has developed an integrated system for garbage collection and disposal in urban as well as rural areas. In this regard, one thousand trolleys and two hundred skips have been placed at different places in the city while tender has been issued for having another 150 skips and 500 trolleys. Elaborating on the environment, the Member Finance said that so far about 230 parks have been rehabilitated while other facilities including jogging tracks, cycling tracks and walking tracks in green areas have been added in different areas of the city.

Similarly, restoration work is being completed in F-9 Park in which so far of all lights in F-9 Park have been restored, renovation works including civil work, upgradation of cricket ground have been completed. The Member Finance further said that new parks are being constructed on Islamabad Expressway near Quaid-e-Azam Portrait, H-8, Diplomatic Enclave, Park Enclave and along the Islamabad Highway. Regarding waste disposal in Islamabad, it was informed that a decision has also been taken to set up a joint dumping site for Islamabad and Rawalpindi where waste will be disposed of using modern scientific methods.

Indonesian CG in Karachi visits IoBM

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: "We must pursue the development of culture and people-to-people contact to enhance mutual cooperation between Indonesia and Pakistan," said H.E, the

Consul General of Indonesia in Karachi, Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat. He was addressing the management, faculty, and students at the Institute of Business Management (IoBM), Karachi on Wednesday, October 6, 2021. The event was presided

over by Mr. Bashir Janmohammed, Chancellor IoBM, who also presented an overview of the rich history of Indonesia-Pakistan relations. During his address, Consul General Dr. June said that the first Indonesia-Pakistan Youth Forum has been established. This will focus on culture, education, tourism, and exchange programs. The interactive discussion with the Consul General provided insights regarding cooperation and collaboration on multiple fronts. Also present on this occasion were IoBM's Rector, Deans, and management. Dr. Tariq Rahim Soomro, Acting Rector and Dean CCSIS, IoBM, delivered the vote of thanks.



Over 3.11m people get vaccination in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: As many as 3,119,709 people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in Faisalabad district. District Health Officer Dr. Ataul Mun'im said on Wednesday that 2,302,154 people had been given the first dose while 765,519 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He said that 29,723 health workers were also given the first dose while 22,314 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of anti-coronavirus vaccine was available in the district.

As of now 517,848 first doses and 345,232 second doses were in the stock at Faisalabad. He said that 37 vaccination centers and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad where registered persons were also getting anti-coronavirus vaccine doses. To facilitate the people these centers had been established in various areas of the city including Allied Hospital, District Head Quarters Hospital, Government General Hospital G.M Abad, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital Samanabad, Children Hospital, Sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Head Quarters Hospital Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandlianwala, Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Jaranwala, Government General Hospital Chak 224-RB, New Building RHC Khurrianwala, New Building THQ Samundri, New Building THQ Tandlianwala, Social Security Hospital Medina Town, Wapda Hospital, Rural Health Centers Mureed Wala, Chak 174-JB, Chak 134-JB, Chak 229-RB, Chak 65-GB, RHC Lundianwala Jaranwala, RHC Khurrianwala Jaranwala, Pindi Sheikh Musa, Kanjwani, Mamukanjan, RHC Chak 400-GB, RHC Chak 153-RB, RHC Chak 374-GB and Chak 469-GB, he added. – APP

Importance of human security stressed

ARIJ GHAZNAVI

ISLAMABAD: Speakers discuss the importance of freedom from want through business and entrepreneurship at an event arranged by the Human Security Institute (THIS) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI). The seminar was a star-studded event with representation of leaders from business, entrepreneur, academic, and think tank community. There were a number of prestigious speakers from various departments, each of which gave important suggestion and add key points in the discussion.

Dir. CSP, Dr. Talat Shabir touched upon the subject of human security and explained its critical link to reducing poverty alleviation. He cited China as an exemplary case among the nations that worked wonders for bringing its

nations out of pits of poverty. Earlier in his welcome, DG ISSI, Amb. Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry highlighted the fact that human security is such a topic that received little or no attention in Pakistan. He said that human security is a strategic issue. In his opening remarks, Former DG ISRAA, Maj Gen. Samraiz Salik ISRA stated that a visible shift of global power from west to east has taken place. He said that concept of security has also changed from state-centric to individual-centric. During the discussion session, the speakers and the participants raised many pertinent points. They shared their own experiences with them and proposed result-oriented suggestions. All the speakers and discussants agreed that following the Chinese model blindly would be a huge mistake and Pakistan need to tailor this model according to its needs.



Gandhara Festival begins at Taxila with full swing



DNA

TAXILA: Gandhara festival at Taxila Museum, Taxila was held to highlight and showcase the significance of Gandhara Civilization, art, culture and artifacts. The event was organized/set up by Center for Culture and Development (C2D) along with the Punjab Archaeology Department to support and promote the theme Project of the Punjab Government aiming "Protection & Promotion of Cultural Heritage of Punjab through Sustainable Tourism and Economic Growth. The UNESCO Pakistan is a leading partner of the project and extending expertise and technical sup-

port to the Government of Punjab for the protection and promotion of heritage sites of Punjab which have paramount importance for Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sufi Islam. The title for the exhibition is "Roots or Routes: Exploring Pakistan's Buddhist and Jain Histories". The exhibition offering exhibits like posters and pictures of Buddhism and Jainism remains and heritage sites in various regions and provinces of Pakistan is one of the most potent ways of presenting and projecting our heritage not only to our local audiences but to the our diplomatic communities and international viewership as well.

These heritage and its diverse exhibition to the world would enhance public awareness about the importance of these treasures and a will to protect and promote these treasures for the posterity. The exhibition /Gandhara Festival would continue from October 5 through October 9. It offers opportunity for art, culture and history lovers to benefit from the work of experts on Gandhara civilization to quench their thirst for knowledge on this subject of utmost importance for our history and heritage. Gandhara Festival was inaugurated by MNA and Federal Parliamentary Secretary, Culture and Heritage Gazala Shafi.

HEC, British Council host conference on climate action

ISLAMABAD: The British Council together with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan on Wednesday hosted a roundtable conference entitled "Education for climate action: How universities can steer the climate crisis."

The higher education sector is enabling the world to understand the impact of climate change on the environment. However, there is still a long way to go before policy and citizen action catch up with the scientific evidence of what is happening to the world's climate. As the country that is fifth most affected by climate change, there is a need in Pakistan to identify gaps, opportunities, and pave developmental pathways and thought leadership towards building a greener Pakistan. With COP26 (UN Climate Change Conference) taking place in the UK later this year, the Education for Climate Action roundtable aims to bring together stakeholders, academics, civil society, and development changemakers from Pakistan and the UK to a platform together to discuss where we are, what more needs to be done and what we can learn from each other. Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Shafiqat Mehmood, Development Director British High Commission Pakistan Annabel Gerry, and British Council Country Director Pakistan Amir Ramzan spoke in the opening session. – APP

KMU extends ETEA test till October 17

PESHAWAR: Khyber Medical University Wednesday extended ETEA test for admission in Allied Health Sciences till October 17 due to expected rains and rough weather. The test will now be held simultaneously on Sunday, October 17 at 9am in different centers of the province instead of October 10. It is worth mentioning that this change in the test date has been made in the light of the reports of the Meteorological Department that heavy rains are likely in some parts of the province on October 9 and 10. A statement issued by the KMU Directorate of Admission said, the test will now be held on Sunday, October 17. Roll number slips will be issued to the concerned candidates soon. While the rest of the terms and conditions have not been changed. In addition, all concerned candidates can visit the KMU website <http://ahs.kmutu.pk> for more information. – APP

Govt attracting maximum foreign remittances

SME sector has to play its key role to reinvigorate the economy and the Government must encourage the local textile sector through a special incentive package

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD. Government is implementing a sustainable growth model to enhance exports and attract maximum foreign remittances in order to get rid of inflation and loans on a permanent basis, said Mian Farrukh Habib, State Minister for Information & Broadcasting. Addressing the Annual General Meeting (AGM) cum dinner of All Pakistan Bedsheets & Upholstery Manufacturers Association (AP-BUMA), he said that textile sector was experiencing worst crisis just 3-4 years ago, however Prime Minister Imran Khan who was then in opposition consulted all stakeholders and a comprehensive textile policy was evolved. He said that after coming into power the PTI Government categorically announced subsidized Gas and Electricity tariff for the industrial sector so that its dynamism could be restored and we

could enhance our exports and create new job opportunities for the unemployed youth. He underlined the importance of the SME sector in the national economy and said that most of the Large Manufacturing Units (LMU) had started their journey as SME's. He said that only the SME segment has potential to immediately double its exports and hence the Government is trying its optimum best to resolve its problems on priority basis. He said that corona was a global phenomenon which has plugged major economies into turmoil but our Government decided to continue industrial activities to save the exports and employment of industrial and commercial workers. He said that world financial institutions were predicting GDP growth of Pakistan at nominal rate of only 1.5-2%. He said that prudent policies played a major role in our growth which have crossed the mark of 4.5% and because of



our sustainable economic model it will become 5% very soon. Quoting various statistics, he said that the Government provided best possible facilities to stabilize the economy on the war footing. He said that his office in Islamabad is open for the business community of Faisalabad and they could contact him at any time for the resolution of their individual and collective issues. He appreciated the smooth transition of power in APBUMA and said that the Government was also contemplat-

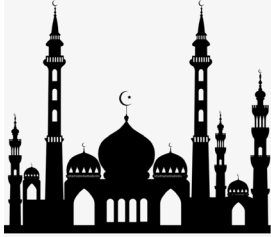
ing to introduce Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) to restore the credibility of general elections. He said that FCCI and FPCCI should also switch over to the new technological interventions so that a conducive climate could be created in Pakistan for the use of electronic voting machines at the national level. Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh President said that Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) is the mother organization of all trade bodies which have been given due representation in this elected forum. He said that the SME sector has to play its key role to reinvigorate the economy and the Government must encourage the local textile sector through a special incentive package. He said that from one dollar of yarn export we could fetch 12-16 dollars from the same volume of yarn through value addition, hence the government must focus on the value added textile sector. He said that Pakistan has

harvested a bumper cotton crop and we have sufficient export orders. "We will have to import high quality cotton yarn to meet our export orders", he said and added that no doubt Government has already trimmed Regulatory Duty from 10 to 5% but the appreciation of dollar has diluted this edge and Government must bring it down to zero. He also supported the demand of zero rating for the SME sector and said that immediate steps would further spur the export activities in the country. The meeting was also addressed by Senior Vice President FCCI Mr. Imran Mahmood Sheikh, Group Leader Mian Muhammad Adrees, Chairman Khawaja Muhammad Younis, Retiring Senior Vice Chairman AP-BUMA Engineer Bilal Jameel, Mr. Arif Ehsan Malik and Deputy Chief Manager SBP Faisalabad Mr. Muhammad Akbar. Later shields were also presented to the guests and participants of the meeting.

7 booked for torturing FDA employees

FAISALABAD: Millat Town police on Wednesday arrested seven people for torturing the employees of Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) and damaging the machinery. According to police, a FDA enforcement team during the checking of legal status of private housing schemes, sealed the office of unapproved housing colony namely 'Kirran Valley' on Millat Road. Some people present in the office tortured and abused the members of enforcement team and damaged a tractor and resorted to aerial firing. Those were arrested include: Amin Jutt, Baba Ayyub, Sajid, Fakhar, Qamar, Salahuddin and Shan. A case had been registered against the accused. – APP

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	04:43 am
Zohr.....	11:56 am
Asr.....	04:05 pm
Maghrib.....	05:46 pm
Isha.....	07:08 pm



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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Emergency

Rescue (Police).....	15
Bomb Disposal.....	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance..1122 & Rescue Services..4451122	
Motorway Police.....	9266044
Motorway Police.....	927060120
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....	9222596
Rawalpindi.....	927060120



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PIA Flight Info.....	114
PIA Cargo.....	9280979
Railway Inquiry.....	117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5	
WASA Rawalpindi.....	5555489
CAA.....	9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....	5611111
MH.....	5611116
Cantt Hospital.....	9270907-11
DHQ.....	5556311-4
RGH.....	9290301-7
Holy Family.....	9290322-7
PIMS.....	9261170-79
Polyclinic.....	9218300-09
Shifa International..4603666	



Departments

CDA.....	9221334-43
CDA.....	9208301-04
Met Office.....	9250360-6
RDA.....	5555864
TMA.....	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3



Complaints

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11.....	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8.....	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8.....	9266316
Wapda Islamabad.....	9217579
Wapda Rawalpindi	111-309-309



Islamabad Metropolitan

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



Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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Utmost efforts a must for Pakistan to join tech race

The president, addressing the launching ceremony of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) pilot project, said the children's motivation towards science education would create actual wealth for the country

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Wednesday said that it required utmost efforts for Pakistan to join the global race of technology which would also guarantee the future national economic development.

The president, addressing the launching ceremony of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) pilot project, said the children's motivation towards science education would create actual wealth for the country which would later support the industry and IT sector too.

Under the umbrella of Ministry of Science and Technology, the Pakistan Science Foundation is executing the STEM's first phase project under PSDP program. The project is initially being launched in 50 schools across Pakistan, selected based on their excellent academic results



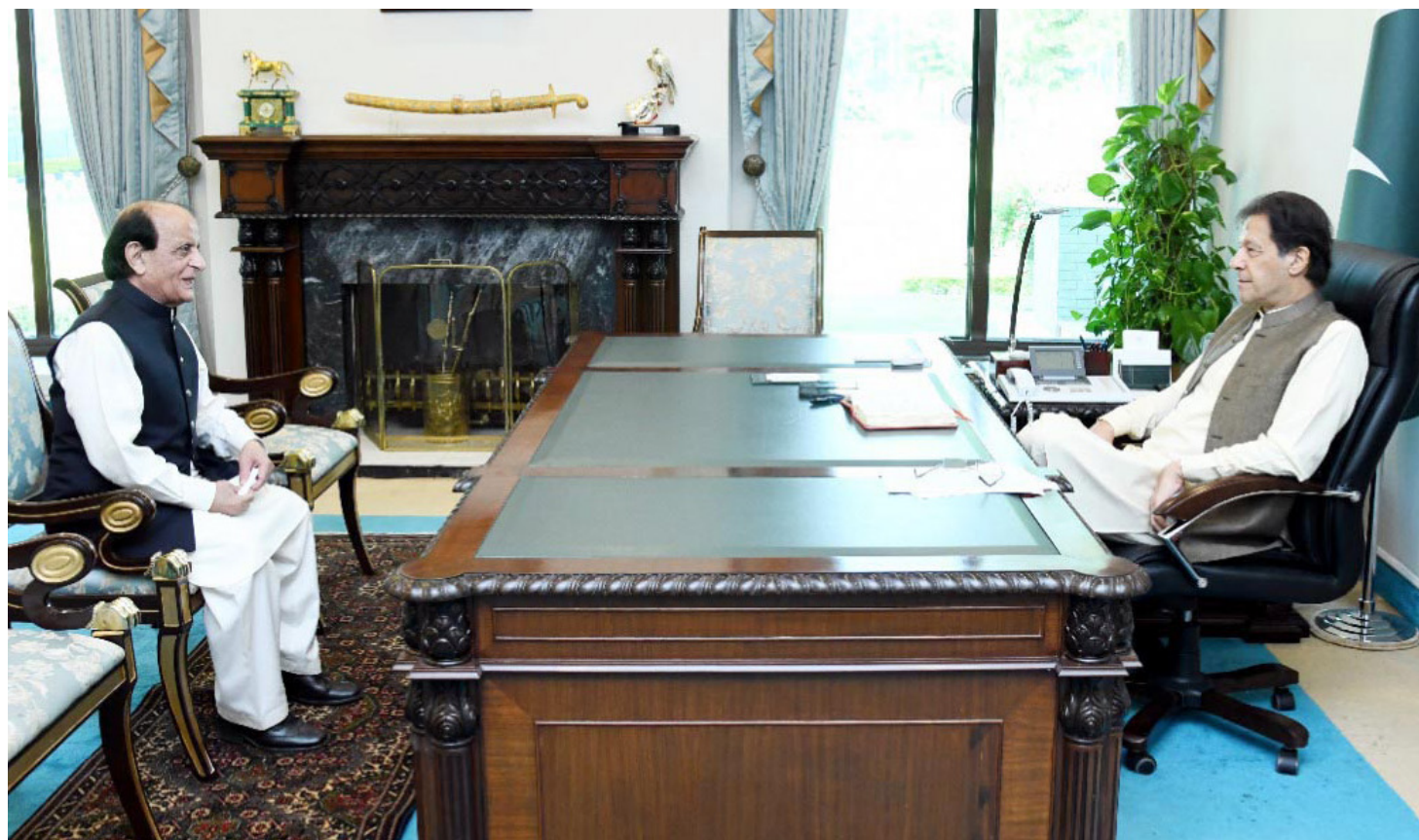
during last three years. Calling STEM education "very dear" to him, the president referred to a survey by Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) which showed that the interest of Pakistani children towards STEM was comparatively low in the region. Quoting a study by University of Sargodha, the president said parents, visiting museum and science festivals as well as encouragement by the teachers played key role to motivate

children towards STEM education. He said China produced around 4.7 million STEM graduates annually, India 2.6 million and Iran 0.35 million while Pakistan would be far behind in the list. Calling the launching of STEM as a timely step, the president called for adopting the required factors for promotion of STEM education which provided the basis for development in organized societies. He also hinted at visiting

the STEM schools sometime and added that it was inevitable to uplift the people to compete the world. Minister for Science and Technology Senator Shibli Faraz said the program would be spread throughout the country. The selected schools will become hubs of STEM education and will serve as model schools for all schools of adjoining areas. He said the program also feature training of teachers and preparation of master trainers. Moreo-

ver, a monitoring mechanism will also be in place to examine the productivity of the program. Moreover, he said the STEM FABLABS will be established in all STEM designated schools which would have state of the art research facilities and will also provide latest resources for digital fabrication. Federal Education Minister Shafiqat Mahmood said the education ministry had launched a pilot program in 35 educational insti-

tutes of Islamabad which would also benefit the Pakistan Science Foundation in STEM initiative. He said STEM was also part of uniform education curriculum and added that teacher training was of high importance to achieve the desired results. Chairman of Pakistan Science Foundation Dr Shahid Baig also addressed the event, attended by provincial ministers, diplomats and principals of the STEM designated schools.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan Sardar Azhar Tariq Khan called on Prime Minister Imran Khan. - DNA

Experts concerned over Anti-forced conversion law

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The impending anti-forced conversions legislation in Pakistan, which has already been tabled before the parliamentary committee on minorities contravenes the basic tenets of the Constitution and flouts the legislative authority of the Parliament as the proposed bill is imposed rather indigenous and aims to serve foreign interests. This was the crux of the discussion held at a seminar titled 'Rhetoric and reality of forced conversions in Pakistan' which was organized by Islamabad Bar Association and Legal Thinkers Forum in collaboration with Institute of Policy Studies inside Islamabad Kachehri.

The session was addressed as keynote speaker by Sufi Ghulam Hussain, research officer at IPS, and author of the IPS baseline study 'Forced Conversions: Rhetoric and Reality'. Among other speakers were Senator Mushtaq Ahmed Khan from Jamaat-Islami, Dr Ikram-ul-Haque, Secretary Council of Islamic Ideology, Dr Inamullah, DG Council of Islamic Ideology, Rao Abdur Raheem from Islamabad Bar Association, Qazi Rafi-Uddin, senior advocate, and Haroon-ur-Rasheed, senior advocate, Islamabad High Court. Syed Nadeem Farhat Gilani, senior research officer at IPS, Zahid Asif Chaudhry, general secretary Legal Thinkers Forum and a large number of legal fraternity also attended the session.

ICCI shows concerns over rising debt burden

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that the central government's total debt has increased by more than 11 per cent in the last one year, which should be a matter of great concerns for the policymakers as the rising debt burden would consume most of the country's financial resources on debt servicing and leave insufficient budget for development projects that would badly affect the economic growth of the country. He emphasized that the government should formulate a comprehensive strategy to get rid of the debt burden

as rising debt would create multiple problems for the country's economic future. He said this while addressing a delegation of the business community during its visit to ICCI. Mian Akram Farid Chairman Founder Group was also present at the occasion. Muhammad Shamim, Ahmed Khan, Zahid Hamid, Haji Nisar Langa and others were in the delegation. Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that total debt of the central government has surged from Rs.35.66 trillion in August 2020 to

over Rs.39.77 trillion August 2021, which was not a healthy trend. He said that the external debt has also increased from Rs.12.123 trillion in August 2020 to Rs.13.436 trillion in August 2021 showing an increase of over Rs.1.3 trillion during the last one year. These trends showed that our country was sinking into a serious debt trap and things have reached to such a point that the government has to borrow to repay the

interest on loans which was very worrying. He urged that the government should reduce its reliance on loans and try to run the economy with indigenous resources. He further stressed that the government should devise a comprehensive strategy to get rid of the debt burden so that with reliance on indigenous resources, Pakistan could move towards sustainable economic growth. Jamshed Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI said that the price of electricity in Pakistan was already very high as compared to regional countries, which had increased the cost of doing business manifold besides raising inflation.

Court reserves verdict on indictment of Zahir Jaffar

ISLAMABAD: A trial court of Islamabad, hearing the murder case of slain Noor Mukadam on Wednesday postponed the indictment of Zahir Jaffar and reserved the decision on his petition. At the outset of hearing, accused Zahir Jaffar pleaded for a chance to speak independently at the end of the trial before the Additional Session Judge Atta Rabani. Zahir complaint to the court that the the US embassy had offered him to provide a legal assistance through a lawyer of his choice to be selected from the list but that list was not provided to him in the jail. The court however turned down his request and asked him to address the bench through his lawyer. The defence lawyer requested the bench for at least four week time period for indictment as seven day time was not sufficient on the grounds that the accused did not know that what kind of evidence was available against him along with the challan. The right of fair trial couldn't be met with hiding information from the accused, the defence counsel submitted while pleading to provide the forensic report, CCTV footage and other records to his client. The plaintiff's lawyer however objected to the defence counsel and submitted that this record was sealed and it couldn't be shared.

'Early breast cancer diagnosis saves lives'

RAWALPINDI: Vice-chancellor (VC) Rawalpindi Medical University (RMU) Professor Dr Muhammad Umar on Wednesday said breast cancer was a killing disease, but was curable if diagnosed at an earlier stage. Talking to APP the VC said there was a need to educate women about self-examination because breast cancer did not affect only women but the whole family have to bear consequences in terms of social and financial impacts. "Women should begin screening for breast cancer at the age of 40", he said adding, "If you have a family history of breast cancer, you may need to be screened preferably". Dr Umer said cases of breast cancer in Pakistan was alarming as Pakistan has the highest cases of breast cancer in Asia. "One out of 8th women in Pakistan was diagnosed with breast cancer during their lifetime," he said. He revealed that women in the developing world, like Pakistan, tend to die at greater rates than in more developed countries because the disease was generally diagnosed later which resulted in poor treatment results. Dr Umer informed that to get relevant data and improve the services of health care in hospitals, a unit of Cancer Registry had been set up at Holy Family Hospital with the assistance of surgical specialists and young doctors.

PAC seeks progress report of NBP audit within 30 days

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Wednesday directed audit authorities to expedite audit of National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and submit progress report within 30 days. The committee met here at Parliament House in the chairmanship of MNA Rana Tanveer Hussain. The committee examined the audit report for the year 2019-20 maximum five highlighted audit paras in order of highest amount involved therein. The senior officials of NBP briefed the committee about the Human Resource and Procurement including hiring policy of 2012 to 2020. They also briefed the committee about the salient features of promotion policy-2012. Chairman committee said that promotion of employees should be ensured transparently. The committee also examined the audit para related to irregular appointments and promotion in State Bank of Pakistan.

Experts urge regional approach for Afghanistan

The open discussion was jointly organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) and the Pakistan-Afghan Youth Forum (PAYF)

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Participants of an open discussion on developments in Afghanistan and its impacts on Pakistan urged the government to build a regional consensus among Afghanistan's neighbours on the way forward for the country. They called for convening a regional summit on the subject. The open discussion was jointly organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) and the Pak-Afghan Youth Forum (PAYF) here on Wednesday. The founder of the Afghan Eye Mr Ahmed Waleed Kakar argued that the Taliban government had not prioritized technocrats for technical positions in its government and urged them to strike

a balance between placing their own members on key government positions and having people with technical knowledge on important technically complicated assignments. He also criticized the Taliban government in Afghanistan for the reports of extra-judicial killings, arrests, and torture coming out of Afghanistan. Defence analyst Lt Gen (Retd) Asif Yaseen argued that criticism against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan over placing non-experts in key ministries was misplaced because the trend was the same in other developing countries as well. He further maintained that criticizing the Taliban regime in Afghanistan over burkas was also misplaced because it was something culturally intrinsic to Afghanistan on which the inter-

national community could not dictate to it. He was of the opinion that the Taliban government in Afghanistan should be called the Government of Afghanistan. Gen Yaseen floated the idea of holding a regional summit on Afghanistan that could pave the way for the recognition of the Taliban government in Afghanistan by three or more countries from the region. He also called for flooding Afghanistan with humanitarian assistance from Pakistan for winning the hearts and minds of Afghans. He cautioned the international community against having expectations from the Afghans that they could not deliver on in the given circumstances. Former Senator Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif argued that the decision of recognition of the Taliban

government in Afghanistan needed to be taken keeping in view the national interest of Pakistan as well as the best interest of the people of Afghanistan. He was of the opinion that Pakistan did not need to wait for other countries to recognize the Taliban government in Afghanistan because the Taliban were in full control of the whole territory of Afghanistan and it was in the best interest of Pakistan and the people of Afghanistan to do it earnestly. Barrister Saif further maintained that many Western countries had given a de facto recognition to the Taliban government in Afghanistan by engaging with them diplomatically since their coming into power in Afghanistan. He regretted that the Americans did not appreciate Pakistan's role in

the war on terror in their support. Barrister Saif was of the view that slowly and gradually the Taliban government in Afghanistan would moderate itself but it could not do so at the moment because of internal pressure. Defence analyst Lt Gen (Retd) Naeem Lodhi maintained that no other country was entitled to impose its ideas of culture on Afghanistan. He asked why Pakistan was waiting for other countries before extending recognition to the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Commenting on the possibility of the grant of pardon to the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Gen Lodhi argued that the government should not do it without taking into confidence the victims of the terrorism unleashed by the TTP on the people of Pakistan.

Briefs

NPO to organize webinar on Production, Planning

ISLAMABAD: The National Productivity Organization (NPO) would organize an online session on "Production, Planning, and Control" on Tuesday, October 12.

The training program will impart knowledge on production planning and control which is a work process and involves the organization and planning of the manufacturing process and improves efficiency, coordination, and leverages the production, according to an official document.

Planning and control are essential ingredients of success, it ensures optimum utilization of production capacity.

In this course applicant will learn the basic concepts of production, manufacturing, selection of systems for optimizing inventory, and production management, it added.

The objective of the session is to equip top-line executives with the latest management tools to understand the norms of production management, methods of capacity planning, use quantitative methods of making better decisions as managers, effectively utilize various tools and techniques to improve the products and services in a production environment.

This training would provide information about introduction to production management, process selection and capacity planning, layout planning, cycle time calculation, line balancing, overall effective equipment, material requirement planning, setting production targets, productivity measurements, and work order planning and costing.

The session would be attended by Production Managers, Inventory Managers, Supply Chain Managers, Store Managers, Material Managers, Production Executives, Schedulers, Production Planners, and Executive Member of the Planning department. — APP

Hill Joint to organize a musical concert

ISLAMABAD: The Hill Joint would organize musical concert titled "Voodoo Child" on October 9 at Lok Virsa. According to announcement, renowned singers including Talal Qureshi, Salar Khan, Maano and Rozeo would perform at the concert.

Talal Qureshi is a Pakistani record producer, singer, songwriter and DJ. The Pakistani musician crafts melodies and songs that are wholly singular, ... Talal released the first single off his debut album, track called "PAISA" featuring R&B, Pop Singer Songwriter - Hasan Raheem. The COVID-19 SOP's would be strictly observed. — APP

84 dengue cases reported in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Islamabad Babar Sahib Din on Wednesday said that 84 dengue cases have been reported in the federal capital during last 24 hours. ICT Administration has launched a joint campaign involving Assistant Commissioners, DHO Office, MCI Health, CDA and various other departments focusing on surveillance, fumigation, sprays, larvicidal activities and awareness.

ADC said that Section 144 has also been imposed by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad against any action leading to dengue spread e.g storage of water in open spaces etc, said a press release. He said 5 persons have been arrested and multiple dengue hotspots have been sealed by ACs and magistrates in the Islamabad Capital Territory. Babar said that as many as 3 dengue magistrates have been notified separately to take strict action. — APP

Coherent policies needed to enhance agri growth: Fakhar

Dr. Steffen Kudella, Resident Representative, Hanns Seidel Foundation Pakistan in his welcome remarks and stated that food security means everyone has access to sufficient and safe food even in times of crisis

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad, Hanns Seidel Foundation Pakistan & MNS University of Agriculture, Multan jointly organized Conference on "Food Security vis-a-vis Sustainable Agriculture in Pakistan: Policy Outcomes and Prospects" at Margala Hotel, Islamabad. The Conference is a follow up to the Roundtable Discussion organized in July at Multan. The Conference highlighted and discussed food security vis-a-vis agriculture productivity in Pakistan. The Conference focused to devise coherent policies to curb the deficit to maintain and sustain the food supply chain by enhancing agriculture growth.

The Conference commenced with the opening remarks of Mr. Ashfaq Ahmed Gondal, Former Federal Secretary of Information and Broadcasting and Vice President (Federal Region), Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad.

He stated that food security is directly related to agriculture and agriculture is the backbone of Pakistan. This sector accounts for 19% of the GDP and the export of agro-based products comprise of the 80% of Pakistan's export. Dr. Steffen Kudella, Resident Representative, Hanns Seidel Foundation Pakistan in his welcome remarks and stated that food security means everyone has access



to sufficient and safe food even in times of crisis. Food Security is a serious non-traditional security challenge globally and for Pakistan, because many households suffer from food insecurity as per a recent study. This becomes particularly serious for children. Even though Pakistan already has a comparatively strong food production sector, its agricultural potential is much bigger and needs to be used for its people. Dr. Kudella stated that our conference intends to connect relevant stakeholders from the farmer in the field to the highest level of policymakers. We want to provide constructive suggestions to policy

makers that are based on research and evidence.

Chief Guest of the Conference His Excellency Syed Fakhar Inam, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Government of Pakistan stated that it is a privilege and honor to be amongst the leading agriculture experts and scientists. Pakistan is a country blessed with the agro-economic zones. We have one of the most extensive irrigation system in the world. Currently, we are using 1/4th of our geographical land for cultivation of five major crops which is still dominated by wheat. 38% of our population is employed in the agro-economic sector which increases the

significance of this sector. Pakistan has incomparable taste and aroma of fruits which cannot be found in any other part of the world.

His Excellency stated that Pakistan needs to upgrade agriculture sector through use of modern technology. We can apply different methodologies on smaller areas and that can be replicated on larger scale upon success to multiply its benefits for the people of Pakistan. We have youth that is committed to take agro-economic sector to new heights. 60% of our total exports depends upon cotton and 70% of the edible oil comes from cotton. This year, we had record produc-

tion in many crops and by next year more people would invest in this sector.

Guest of Honor of the Conference His Excellency Syed Hussain Jahania Gardezi, Provincial Minister of Punjab for Agriculture, Government of Pakistan stated that as far as food security is concerned, it has always remained a threat to mankind. Various scientists and philosophers have also been warning about the threats related to food, agriculture security and climate change. Food security threat has always existed; however, the dimensions of this threat have changed due to other factors particularly climate change.



ISLAMABAD: TiKA Islamabad Program Coordinator, Gokhan Umut, visited Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) and met with Mobashir Hasan, Managing Director of APP. Some collaboration areas between TiKA and Associated Press of Pakistan were discussed during the meeting. — APP

ICE launches PG Cert in education

MEHTAB AHMED

ISLAMABAD: The Post Graduate Certificate in Education qualification was launched at Shamadan Hall, Serena Hotel in the presence of the iQualify UK and International Centre of Excellence (ICE) Management from Pakistan and the UK Office. The purpose, as evinced by the theme of the event "TRANSFORMING TEACHERS TO ACADEMIC LEADERS", was to empower the existing teachers with the highly demanded skillsets. "PG Cert in Education is a step towards acquiring the right leadership skills in the right environment and in the

right direction," said Ms Sumbal, Head of Centre, ICE Pakistan and the moderator of the panel. "The comprehensively designed programme targets the essential skillset that the education industry depends on to address higher education and its shortfalls in teaching - with specific reference to Higher education landscape in Pakistan."

The event also included a panel discussion with the respected members of the education sector; namely, DrShaheen-Sardar Ali (Rector NAHE), Dr Paul Dudley, DrNishatRiaz and Dr Muhammad Ali Saeed, who discussed the challenges of education sector and educationists at length.

CDA utilizing transplanted trees to shift fully-grown trees

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is utilizing modern tree transplanted to shift fully-grown trees coming under the development of Rawal-Dam interchange. CDA has already committed in Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Report that no tree will be chopped/cut falling in the project rather these will be transplanted to alternative site in the vicinity. In this context, trees being transplanted were either in the median strips or in the vicinity of project where construction work is being carried out. The tree transplanter has

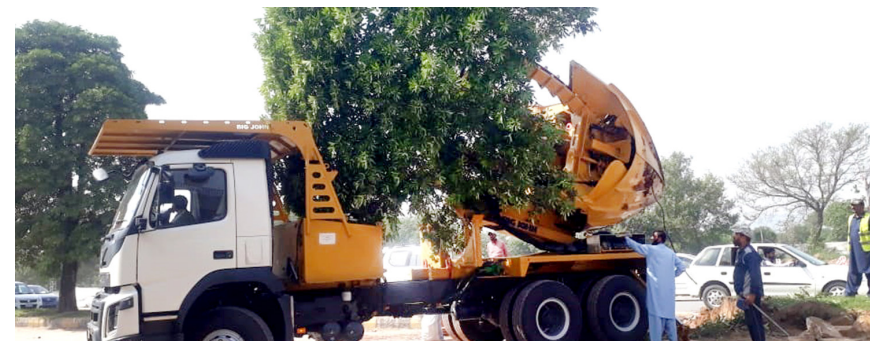
been acquired from Pakistan Navy to shift the grown trees, affected due to construction work, at an alternative place in the vicinity.

In addition to transplantation of grown trees, plants were also planted near this so that upon completion this

project will not only ease the traffic flow in the vicinity but would also add to the beauty of the city.

It is pertinent to mention here that CDA has decided that in future no tree will be chopped due to construction work rather it will be trans-

planted to an alternative site. For this purpose CDA Development Working Party during its recent meeting has also approved the procurement of latest and modern tree transplanted for safe shifting of grown trees affected due to development projects.



Scale up of Ehsaas Nashonuma recommended

Results were highly encouraging; the findings are supportive of the program focus on marginalized women, their financial empowerment and improved dietary knowledge

SHUJAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Ehsaas Nashonuma steering committee reviewed results of an independent evaluation conducted by the Agha Khan University, Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar, SAPM chaired the meeting. The purpose of the research conducted was to understand how Ehsaas Nashonuma had influenced the health and wellbeing of beneficiaries along with the enabling and impeding factors related to the uptake of Ehsaas Nashonuma, the process, outcomes, and the flow of operations. The evidence from the evaluation is critical to decide about the upscaling of Ehsaas Nashonuma, and impact evaluation of the combination of conditional cash transfers with specialized nutritional food had already been conducted prior to the commencement of Ehsaas Nashonuma as a pilot project in 15 districts where 50 centers are now operational. Results were highly encouraging;

the findings are supportive of the program focus on marginalized women, their financial empowerment and improved dietary knowledge. Evaluation specifies considerable buy in by beneficiaries and a smooth and transparent process of Ehsaas Nashonuma implementation. Report highlighted how the program facilitated access to healthcare utilization

and improved diets for beneficiary women and their children and how the rule-based procedures were followed for identification of beneficiaries and dispatching of diet and conditional cash transfer. 99.37% of beneficiary women reported satisfaction from Nashonuma services provided to them during their pregnancy as well as those extended to their children

for their growth and wellbeing. Speaking to the press, Dr. Sania said, "The program will be up-scaled nationwide to all districts in this fiscal year."

The steering committee was attended by provincial representatives and members of the international development community. DG-KP, Special Secretaries from Punjab, GB and AJK appreciated

the program and validated the on-ground impact from their insights. Some important recommendations were made with regard to the revised design which will be used in the scaleup particularly with reference to the introduction of mobile units and they need to emphasize on awareness creation. There was also a strong recommendation to increase the size of the Nashonuma cash stipend. Currently, Ehsaas Nashonuma provides Rs. 1,500 for boys and Rs. 2,000 for girls and the recommendation was to increase the stipend amounts which the steering committee approved. "Ehsaas Nashonuma will be integrated with all One Window Ehsaas Centers", said Dr. Sania.

The program is critical to address the issue of stunting in children as according to the national nutrition survey 40 out of 100 children in Pakistan are stunted. Therefore, Ehsaas Nashonuma, the conditional cash transfer program will play an important role in building human capital.



Cabinet approves census on modern tech

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Syed Aminul Haq said on Wednesday that the federal cabinet had approved the census to be run on modern technology.

Talking to a private news channel he said that for equitable distribution of resources, it was necessary to conduct a census in modern ways after five years, which would eliminate many problems in Sindh.

He said the Ministry of Information Technology was making appropriate ways to retain the data of every single person in future censuses.

Minister said the Muttahida Qoumi Movement (MQM) Pakistan showed concern over the census which was being resolved after the cabinet approval.

"Most people travel to cities for employment that were not included in the census," he said. — APP

NEPRA issues 8417 Net Metering licences

ISLAMABAD: National Electric Power Authority (NEPRA) issued 8417 licences of Net Metering with a cumulative installed capacity of 145,881 MW during the last fiscal year (FY 2020-21) in all power distribution companies (DISCOs).

Sharing the details of net metering, official sources told APP here that out of the total, 2,170 licenses were issued in Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) with a capacity of 41,126 MW, 1976 in Islamabad Electric Supply Company (24,439 MW), 876 in Multan Electric Supply Company (17,928 MW), 564 in Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (14,879 MW) during the said period.

Similarly, he said that the authority granted 1,357 net metering licences in K-Electric with a cumulative capacity of (23,885 MW), 525 in Peshawar Electric Supply Company (6,064 MW), 433 in Gujranwala Electric Power Company (11,138 MW), 11 in Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (0,951 MW), 7 in Sukkur Electric Supply Company (0,136 MW) and 4 in Quetta Electric Supply Company (0,326 MW) during the last financial year. They said the regulator also issued 273 licenses with a total capacity of 3,147 MW in Defense Housing Authority and 221 licenses in Bahria Town Pakistan Limited with 1,862 MW capacity during the said period.

Meanwhile, the sources said NEPRA also granted 27 generation licences with a cumulative capacity of 1591.343 MW during the said period.

The generation licences were granted for various power plants based on coal, hydro, solar, biomass, biogas, and nuclear technologies. Out of the total, 19 licences were granted for solar/biogas, four for hydro, two for bio-mass/bio Gas, and one each for nuclear and coal.

Some of these plants were included 1145 MW Karachi Nuclear Power Plant-3 (KAN-UPP-3), 102,063 MW Master Hydro (Pvt) Ltd, 82.25 MW Uzghor Hydropower Company (Pvt) Ltd, 40.80 MW PEDO (Koto Hydropower Project), 69 MW PEDO (Lawi Hydropower Project), 55 MW Mughal Coal Energy Limited, 6.20 MW Bio-Mass Matol (Private) Ltd. — APP

Lok Virsa to hold Open Mic Jam party

ISLAMABAD: The Hill Joint would organize Open Mic Jam party at National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage-Lok Virsa on October 7.

According to Hill Joint, the show would provide an opportunity to emerging musicians to gain experience performing to a live audience without having to go through the process of getting normal music gigs, which is very difficult to do without experience or a demo recording.

Open Mic programme was initiative to discover melodious voices and used to be held on weekly basis audition.

The programme was helping those who were eager to sing but they lack a proper or available platform to perform. The COVID-19 SOP's would be strictly observed. The show would be opened for all but no Mask no entry. — APP

IS in Afghanistan

THE fighting between the Taliban and the Islamic State (IS) in Afghanistan is heating up as on Monday, reports emerged that the Taliban destroyed an IS cell in Kabul, hours after an attack on a mosque claimed five lives. Despite claiming control of the country about seven weeks ago, the Taliban still faces resistance from outfits like IS and other splinter groups that are seeking to consolidate their footing in Afghanistan. This is a conflict that is unlikely to die down anytime soon given how the IS in particular has seen its influence grow in the region, and it is aiming to recruit members from other outfits and even disenfranchised Taliban members. Not only does this pose a challenge for the Taliban, but it also means that civilians in Afghanistan will continue to be targeted in such tragic violent attacks. The Taliban officials have claimed that the operation was quite successful and decisive as the IS centre was completely destroyed and all the members in it were eliminated. This is encouraging considering the serious threat the group poses not just to Afghanistan, but also neighbouring countries given that IS espouses a transnational agenda. However, while this will undoubtedly be a setback for IS, history suggests that such measures only lead to temporary gains before militant outfits regroup and adapt. Even tactics such as leadership decapitation have reaped limited dividends in the past against groups like al-Qaeda. This resilience can be understood by taking into account the fluid organisational structure of the local chapters of transnational militant groups, which are designed to be able to absorb such shocks and regroup as they constantly feed on the plethora of splinter groups in the region. While the Taliban is currently attempting to establish its authority across the country by brute force, it will require help going forward in terms of aid and ammunition. This is where both regional and international assistance will be key. For that to happen however, the Taliban will have to keep in mind that such assistance will only be forthcoming as long as they accommodate concerns at the other end as well regarding human rights and women's education.

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Talking about Covid-19

PAKISTAN'S declining trend of Covid-related deaths should be greeted with optimism—albeit, cautious. With cases plateauing to almost 28 per cent of the peak and vaccinations gathering momentum (27 per cent has had at least one dose administered), one might wonder whether we are finally inching towards the end of this dark and dreary tunnel. However, as emphatic groups upon groups of pilgrims return from the annual pilgrimage, let's just put a hold on the fireworks. The National Command and Operation Centre is spot-on in treating those heading back with extra caution. Placed in Category C on the coronavirus infections' list, those having come in contact with the coronavirus hotspot must be at a greater risk of transmission. Indian health officials have already marked the Hindu pilgrimage of Kumb Mela as the superspreader that likely fuelled the deadly surge earlier this year. While Baghdad tried its utmost best to uphold safety precautions in hosting the pilgrimage before opening doors to overseas travellers, divine providence always finds a corner to reign supreme. Stories about unmasked pilgrims throwing caution to the wind in the name of religious fervour are all over the news. This is not to make light of anyone's beliefs but Pakistan has already had its Wuhan moment last year. Call it a lackadaisical response to a fast-spiralling crisis or the fatalistic manifestation of simply not having the means, Islamabad's poor handling of pilgrims returning from Iran had cost Pakistan dearly. Battling a virus that keeps attacking us in newer, more lethal forms is no ordinary feat. And such extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. Living with Covid-19 is a new reality. No qualms about that. Ergo, instead of giving in to the whims of those who prioritise fanning discord flames over national security, Pakistan needs to step up its quarantine facilities. In the past, dubious directives allegedly given by Special Assistant to PM (Overseas Pakistanis) Syed Zulfiqar Bukhari with regard to clearing pilgrims were said to have spelt the medical catastrophe. Such irresponsible innuendos need to be bid farewell to. Then again, it would be overwhelmingly hard to convince people to stay in special camps after hundreds cried of being stuck in squalid conditions last year. The coronavirus saga is far from over. But just to prevent the ship from hitting rock-bottom, we need to gain grounds whenever there are signs of another outbreak. For a society hell-bent on living in denial and disbelief, we've been quite fortunate. But disregarding the public health catastrophe can only work so far!

Amnesty to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

Attiya Munawar



The decision to grant amnesty to the TTP is not a trivial one, it is a big decision. The government should not bypass the parliament on this issue at all. The issue should be discussed in the parliament and decided by mutual consultation through a joint parliamentary committee

PAKISTAN has fought a successful war against terrorism, inflicting heavy casualties and financial losses in this war, however, all terrorist groups operating against Pakistan are well aware that without bowing to the law and recognizing the Con-

stitution of Pakistan they will not be accepted, so they are being invited to negotiate under the constitution. Prime Minister Imran Khan, while confirming the talks with some groups of Taliban, said that if the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) surrenders, they will forgive. The government of Pakistan wants to give a chance to peace while avoiding further bloodshed.

Pakistan can negotiate from a strong position. Appropriately under taken negotiations will not only bring peace to Pakistan but will also be a major blow to the enemies of the country who are sponsoring these angry elements. There is no doubt that PTI prefers peace talks to war. The Prime Minister has also hinted at talks with some groups in the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), but the TTPs overall response seems inflexible, conflict resolution must be found for peace, but peace cannot be unilaterally pursued, lasting peace is possible only when the other side also expresses its desire.

But the statement and actions of the banned organization do not prove that the peace talks are serious and they are ready for any

dialogue. In this case, the gestures of unilateral talks are not in line with Pakistan's commitment against terrorism.

Pakistan's desire to hold bilateral talks after a long war on terror indicates weakness. It is worth noting that the world's most resourceful states have not been able to successfully eradicate terrorism as Pakistani security agencies have done, although terrorist elements still carry out sporadic incidents but for a decade, the current situation is quite different and remarkably better than before, as acknowledged by the world and international organizations along with people of all walks of life in Pakistan.

Pakistan had spared no effort to curb terrorism, but the remnants of the terrorists could not be completely wiped out in Afghanistan due to the provision of a conducive environment for hiding their heads. Pakistan is suffering the consequences. However, after the Taliban's victory in Afghanistan, we believe that the Afghan Taliban should play a responsible role in this situation, which is expected of them by all. This has also been promised by the Taliban leadership. Pakistan should be no need

to be part of the talks or any direct offer, the Taliban should fulfill their responsibility, because they promised that Afghan territory would not be used against any other country, yet concerns from the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) are still a matter of concern.

The decision to grant amnesty to the TTP is not a trivial one, it is a big decision. The government should not bypass the parliament on this issue at all. The issue should be discussed in the parliament and decided by mutual consultation through a joint parliamentary committee. Prior Negotiations with TTP were neither wrong nor are they wrong now, but both sides will agree.

Only then will the talks be meaningful, if the government decides to negotiate with the TTP without a consensus then such measures may create chaos in the country and will not cast a good impression at the international level either. Peace talks by the government will be successful only when the power of the parliament and the people is behind it. Without the confidence of the people and parliament, the desire for peace will remain unfulfilled.

Because together we stand

Munaza Kazmi



History may be boring, embellished with a lot of years, though to memories, but full of lessons for life. You all would be familiar with our history, the greatest and the richest of all, the Kingdom of Sub-continent, whose splendor still reflects from the timeless buildings of Lahore or Dehli. Howit was assembled?

“UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL” was first pitched by John Dickinson, known as the founding father of United State. I believe this phrase, many of us had heard and read a lot. However, not a mere theory, but this phrase is actually practical and agreed among everyone. With the meaning that, “If we are together, we can win any battle”.

Talking on the broader spectrum, any circumstances that a nation confronts can be pacified if it gets the association of all. History may be boring, embellished with a lot of years, though to memories, but full of lessons for life. You all would be familiar with our history, the greatest and the richest of all, the Kingdom of Sub-continent, whose splendor still reflects from the timeless buildings of Lahore or Dehli. Howit was assembled? “Unity”; by Akbar's combining all the surrounding states, by making peace, harmony and an air of uniformity, which in return cultivated prosperity. Later, time took a U-turn towards failure, reasons involved nevertheless the gravest of all corruption parallel with division or our failure to stay united.

I recently completed reading “The Anarchy” by William Dalrymple and trust me my heart tore with idea that we couldn't unite, and when it was evident that if we would have collaborated we could drag those sea dogs out of our magnifi-



cent country, but all we were cared for personal gains. Turn the pages and you would find Tipu from Mysore and Siraj from Bengal went court to court with the message that, “united we could win”, however failed, betrayed and why, because of the greed of personal gains. Well, those personal favors also didn't last for long. Till today we are doing the same, repeating the history as we cannot agree on one point, we cannot represent at globe as a united nation, since we distinguish ourselves as Punjabi, Pathan, Balochi, Kashmiri or Sindh, but never hear anyone saying am Pakistani, then there goes a roller coaster for sect and further under the disguise of politics. In doing so we ignore, a political environment marked by instabil-

ity is likely to include acts of violence, including the worst of all terrorism that has a vicious power to destroy what comes in the way, but who cares since everyone is only interested in self, individualism.

However, why we divide, who we are to fight on a piece of land, or some other material gain that obviously would never stay with us forever, as we know we are guests of few years. What if today we may stand as one nation and represent our country and support our leader, we not only can earn the respect from across the globe, but the doors of prosperity can unlock. We care for others to put effort first, why not start with our self to make Pakistan great.

Remember, when many drops gather they form a sea, otherwise the sea is nothing, understand this riddle, if a drop is alone then a single drop is nothing, in the same regards, if we turn away from everyone then we will be all alone. Why don't we unite and form a current? Consider about the greatest of people, let's say Quaid e Azam a one-man army, later followed by millions. Let's do some good everyday for our country, start with just a positive thought.

A very good example from nature Rainbow, how many colors are there in it? as such they are seven, however how closely they are attached, had they been alone, there would be no such concept of rainbow. Same is the case with the nation.

Briefs

Govt rules out consultations with Shehbaz

FROM PAGE 01
the minister said while wondering over the insistence of Shehbaz to become a part of the consultation on appointment of NAB Chairman. He sarcastically said some people wanted that the government should appoint the Station House Officer (SHO) after consulting the thieves. Fawad said the government had omitted clauses pertaining to private and banking conflicts and tax related issues from the Ordinance to be promulgated after the President's nod. The government would issue the Ordinance in a first place, later an Act of Parliament would be introduced after consultation with opposition to further improve the NAB law. The suggestions from opposition would also be incorporated in the amendments of the NAB law if there would be any. Now the bureau would concentrate on its original task of eradication of corruption, Fawad said, adding, but its performance was compromised with additional responsibilities after inclusion of business and other crimes. He said the NAB would now concentrate on nabbing the 'big fish'.

Deputy Chairman NAB resigns

FROM PAGE 01
The law ministry forwards the resignation to the president for the final decision, and after his approval, the ministry notifies an acceptance of the resignation. The federal government had appointed Asghar as deputy chairman in April 2019 for a period of three years. Before assuming charge at NAB, Asghar was former director-general of the Anti-Corruption Establishment in Punjab and performed his duties from September 24, 2018, to February 22, 2019.

Chairman to continue until new successor

FROM PAGE 01
Under the ordinance, the procedure for re-appointment will be the same, but chairman NAB can be removed just like the judges of the Supreme Court. The ordinance empowers the president to set up accountability courts in the country as much as he wants. He has also been empowered to appoint accountability court judges in consultation with the concerned chief justices. The judges will have a three-year term limit under the new law. The amendment also stops NAB from intervening in federal, provincial and local taxation matters. Similarly, decisions of federal and provincial cabinets, committees and sub-committees will not fall under the jurisdiction of NAB.

Lt Gen Nadeem Anjum new DG ISI

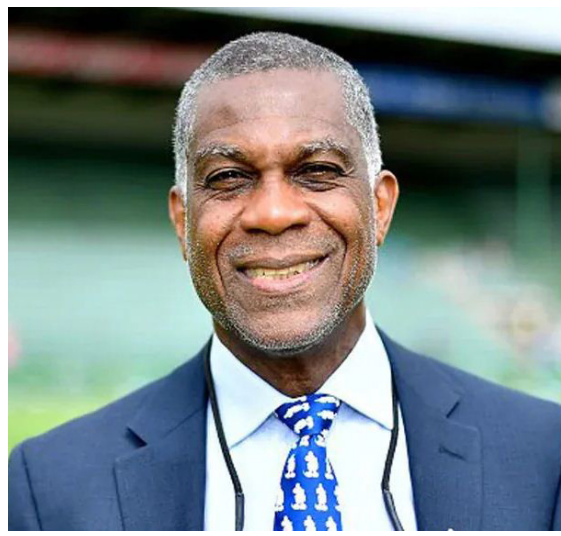
FROM PAGE 01
In the valedictory meeting, Prime Minister Khan eulogized Lt Gen Hameed's services as ISI chief and expressed good wishes on his new appointment as Corps Commander, Peshawar. Lt-Gen Faiz Hameed had previously served as the head of the internal security wing at the ISI, where he stayed for around two-and-a-half years. According to the ISPR, Lt-Gen Muhammad Saeed has been appointed as Commander, Karachi Corps. Lt-Gen Nausman Mahmood has been appointed as President of National Defence University. Lt-Gen Asim Malik has been appointed as Pakistan Army's Adjutant General. His appointment came after he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general. Lt-Gen Muhammad Amir has been appointed as Commander Gujranwala Corps. Lt-Gen Asim Munir has been appointed as Quarter Master General. These appointments and transfers have taken place today and reportedly there will be more in the days to come as some of the top generals reach their end of term shortly.

Holding terms ECB's pull-out of tour as 'Western Arrogance'

Pak men traveled to England for three Tests and three T20s in the summer of 2020 - all in a bio-secure environment without fans - within the first six months of the Covid

ISLAMABAD: Former West Indies cricketer and renowned commentator Michael Holding believe that the England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) showed "Western arrogance" by pulling out of their tour of Pakistan and said the latter would not have meted out similar treatment to India. England's men's and women's teams were due to play white-ball games in Pakistan but withdrew last month. The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) blamed "increasing concerns" about traveling in the region and "pressures" of bubble environments. "The ECB statement doesn't wash with me," Holding said. "No

substance." Speaking after receiving the Cricket Writers' Club Peter Smith Award as quoted by bbc.com, Holding said, "Nobody wants to come forward and face up to anything because they know what they did was wrong. So they put out a statement and hid behind a statement. It just reminds me of the rubbish they did with Black Lives Matter. "I won't go back into that because I've said enough about that. But what that signal sends to me, is the same Western arrogance. I will treat you how I feel like treating you, it doesn't matter what you think, I'll just do what I want." Three days before the ECB announced its decision New Zealand pulled



out of a tour of Pakistan claiming security concerns. Pakistan's men traveled to England for three Tests and

three T20s in the summer of 2020 - all in a bio-secure environment without fans - within the first six months of the COVID-19 pandemic. "Pakistan went to England before vaccines were available for six or seven weeks," said Holding, who played 60 Tests for West Indies before becoming a celebrated commentator. "They stayed, they played their cricket, they honoured what England wanted them to honour, to save England's butt, to put it mildly. "Four days in Pakistan? I'm absolutely sure they would not have done that to India because India is rich and powerful." Holding, who will retire from commentary this year,

was rewarded by the Cricket Writers' Club for "outstanding contribution to the presentation of cricket to the public". He has passionately spoken about racism in the past 18 months. Yorkshire batter Harry Brook won the Young Cricketer of the Year Award and England batter Sophia Dunkley the women's cricketer award. All-rounder Alice Capsey won the emerging player award after her role in The Hundred for Oval Invincibles while Nottinghamshire bowler Luke Fletcher was named County Championship Player of the Year and Alex Jervis the Disability Cricketer of the Year. - APP



KUALA LUMPUR: High Commissioner Anna Baloch hosted Dr. Ahmad Azam Ab Rahman, Special Advisor to Foreign Minister of Malaysia for humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan, at Pakistan House. Views were exchanged on developments and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. - DNA

Ozil wants to support Asian footballers

LONDON: Former Arsenal star Mesut Ozil hopes to boost the numbers of British South Asians breaking into professional football after helping launch a development centre in Bradford. The United Kingdom has a South Asian population of more than three million people, which amounts to seven per cent of the population. Yet only 11 British South Asians have played the professional game in England. In a bid to redress that stark imbalance, Fenerbahce midfielder Ozil joined forces with the Football Association and the Football for Peace organisation. Football for Peace, led by former British South Asian player Kashif Siddiqi and the FA, are co-launching the MesutOzil Development Centre in Bradford, which has a large South Asian community. The centre will run football and life skill sessions at League Two side Bradford City's training ground. Several Premier League and Football League clubs have also signed up to the initiative and it is hoped the Bradford centre will be the first of many to open nationwide. Ozil has Turkish roots but represented Germany, the country of his birth, before quitting the international stage in 2018 in protest at "racism and disrespect". - DNA



Central Punjab outclasses Sindh by eight wickets

DNA

LAHORE: Central Punjab has outclassed Sindh by eight wickets here at the Gaddafi Stadium and has moved to the top spot on the points table of the National T20 Cup. Hasan Ali-led's side chased down the 129-run target for the loss of two wickets. HusainTalat and Shoaib Malik formed a 98* run stand for the third wicket after CP lost both openers. Hussain scored 52-ball68 while Shoaib Malik made 40 off 25 balls. For Sindh, Mir Hamza was the lone wicket-taker of Kamran Akmal (1) while Ahmed Shahzad was run-out (20). Earlier, Sarfaraz Ahmed played a fighting knock after his side had a disappointing start. Sindh's captain remained unbeaten on 54 off 37 deliveries, powered by five fours and one six. Ahsan Ali was the other notable batter, scoring 23 while Danish Aziz and Anwar Ali scored 20 each. Sindh were teetering at 32/4

after CP's stand-in captain Hasan Ali decided to bowl first. Sarfaraz formed a 35-run partnership with Danish to give stability to the scoreboard while he and Anwar added 41 for the sixth wicket. Sarfaraz reached to his 15th T20 fifty in the last over where he smacked 16 runs off WahabRiaz. For CP, Faheem Ashraf and Hasan took two wickets each while Wahab and Usman Qadir bagged one each. Note, Babar Azam is not featuring in today's match for Central Punjab due to personal commitments.



Four Balochistan players test positive for Covid-19

LAHORE: Four players of Balochistan have tested COVID-19 positive before their National T20 Cup match today at Gaddafi Stadium. Imam-ul-Haq-led Balochistan were scheduled to face Northern later at 7.30 pm but now they might not play. The four Balochistan players have been placed in a 10-day quarantine. All other players were asymptomatic and tested negative, and will continue to participate in the tournament. All other participants and their families underwent testing on Tuesday and have returned negative. The second match has been swapped with Northern taking on Southern Punjab. This means Northern and Balochistan match will now be played on 9 October under floodlights. Balochistan-Khyber Pakhtunkhwa match on 7 October will be played as scheduled. Balochistan will beef up their squad with players from their Cricket Association Championship three-day tournament side. - DNA

Biden-Xi discuss Taiwan amid tensions

"If its democracy and way of life are threatened, Taiwan will do whatever it takes to defend itself," Tsai said in an article that was published on Tuesday in the prominent journal, Foreign Affairs

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden has said that he has spoken to Chinese President Xi Jinping about Taiwan after Beijing sent a record number of military aircraft into the self-ruled island's air defence zone (ADIZ) and officials in Taiwan said they were at their worst in 40 years. Asked by a reporter about "China's provocation over Taiwan", Biden said on Tuesday that he and Xi had discussed the issue. "I've spoken with Xi (Chinese President Xi Jinping) about Taiwan," Biden said at the White House. "We agree, we'll abide by the Taiwan agreement, and we made it clear that I don't think he should be doing anything other than abiding by the agreement."

Taiwan said it tracked a record 56 Chinese aircraft in its ADIZ on Monday, in a series of military manoeuvres that began on Friday, China's National Day, and prompted the island to scramble fighter jets in response. Beijing, which claims Taiwan as its own territory, has stepped up cross-strait activities this year, with the number of recorded incidents on track to be double the level of 2020. On Wednesday, Defence Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng told the island's parliament cross-strait tensions were at their worst in 40 years, and warned that Beijing could have the ability to mount a full scale invasion of the democratic island by 2025. President Tsai Ing-wen earlier wrote of "catastrophic consequences" for the Asia Pacific region if Taiwan, which is pre-

Taiwan fears China can start 'full-scale invasion'

TAIPEI CITY: China will be able to launch a "full-scale invasion of Taiwan by 2025," the Taiwanese defense minister said on Wednesday, warning that the Taiwan Strait is witnessing the "toughest situation" in the past four decades. "It is the toughest situation I have seen in more than 40 years of my military life," Taiwan's Defense Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng told lawmakers, according to daily South China Morning Post. His comments came amid soaring tensions as China has sent warplanes nearly 150 times into Taiwan's air defense identification zone (ADIZ) in the past few days. The ADIZ is a buffer zone outside a country's airspace, where it has the right to ask incoming aircraft to identify themselves. Chiu, a retired army general, warned that Beijing will "have the ability to mount a full-scale invasion of Taiwan by 2025." China claims Taiwan as a "breakaway province," while Taipei has insisted on its independence since 1949 and has diplomatic relations with at least 15 countries. "By 2025, Beijing will be able to keep the cost of such conflict at a minimum, meaning it would have the full ability to start a war," said the minister. "The Chinese Communists already have the ability to do so now, but they need to think about the cost and consequence of starting a war," he added. - DNA

paring to mark its own National Day on October 10, were to fall to China. "If its democracy and way of life are threatened, Taiwan will do whatever it takes to defend itself," Tsai said in an article that was published on Tuesday in the prominent journal, Foreign Affairs. Responding to Tsai's article, China's state-run Global Times accused the president and her DPP of turning Taiwan's democracy into an "extreme ideology". "Their fate is bound to be a catastrophe when they attempt to separate Taiwan from the (sic) China," the Communist Party newspaper said in an editorial that also poured scorn on the US and the island's western allies. "The further the DPP authorities go down the path in colluding with external forces, the closer they move to their tomb. There is no force in the world whose

will to "defend Taiwan" is stronger than China's will to fight against secession and achieve reunification. No force dares or is willing to fight to the death against the world's second largest economy, as well as a nuclear power, in order to prevent China's reunification." While the United States does not have formal diplomatic relations with the island it is bound by law to protect Taiwan and is Taipei's biggest source of military and political support. Washington has no specific 'agreement' with Beijing on cross-strait relations. "Agreement" probably means adhering to the One China policy in the sense that you give diplomatic recognition to Beijing, but you still support the right of Taiwan to defend itself," said Al Jazeera's Rob McBride who is in Hong Kong.

UK national charged with terror offenses

FROM PAGE 01
having been picked up near the Turkish border with Syria. His father Afzal still works in England and previously said he knew his son "was thinking of going there (Syria) and helping people." Suleman was eventually captured in Syria by a Turkish-backed militia group called Liwa Al-Shimal in October 2017. He told The Times that he was safe, but pleaded for an opportunity to return to Britain to challenge any allegations against him. He was later freed by a court in Jarabulus, Syria - which is not internationally recognized - after it ruled that there was not enough evidence to convict him. Suleman had been missing since his release, with some reports placing him in Pakistan. But British counterterrorism police last night confirmed that charges had been secured against him. He is accused of having prepared for acts of terrorism, membership of a proscribed organization and receiving weapons training.

Maryam slams NAB, SC's 'silence'

FROM PAGE 01
(IHC), the PML-N leader, in reference to the action taken against the Sharif family in the aftermath of the Panama Papers, asked where was the "Panama bench, the JIT [Joint Investigation Team] and NAB" in the wake of the Pandora Papers exposé. Meanwhile, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) has overruled the registrar's official objections on Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz's application in the Avenfield Apartments acquittal plea.

A division bench of the IHC, led by Justice Amir Farooq, heard the application. In her plea, Maryam maintained that the country's premier intelligence agency's chief played a role in convictions in the Avenfield case. The bench noted that the IHC registrar's office had raised two objections that are being overruled. Outside the court, she asked where the petitioner was who took the Panama case to the court. "The entire nation is looking for that petitioner and the Panama JIT," she said, adding that "former chief justice Asif Saeed Khosa told Imran Khan to bring the Panama case to him as the decision had already been made". According to Maryam, "A retired army officer quizzed her when she appeared before the Panama JIT in 2018 while all officers of NAB and other agencies stayed silent." Taking a jibe at Prime Minister Imran over the formation of a commission to probe Pandora Papers, she said the prime minister has "refused to reveal the details of toshakhana (state treasury) but has agreed to form a commission to investigate his ATMs named in the Pandora Papers".

'Sharifs trying to hide corruption'

FROM PAGE 01
conference in Islamabad on Wednesday, he said Nawaz Sharif plundered the national exchequer and procured properties abroad. He said Sharif family was provided fair trial opportunity but they had nothing to present before the courts in their defense. The Minister said PML (N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz is hiding behind adjournments in the courts. He said the courts should hear their corruption cases on daily basis.

Britain's first '4-star' non-food store

LONDON: Amazon on Wednesday expanded its chain of physical shops selling non-food products to Britain, opening a new outlet southeast of London that will compete with local stores. The US conglomerate's "4-star" store in the Bluewater shopping mall in Kent is stocked with items such as electronics, toys and books that have at least a 4-star rating from Amazon's UK customers. - APP

Briefs

Baku to host Int'l Business Forum in November

DNA

BAKU: The 25th International Business Forum (IBF) will be held in Baku on November 14-17, 2021, the Azerbaijani Agency for Development of SMBs has reported.

The forum, organized by the Agency and the Turkish Association of Independent Industrialists and Businessmen (MUSAID), will bring together businessmen and government officials from several countries.

The main purpose of the forum, which is held annually in different countries, is to develop bilateral trade and economic relations between the countries, create models of sustainable cooperation, strengthen investment cooperation and business relations. It is planned that a number of conferences, presentations, bilateral meetings, exhibitions, and other events will be held during the forum.

At the meeting between Agency's Chairman Orkhan Mammadov and IBF Head and MUSAID Founder Erol Yazar, the parties discussed preparations for the forum. It was noted that the preparations continue in accordance with the memorandum of understanding signed between the Agency and IBF in July this year.

EU unveils strategy to tackle rising antisemitism

BRUSSELS: The European Union unveiled Tuesday a new strategy to combat growing antisemitism in Europe with plans to better tackle hate speech, raise awareness about Jewish life, protect places of worship and ensure that the Holocaust isn't forgotten.

According to Europe's Fundamental Rights Agency, nine out of 10 Jews consider that antisemitism has increased in their country and is a serious problem. More than one in three people have considered emigrating to escape the abuse.

The EU's executive branch, the European Commission, said it was presenting what amounts to the first strategy of its kind given the "persistence and a significant increase of anti-Semitic incidents" around the 27-country bloc.

Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that "the strategy we are presenting today is a step change in how we respond to antisemitism. Europe can only prosper when its Jewish communities feel safe and prosper."

Under the plan, which will be rolled out over this decade, the commission will use EU funds to support member countries as they develop their own national strategies and complement their actions. — APP

Int'l political youth forum held in Kazakhstan

FOREIGN DESK

NUR SULTAN: The international youth-political forum "Jastar-Otanga!" organized by The Eurasian Regional Center of Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF-ERC) and the Youth Wing MK "Jas Otan" under the "Nur Otan" Party (chairman N.Nazarbayev) successfully started its work on 5 October 2021.

This year, the event is special for the Republic of Kazakhstan since it celebrates its 30th Independence Anniversary. The main purpose of the four-day forum is to develop young people's leadership, speech and communication skills, team building and networking skills, and their interest in information technology.

Vusal Gurbanov, the acting director of the ICYF-ERC addressed the Opening Ceremony of the forum along with Nurzhan Zhetpisbayev, Chairman of "Jas Otan" Young Wing. They made presentations about the organizations they represent, wished good luck to the participants and invited them to make an effective proposal in upcoming debates.

Pakistan-Turkey to boost co-op in maritime affairs

Ambassador, in his remarks, said that Pakistan and Turkey are cooperating in both civilian and defense sides of maritime affairs. He highlighted the existing potential and prospects of joint collaboration between the shipbuilding industries of Pakistan and Turkey

DNA

ISTANBUL: A 'Naming Ceremony' was organized at SANMAR Shipyards, Istanbul today to commemorate cooperation between SANMAR Shipyards, Turkey and Port Qasim Authority (PQA), Pakistan. Under an agreement, PQA has bought 4 ASD LNG Compatible Tugs and 2 Pilot Boats from SANMAR Shipyards. This project is yet another manifestation of the growing ties between Pakistan and Turkey in the maritime domain.

The ceremony was attended by President SANMAR Shipyards, Mr. Cem Seven, Chairman Port Qasim Authority, Rear Admiral (R) Syed Hasan Nasir Shah, the Ambassador of Pakistan to Turkey, Mr. Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi, and other dignitaries. At the ceremony, the 4 Tug boats were named Korangi, Pipri, Gharo, and Malik, respectively, while the 2 Pilot boats were named Heer and Sassi. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman PQA, Rear Admiral (R) Syed Hasan Nasir Shah noted that the agreement between

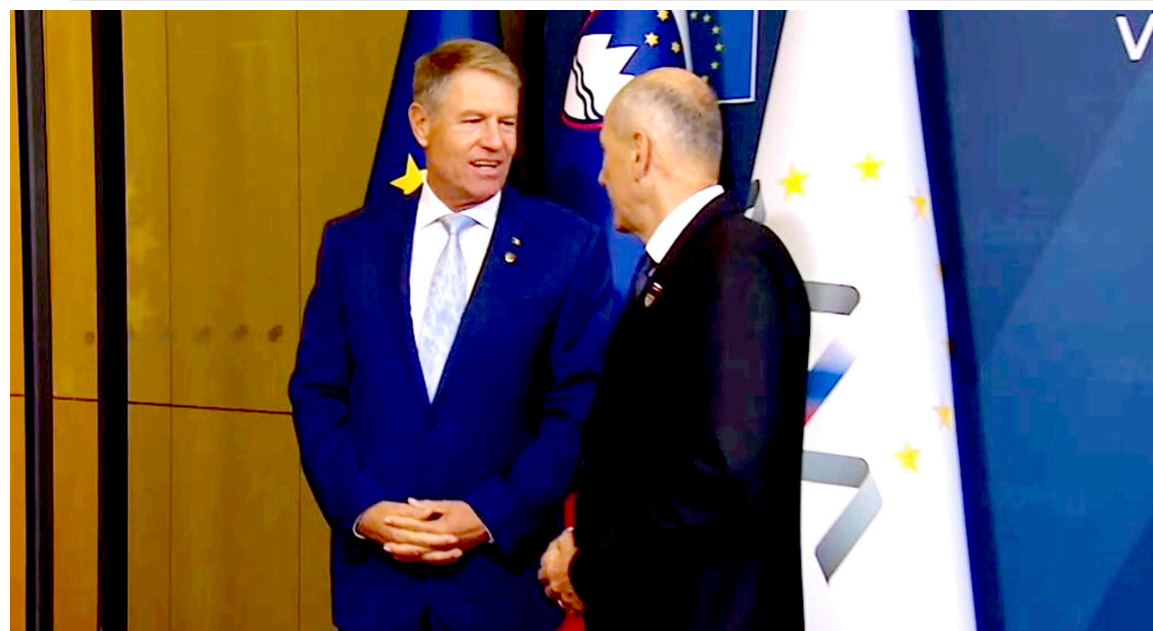


PQA and SANMAR would prove to be a landmark agreement and would further boost cooperation between the two countries in maritime affairs. The Ambassador, in his remarks,

said that Pakistan and Turkey are cooperating in both civilian and defense sides of maritime affairs. He highlighted the existing potential and prospects of joint collaboration between the

shipbuilding industries of Pakistan and Turkey. SANMAR Shipyards has decades of experience in building tugs, workboats and pilot boats for national and international cus-

tomers, and provides technical consultancy services. Once completed, the 4 ASD LNG Compatible Tugs and 2 Pilot Boats will be handed over to the Port Qasim Authority, Pakistan.



KRANJU: Romanian President attending the EU-Western Balkans summit, hosted by EIU2021SI in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia. Strengthening EU's strategic engagement with Western Balkans is of mutual importance, fostered by shared goals. — DNA

International Book Fair opens in Baku

People's writers and poets of Azerbaijan, famous young writers and popular foreign authors and actors are taking part in the book fair

DNA

BAKU: The 7th Baku International Book Fair has opened at Expo Center. The opening ceremony was attended by prominent public figures, representatives of science, literature, culture, art, as well as representatives of diplomatic missions accredited in the country, foreign guests.

Among the participants of the event were Deputy Prime Minister Ali Ahmadov, the Culture Minister Anar Kerimov, the Education Minister Emin Amrullayev, Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) Sabina Aliyeva, President of the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation Gunay Afandiyeva, Turkish Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism Ahmet Misbah Demircan and many others.

Speaking at the event, Deputy Prime Minister Ali Ahmadov said that books have a special place in people's lives, and it is impossible to imagine civilization without books. He stressed the importance of the International Book Fair which has become a traditional event.

The Culture Minister Anar Karimov stressed that the state pays great attention to the development and pro-



BAKU: Pakistan's ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee attended the inauguration of Baku Int'l Book Fair. — DNA

motion of book reading. He noted that the book fair marks the 880th anniversary of the outstanding Azerbaijani poet and philosopher Nizami Ganjavi. Nizami's book corners will be open in the exposition hall, performanc-

es based on his works will be shown for children. The Education Minister Emin Amrullayev spoke about the role of books and reading in the life of society. He underlined that it is very important to instill in children a love of reading books.

In their speeches, Turkish Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism Ahmet Misbah Demircan and chairman of the Azerbaijan Writers' Union, People's Writer Anar Rzayev stressed the importance of the book fair.

Meanwhile, the Baku International Book Fair is expected to take place every year. Previously, it was held once every two years. From 2021, the book fair will be held annually. The main purpose of the event is to promote reading habits, to familiarize

readers with the national and foreign publications, as well as to create cooperation opportunities between national and foreign publishing houses.

The exhibition involves publishing houses, printing companies, bookstores, libraries and cultural centers from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, France, Indonesia, Iran, Colombia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Egypt, Uzbekistan, Russia and Turkey.

The exhibition will host up to 150 events in various formats.

People's writers and poets of Azerbaijan, famous young writers and popular foreign authors and actors are taking part in the book fair.

Among the guests are Chingiz Abdullayev, Sinan Yagmur, Ercan Kesal and many others.



WHO still reviewing Sputnik V vaccine

GENEVA: The World Health Organization (WHO) is still reviewing data about Russia's Sputnik V vaccine as part of hopes that it can be approved by the UN health agency for emergency use against coronavirus, but said Tuesday that no decision is imminent.

The clarification comes after Russian Health Minister Mikhail Murashko in recent days said that administrative issues were among the main holdups in WHO's decision-making process about whether to grant an emergency use listing to Sputnik V, as it has for a half-dozen other vaccines. Such approval would be a

show of international confidence in the vaccine after a rigorous review process, and could pave the way for its inclusion into the COVAX program organized by WHO and key partners that is shipping COVID-19 vaccines to scores of countries around the world based on need.

"As with other candidate vaccines, WHO continues to assess Sputnik V vaccines from different manufacturing sites and will publish decisions on their EUL (emergency use listing) status when all the data are available and the review is concluded," WHO said in a statement. — APP

Pandora Papers cast shadow over Czech PM

AGENCIES

PRAGUE: With days to go until national elections in the Czech Republic, Prime Minister Andrej Babis is trying to shake off criticism following allegations about his business dealings in the Pandora Papers.

In the headline-grabbing leak published on Sunday, which revealed the offshore dealings of hundreds of public officials, international investigative journalists claimed that Babis, a billionaire, used a convoluted scheme to buy a \$22m property in France. Babis has denied the claims, tweeting to his 460,000 followers that he had done nothing wrong and dismissing the investigation as a smear campaign against him and his populist ANO party.

When journalists from the BBC and Czech investigative journalism outlet investigace.cz approached him for comment, the premier's security pushed them away. "I expected it. They are trying to make me look bad before the parliamentary elections," Babis tweeted an hour after the Pandora Papers were published.

A reporter from Seznam Zpravy questioned the leader: "Did you declare your property for taxes?"

Babis responded: "I don't own any real estate abroad. I don't own any offshore." But seconds later, he said he was advised to buy real estate via offshore.

As party campaign leaflets were handed out to people on the streets of Prague ahead of the two-day vote beginning Friday, talk was focused on the scandal.

Mali summons French envoy over Macron's criticism

FOREIGN DESK

BAMAKO: Mali has summoned France's ambassador to the country to register its "indignation" at French President Emmanuel Macron's recent criticism of the country's government, which is dominated by army figures.

Tensions between France and its former colony Mali have been high since it emerged that the Sahel state is in talks with Russian mercenaries. Mali voiced its displeasure to the French ambassador on Tuesday.

These frustrations were on full display at the UN General Assembly last month, when Choguel Kokalla Maiga, Mali's interim prime minister, accused France of a "sort of abandonment in full flight" over its decision to reduce its military deployment in the semi-arid Sahel region.

Macron later told French media that Maiga's comments were "unacceptable" and suggested that Mali's government was "not even really one" — because of the coup in Mali led by Colonel Assimi Goita in May.

The war of words continued on Tuesday when Macron called on Mali's ruling military to restore state authority in large areas of the country abandoned in the face of the armed uprising.

"It's not the role of the French army to fill in for the 'non-work', if I may describe it, of the Malian state," he told French media.

Uzbekistan, Tajikistan leaders hold phone call

TASHKENT: President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev had a telephone conversation with the President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon. The President of Uzbekistan cordially congratulated the Leader of Tajikistan on his birthday, wishing him good health, prosperity and new success, peace and prosperity to the brotherly Tajikistan people. The achievements of modern Tajikistan in state-building and socio-economic development, the progressively growing prestige of the country in the international arena were emphasized.

The fruitful results of the chairmanship of the Tajik side in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization this year and the successful holding of the anniversary summit of this multilateral structure in Dushanbe last month were highly appreciated. The presidents noted with deep satisfaction the strengthening friendship, good-neighborness and strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. — DNA

Six hours outage: Facebook needs fixing, now!

They are not reliable in the sense that Monday's outage disconnected millions of people from their de facto news sources. This is not an exaggeration. In 2020, a massive 79 percent of Arab youth obtained their news from social media, compared with just 25 percent in 2015, according to the Arab Youth Survey

FAISAL J. ABBAS

TWO events related to tech giant Facebook this week should force us to stop and reflect about how the rise of social media has impacted us as societies, especially in the Arab world. Two days of testimony to US senators by whistleblower Frances Haugen, and the six-hour outage of Facebook and other popular Facebook-owned products such as Instagram and WhatsApp, show not only how addicted we have become to these platforms, but also revealed two of their major flaws: They are neither reliable nor trustworthy.

They are not reliable in the sense that Monday's outage disconnected millions of people from their de facto news sources. This is not an exaggeration. In 2020, a massive 79 percent of Arab youth obtained their news from social media, compared with just 25 percent in 2015, according to the Arab Youth Survey. The outage should be a stark reminder that you should never put all your eggs

in one basket, and a cautionary tale for those technology enthusiasts who lobbied for a world in which Facebook feeds and Twitter posts replaced traditional media outlets and credible news sites.

The writing has always been on the wall, but many chose not to notice it. Until January this year Donald Trump was arguably the most powerful man in the world, but that did stop Twitter and Facebook from denying him access to their platforms. The point is not whether those bans were justified after the horrific attack by some Trump followers on the US Capitol. The point is that even Trump, with all his power at the time, could not strong-arm the social media companies into maintaining his presence on their networks. This should be a warning to those news outlets that have spent the past few years giving away their content free of charge to these platforms instead of investing time and money on their own sites: You can lose it all at any time. The other issue is that consumers' increased reliance on social media for news comes at a price, and not just financial.

The rise of fake news and partisan media outlets has led to massive distrust among the general public; the Edelman Trust Barometer 2021 reported that 59 percent of them thought journalists purposely tried to mislead people by saying things they knew to be false, or publishing gross exaggerations. Meanwhile, an estimated \$2.6 billion a year in advertising revenue is flowing into the coffers of publishers of misinformation and disinformation, according to NewsGuard and Comscore. And none of this would have been possible without the increasing popularity of social platforms, in the sense that they gave every Tom, Dick and Harry an audience and rewarded them for growing it — regardless of whether they were spreading real or fake news.

If a social media post instigates hate, threatens the well-being of innocent individuals or infringes on people's rights, the company that gave a platform to that post should not be immune from liability or absolved of its responsibilities. You may think that all of this is mere coincidence — but that is where Haugen

comes in. The day before her testimony on Capitol Hill, she explained in a TV interview how Facebook's news feed algorithm is optimized for content that generates a reaction. The company's own research shows that it is "easier to inspire people to anger than it is to other emotions," Haugen said. "Facebook has realized that if they change the algorithm to be safer, people will spend less time on the site, they'll click on less ads, they'll make less money." In other words, purely to maximize their profits, social media platforms may have increased divisions in our societies, inspired hate attacks, convinced people to vote for policies or politicians who acted against their own interests, and created a global trust deficit that has led to an unprecedented blurred line between fact and fiction.

There is no evidence that the operators of social media platforms wanted any of this to happen, and the malign intentions of users, whether individuals, governments or private entities, are equally to blame. Is it too late to act? No, it is not. In a report by our research and studies

unit here at Arab News, media expert Juan Senor argued that only journalism could save journalism, and pointed out that subscribers to credible news sites actually increased during the pandemic — so we know there is a market for the truth, honestly reported. What should happen now is that tech companies, governments and respectable news organizations combine their efforts to defend that truth. Governments should tax technology companies fairly, and some of those revenues should be invested in traditional media outlets.

Finally, let us put to bed once and for all the argument that Facebook, Twitter and the like are not publishers. They are — just as Arab News, The Times of London or The Washington Post are — and they must be subject to the same disciplines. If a social media post instigates hate, threatens the well-being of innocent individuals or infringes on people's rights, the company that gave a platform to that post should not be immune from liability or absolved of its responsibilities.

— Courtesy Arab News

Briefs

Online visa service to be started for Afghanistan: Sh Rasheed

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior, Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad on Wednesday said that online visa service will be started for Afghan citizens to make this process more transparent and smooth.

Talking to the media, the minister said that this new system will start working within 10 days as the government will provide an on-arrival visa.

He said that the government will use modern technology to get data and maintain the complete records of entry and exit movements. He said that this system will be applicable on two borders initially while other five borders will be included later.

He said that the government was going to announce an amnesty to all visa-holders to submit an application by 30th of next month and make sure their exit from Pakistan.

"Otherwise, they have to face cases against them in Pakistan", he added.

He said that the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) had been given the task to avoid hoarding of dollars in the country. He added the present government was making sincere efforts to provide all basic facilities for the country's people.

He said that things were changing in the region and Pakistan being a responsible state would fulfill its responsibility of national security while meeting international expectations as a major country in the region with the objective to strengthen peace in Afghanistan. — APP

Russia reports record daily covid deaths

AGENCIES

MOSCOW: Russia reported a record high number of daily coronavirus deaths on Wednesday as the country struggles with stubbornly high infection rates and regions beyond Moscow cautiously bring back pandemic restrictions.

The world's fifth worst-hit country with more than 7.5 million infections, Russia has seen cases climb since August driven by the contagious Delta variant and a sluggish vaccination drive. A government tally recorded 929 Covid-19 deaths in the past 24 hours, Russia's highest daily virus death toll since the outbreak of the pandemic.

Several Russia-made jabs have been available for months, but authorities have struggled to encourage its vaccine-sceptic population to get inoculated.

Polls show that more than half of Russians do not plan to get a shot. As of Wednesday, just under 30 percent of Russia's 146 million population had been fully vaccinated, according to the Gogov website, which tallies Covid-19 data from the regions.

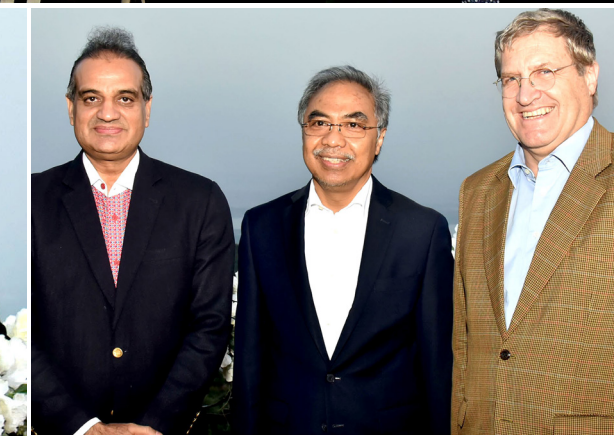
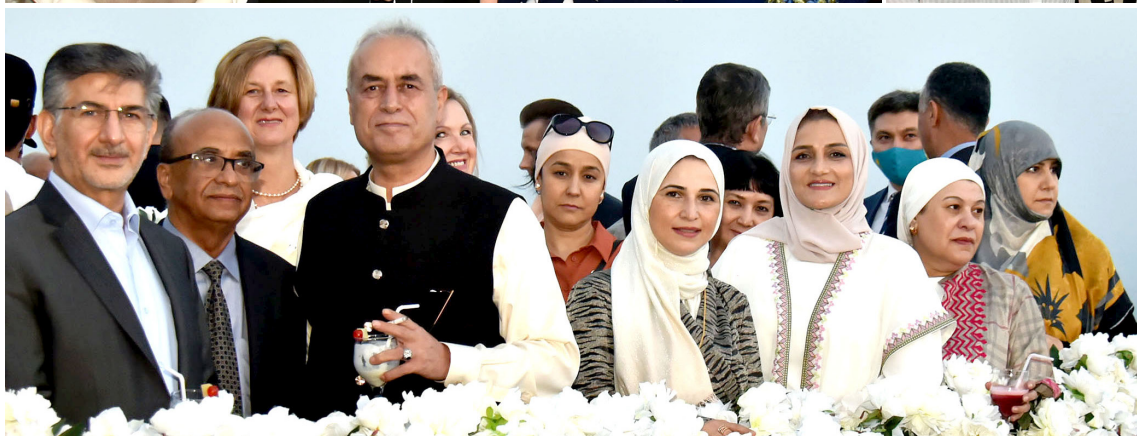
Deputy Prime Minister Tatyana Golikova said earlier this week that death rates were high among unvaccinated Russians.

Pakistanis to face UK quarantine

DNA

KARACHI: The United Kingdom on Wednesday said Pakistanis coming to Britain will have to undergo certain coronavirus safety measures, as it works on recognising the Pakistan-issued COVID vaccine certificate. Pakistan was removed from the red list and was placed on the amber list on September 22 along with several other countries, but in the latest travel advisory, UK said it was working with Pakistani authorities to recognise the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) issued vaccine certificate. Pakistan is now on a new "rest of the world" list — and is not on the list of the countries whose vaccination certificates are recognised in the UK.

Diplomats enjoy Sunset dinner at Monal



ISLAMABAD: CEO and Founder of Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal hosted an annual sunset dinner for the diplomatic community based in Islamabad. A large number of ambassadors, high commissioners and diplomats attended the dinner. The guests enjoyed the Monal hospitality the most. The seven-course menu provided the guests with an opportunity of enjoying both continental and Pakistani cuisines. The diplomats praised the CEO Monal for providing them with an opportunity to meet their colleagues after a long time because the Covid situation had restricted their movement and social gatherings. Most of the diplomats were of the view that Monal happened to be their preferred choice whenever they had guests from their respective countries adding Monal offers a variety of culinary options. **Full coverage shall be published in the coming issue of Centreline magazine.**

Efforts afoot to sabotage CPEC: Asad

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar on Wednesday said that efforts are underway to fail the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

Reacting to a recent report of an American Think Tank on China Pakistan Economic Corridor at a news conference in Islamabad, he said details about the corridor project have been shared on multiple occasions including at the level of parliament. He categorically stated that the CPEC related projects are transparent and carry no hidden debt.

Asad Umar clarified that the Chinese debt is only twenty-six percent of the total external liabilities of Pakistan and added that the country has a debt servicing challenge which we are meeting but clarified that they do not have any problem with the Chinese debt.

The minister said the terms of debt financing for power projects executed under the CPEC are actually more favorable than the non-CPEC financing which had come in from other multilateral agencies. He said the loans which were taken by the government were also at the concessional rate of two percent. He said China has also provided grants to execute different CPEC related projects. A vocational training institute has been established in Gwadar with the Chinese grant. Asad said fake news are being spread against the corridor project in order to create a wrong impression among the people. Minister for planning said most of the projects under the CPEC have been completed in the stipulated period. He said both Pakistan and China welcome investment from other countries in this project.

Linkages with Central Asia to usher era of prosperity

Talking to Ambassador of Republic of Kazakhstan, the minister said that stable and peaceful Afghanistan would help to realize the vision of an interconnected, prosper and economically vibrant region

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Wednesday said the establishment of communication linkages with Central Asian States through Afghanistan would usher in new era of prosperity and development in the entire region. Talking to Ambassador of Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yezhan Kistafin, the minister said that stable and peaceful Afghanistan would help to realize the vision of an interconnected, prosper and economically vibrant region.

Fawad told that Pakistan had extended all possible support in the provision and facilitation of humanitarian relief besides helping in the international evacuation efforts in Afghanistan. Both the sides also emphasized the need to strengthen cooperation in the fields of media and information.

The minister said that memorandum of understanding (MoU) for exchange of news between the state media organizations of both countries would be signed on the occasion of Kazakhstan's President visit to Pakistan. Chaudhry Fawad Hussain also assured the ambassador that Kazakhstan would be provided with Pakistani dramas and films which would be dubbed in Kazakh language for telecast in Kazakhstan. The ambassador said that his country would extend all possible support to Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision of regional connectivity. He also appreciated Pakistan's role in evacuation of foreign nationals, diplomats and international media personnel from Afghanistan.

Both the sides also agreed to hold a grand ceremony at Pak-China Friendship Center on February 24, 2022 to celebrate 30th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between the two brotherly countries.

Kazakh envoy meets Shafqat Mehmood

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador and plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kazakhstan Yezhan Kistafin called on the Federal Minister for Education, Professional Training, National Heritage and Culture Shafqat Mehmood here on Wednesday.

The two sides discussed to enhance educational and cultural relationships and for this purpose the both sides agreed on people to people and university to university contacts. Quaid-e-Azam University is already working with universities of Kazakhstan on science and Technology areas and memorandum of understanding in this regard is likely to be inked in next couple of months.

After the signing of MoU the faculty and students from both countries will visit each other which will further strengthen the fraternal ties between the both countries.

Shafqat Mehmood expressed his desire for broad based and deeper relationship with Republic of Kazakhstan and also suggested the exchange of cultural troops of both the countries to enhance the awareness of each other's cultures of two brotherly states.

In this regard Pakistan National Council of Arts will sign memorandum of understanding with the Arts related organisation of Kazakhstan. The both sides also discussed to hold the events of sports, joint webinars and other extracurricular activities to bring the people of the both countries closer. — Staff Report

World's press, publishers condemn PMDA

DNA

KARACHI: The World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IPRA), the International Publishers Association (IPA), and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) call on Pakistani authorities to retract plans to establish the 'Pakistan Media Development Authority' (PMDA) that risks placing strict state control over all media. Under the pretence of "simplifying procedures and fighting disinformation", the proposed changes to current frameworks aim to centralise under a single authority all regu-

lations pertaining to any media. The PMDA would replace existing media regulatory bodies and would oversee "films, electronic, print and digital media" across every domain, from registrations to wages, licensing to the allocation of government advertising, as well as both civil and criminal complaints procedures. Serious concerns have also been raised regarding the proposed governance of the new PMDA — notably a perceived lack of independence from government. Half of the PMDA board's eight members — as well as the chairman — will be appointed by the state.



ISLAMABAD: Yezhan Kistafin, the ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan called on the federal minister for education, professional training and national heritage Shafqat Mehmood. — DNA

Baku willing to expand gas supply to Europe

Azerbaijan began natural gas supplies to Europe in 2020

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijan is willing to expand its natural gas supplies to Europe, President Ilham Aliyev said Wednesday, amid the continent's deepening energy crisis driven by soaring demand.

The energy-rich Caspian nation is currently supplying 10 billion cubic metres of natural gas per year to Italy, Greece and Bulgaria through the Southern Gas Corridor (SGC) via Georgia and Turkey.

"Azerbaijan began natural gas supplies to Europe in 2020 and we can become a natural gas supplier to other European countries as well," Aliyev told the European Union's newly appointed ambassador to Baku.

European and UK gas prices surged Wednesday by more than 25 percent, driven by soaring demand ahead of the northern hemisphere winter.

Europe's energy crisis has also been exacerbated by a lack of wind for turbine sites, coupled with ongoing nuclear outages — and the winding down of coal mines by climate-conscious governments. Runaway gas prices — coupled with oil that this week struck multi-year highs — have fuelled global concern over spiking inflation.

Azerbaijan began natural gas supplies to Europe at the end of December from the Shah Deniz field off the Caspian coast through the SGC. Europe is heavily reliant on energy supplies from Russia and some countries within the bloc have called for diversifying supplies to reduce Moscow's role.

Critics have accused Moscow of intentionally limiting gas supplies to Europe in an effort to hasten the launch of Nord Stream 2, a controversial pipeline connecting Russia with Germany.

NATO bars 8 members of Russian mission as spies

BRUSSELS: NATO said on Wednesday it had stripped eight members of the Russian mission to the Alliance of their accreditation, calling them "undeclared Russian intelligence officers" — meaning spies.

A NATO official giving the information said that "we can also confirm that we have reduced the number of positions which the Russian Federation can accredit to NATO to 10", down from 20 previously. — APP

Dollar flight continues against rupee

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The greenback has mustered on Wednesday more value against the local currency in the inter-bank trade which saw dollar rising Rs0.16 by day-end. The dollar has concluded at Rs170.96 against the Pakistani rupee after an increase of Rs0.16 in the banker trade today. Separately as reported yesterday, the price of per told gold witnessed an increase of Rs800 in Pakistan. The per tola of precious yellow metal now costs Rs115,000, said Muhammad Arshad, the chairman of the All Pakistan Jewellers Manufacturers Association. Likewise, the rate of 10 grams gold rose by Rs669 to Rs98,593.

Gold prices in the international market fell on Tuesday as the dollar benefited from subdued risk sentiment. Spot gold fell 0.6% to \$1,758.27 per ounce, after hitting \$1,770.41 on Monday, its highest since Sept. 23. U.S. gold futures shed 0.6% to \$1,757.30. Spot silver fell 0.8% to \$22.48 per ounce, platinum shed 0.9% to \$958.83, while palladium rose 0.1% to \$1,906.45.