



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Another Black Day & year of sufferings for people of IIOJK

Detailed News On Page-05

Aung San Suu Kyi testifies in Myanmar court

Detailed News On Page-07

Emma seals first win since US Open title

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Shehbaz expresses solidarity with IIOJK

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president and opposition leader in National Assembly (NA) Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday has expressed solidarity with the people of occupied Kashmir on Black Day. In his message, the PML-N leader said that on October 27, 1947, Indian government illegally occupied the valley. This day is an open challenge for international community and United Nations Security Council (UNSC), he added. Kashmir will be soon freed, he hoped.

EVMs will deprive 3.2mn voters

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology Shibli Faraz Wednesday said that 3.2 million visually impaired people will not be able to cast a vote in the next general elections if Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) are used. Faraz drew attention to the matter through a written response to MNA Noreen Farooq Ibrahim's question. He informed the National Assembly in his reply that the EVMs don't have the braille feature for the visually impaired people to cast a vote. "The new directive must be issued to the EC if we need to bring this feature to the EVMs' system," said Faraz.

Common man looking towards PPP

DNA

LARKANA: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari Wednesday said that decisions related to the country were made by the common men during the PPP's stint in power. The statement was made during Bilawal's address to party workers at one of the events organised by the PPP in Larkana. Workers of the country, farmers, and every common man are looking towards the PPP at the moment," said Bilawal.

Riyadh provides '\$4.2b' lifeline to Islamabad

Minister categorically denied having any link between the Saudi Arabia's this extended facility and IMF programme

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Finance Minister on Wednesday formally announced that Saudi Arabia would provide \$4.2 billion to Pakistan to overcome its balance of payment issues and address energy problems faced by the country. Addressing a press conference along with Federal Minister for Energy, Hammad Azhar, the advisor said that out of this amount US\$3 billion would be placed with the State Bank of Pakistan to help balance of payments and \$1.2 billion would be provided as oil supplies on deferred payment. The minister said that the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia had told him that Pakistan and Prime Minister Imran Khan hold special place for the Kingdom, so he (Crown Prince) was pleased to do this. He said that the Saudi Finance Minister also telephoned him on Tuesday and informed him about the support. The advisor said that some of the amount had already been released on Tuesday.

PM Imran thanks Saudi crown prince

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday thanked Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for depositing \$3 billion in Pakistan's central bank. The premier took to his official Twitter account to thank the prince for his "support" and for financing refined petroleum products with \$1.2 billion. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) "has always been there for Pakistan in our difficult times including now when world confronts rising commodity prices," added the premier. Saudi Arabia agreed to provide a \$4.2 billion lifeline to Pakistan on an annual basis in the shape of cash assistance and oil on deferred payments, Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry said on Tuesday.

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

Govt to deploy Rangers in Punjab for 60 days

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed on Wednesday announced that the government has decided to summon the Punjab Rangers to maintain the law and order situation in the province amid the on-going protests staged by the proscribed Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP). Speaking during a press conference in Islamabad,

TLP not a religious organization: Fawad

STAFF REPORT



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry has said that the banned organization should not dare to blackmail as the organization will no longer be considered a political but a militant organization. Briefing media in Islamabad about the decisions taken by the Federal Cabinet, which met in Islamabad today [Wednesday] with Prime Minister Imran Khan in the chair,

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov met with Amer Ali Ahmed, Chairman of Capital Development Authority. - DNA



TEHRAN: Group photo of the Foreign Ministers/Heads of delegations after 2nd meeting of Afghanistan's neighboring countries held in Tehran. - DNA

FM Qureshi seeks political engagement for Afghanistan

He said the sudden withdrawal of foreign assistance had created a huge gap and warned that 90 percent population could fall below the poverty

DNA

TEHRAN: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on called for devising a long-term roadmap for Afghanistan in order to advance the agenda of political engagement, economic integration, and regional connectivity. Addressing at the second Ministerial Meeting of Neighboring Countries of Afghanistan, the foreign minister stressed the need for exploring possibilities

FM Qureshi calls on President Raisi

DNA

TEHRAN: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi paid a courtesy call on President of Iran, Seyed Ibrahim Raisi in Tehran. Special Representative for Afghanistan Ambassador Muhammad Sadiq, Pakistan's Ambassador to Tehran, Rahim Hayat Qureshi and senior officials accompanied the Foreign Minister. The Foreign Minister conveyed greetings from

of collaboration with key international actors that can support the reconstruction and economic development efforts in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister of the host country Iran Dr. Abdullahian, and the foreign ministers of China, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan attended the session. He said achieving economic sustainability in Afghanistan was crucial step at the moment as

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

Two soldiers martyred in Kurram

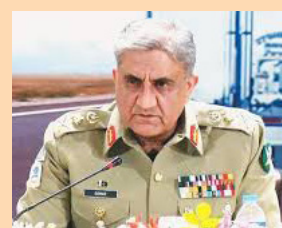
IBRAR KHAN

RAWALPINDI: Two soldiers were martyred when security forces attempted to thwart terrorists' attempt to cross the fence along the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border in Kurram. The incident took place on the night between October 26 and 27. Under cover of darkness, terrorists from the Afghanistan side attempted to cross the border into Pakistan, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. Reacting to the threat, security forces initiated a prompt response and successfully thwarted the attempt. However, during exchange of fire, Lance Naik Asad, 24, resident of Kurram, and Sepoy Asif, 21, resident of LakkiMarwat, embraced martyrdom. The military's media wing said Islamabad strongly condemns the use of Afghan soil by terrorists for activities against Pakistan and expects that the interim Afghan government will not allow such activities in the future.

COAS visits HQ Southern Command Multan

SAIFULLAH

RAWALPINDI: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) visited HQ Southern Command Multan. COAS was given detailed briefing on Operational, training and administrative matters of the formation. Later, COAS



visited Kot Abdul Hakim to witness integrated training of strike Corps troops busy

in practising drills and procedures involving crossing of major water obstacles as part of offensive manoeuvre. COAS also interacted with participants of Exercise. Speaking on the occasion, COAS said that such exercises enhance confidence of troops and hone professional

Continued on Page 06

Inside...

Ashrafi thanks Saudi leadership for economic assistance - Page 02

Strategies needed to debunk CPEC disinformation - Page 03

ICCI President calls for focusing on ASEAN region - Page 04

Another Black Day & year of sufferings for Kashmiris - Page 05

T20 WC: England beats Bangladesh by 8 wickets - Page 06

Australian MPs ask India to let Kashmiris decide their fate - Page 07

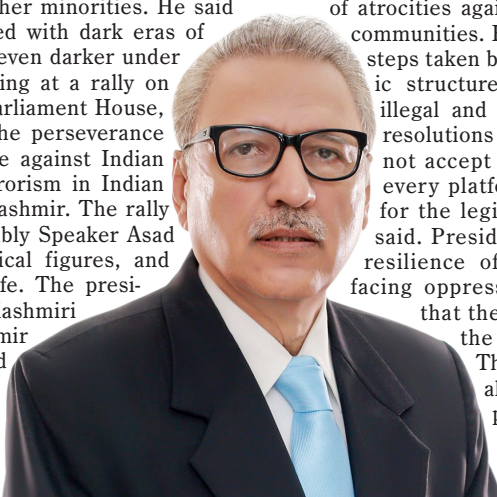
Diplomats, Businessmen to re-evaluate, Pak-ASEAN ties - Page 08

India digging its own grave by oppressing Kashmiris: President

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi on Wednesday said India was digging its own grave by oppressing Muslims of the Occupied Kashmir and other minorities. He said the history of India was blotched with dark eras of tyranny and its future would be even darker under the Hindutva supremacy. Speaking at a rally on Kashmir Black Day in front of Parliament House, the president paid homage to the perseverance and struggle of Kashmiri people against Indian illegal domination and state-terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The rally was attended by National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser, federal ministers, political figures, and people from various walks of life. The president said the sacrifices of the Kashmiri people would pay off and Kashmir would soon be free. He assured the Kashmiris that the Pakistani nation would stand with its Kashmiri brothers and sisters. The president said that on October 27, 1947, India occupied

Jammu and Kashmir through an illegal intervention. The worst series of state terrorism and persecution against the Kashmiri people day continues till date, he added. President Alvi said under the Hindutva ideology, the fascist government of India had launched a spate of atrocities against Muslims and other minority communities. He pointed out that the unilateral steps taken by India to change the demographic structure of Jammu and Kashmir were illegal and a clear violation of various UN resolutions and international law. "We will not accept these illegal steps. Pakistan on every platform will continue to raise voice for the legitimate rights of Kashmiris," he said. President Arif Alvi paid tribute to the resilience of the Kashmiri people despite facing oppression for decades. He regretted that the world had turned a blind eye to the Indian atrocities on Kashmiris. The president urged the international community and India to fulfill its promise of giving Kashmiris the right to self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolutions.



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Ashrafi thanks Saudi leadership for economic assistance

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are two such friendly and brotherly countries that always stands shoulder to shoulder with each other in every thick and thin

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan thanks the leadership of Saudi Arabia, Khadim-e-Harain Al-Sharifain, Shah Salman bin Abdul Aziz, and Crown Prince Amir Muhammad bin Salman for the support and economic assistance amidst the circumstances when the entire world facing difficulties on account of Coronavirus Pandemic.

In a released statement from Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) here on Wednesday, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Chairman Pakistan Ulama Council, Special Aide to Prime Minister of Pakistan on Religious Harmony and Middle East said that people and government of Pakistan are grateful to the leadership of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the way in which Pakistan has been supported and assisted in the economic field.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are two such friendly and brotherly countries that always stands shoulder to shoulder with each other in every thick and thin, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi adding that, there is a relationship of love



and brotherhood, faith and belief between us and Saudi Arabia and time has proved that whenever a difficult stage comes Saudi Arabia has never left Pakistan alone. Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi underlined that following after the visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, to Saudi Arabia, we are grateful to Almighty Allah and also thankful to the leadership of Saudi Arabia, especially King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, for the decision to assist and cooperate with Pakistan in economic field. The leadership of Kingdom of Saudi

Arabia as per past traditions have made Pakistan-Saudi Arabia friendship everlasting and gave message to the world that Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are one and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stands united with Pakistan in every difficult situation.

Our stability, our defense, our security, our religion, our faith are one, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi adding that may Allah Almighty perpetuate this friendship and this unity between Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

He said, "We understand that our Prime Minister Imran Khan and his team work hard in their struggle and efforts and for these efforts, we also thank him".

We also thankful to Prime Minister Imran Khan for making this clear to the world in this regard and for his thankful message this morning to the leadership and people of Saudi Arabia that it does not matter either relations and friendship between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are difficult or better, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Special Aide to Prime Minister of Pakistan on Religious Harmony and Middle East.



FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad addressing to a seminar on Kashmir Black Day at Zila Council Hall. – APP

Kashmir Black day observed across Faisalabad

The participants were carrying placards and banners pertaining to the slogans in favour of the Kashmiri people

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: On the directions of the government, Kashmir Black day was observed across the Faisalabad district on Wednesday to express solidarity with the people of the Indian Held Kashmir. The divisional and district administrations had arranged various programmes in this connection.

The Kashmir Solidarity Seminar was held at District Council hall in which Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad was the chief guest. RPO Imran Mehmood, CPO Dr. Muhammad Abid Khan, ADC HQ Muhammad Khalid, AC City Sahibzada Muhammad Yousaf, District In charge control room Muhammad Sadiq, Educationist M. Akhtar Butt Raja Riffat Mukhtar were participated while representatives of civil

society and a large number of students were also present in the seminar.

Addressing the seminar, the Deputy Commissioner said that the people of Kashmir had been facing acute food and medicines shortage and they were unable even to offer prayers at mosques. He said that it was sheer violence of human rights to keep deprived Kashmiri people from the right to self-determination.

The participants paid rich tributes to the martyrs of the Indian Held Kashmir and said that Pakistani nation stood with them in their struggle of freedom. Later, a rally was taken out from District Council chowk which was led by Deputy Commissioner, RPO and CPO. The rally ended at Katchri bazar chowk after passing Khaleeq Qureshi road and in front of Press Club.

The participants were carry-

ing placards and banners pertaining to the slogans in favour of the Kashmiri people. The participants also chanted slogans against the India and in support to the Kashmiri people.

Talking with mediapersons Deputy Commissioner said that October 27 was a black day in the history of Indian Held Kashmir when the India illegally occupied the valley. He said that Pakistani nation could not keep silent over the Indian atrocities with the innocent Kashmiris and would continue support till their independence.

He said that the objective of observing of the Black Day was to take attention of world forces towards the Indian held Kashmir situation. He demanded the UN take immediate action on the Indian brutalities and atrocities in the Indian Held Kashmir. RPO and CPO said that Kashmir was the integral part of

Pakistan and agenda of the independence of Pakistan could not be completed without the independence of Indian Held Kashmir.

During their speeches, the other speakers said that the struggle of the Kashmiris had been entered in a decisive phase and the blood of the Kashmiri people would not go waste. They said that Prime Minister Imran Khan had raised the voice for the independence of the Indian Held Kashmir.

They condemned the illegal occupation of Kashmir by the Indian forces and said that the Pakistani nation would continue support to the Kashmiri people till their independence. They said that the Black Day was being observed to sensitise the international community on the crimes and human violation by the Indian troops.

Photo exhibition held

DNA

FAISALABAD: A photo exhibition to mark 'Kashmir Black Day' was organized here at the arts gallery of Punjab Arts Council Faisalabad on Wednesday.

Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad inaugurated the photo show. Director Arts Council Zahid Iqbal and a large number of people were present on the occasion.

A number of art pieces depicting Indian atrocities on innocent Kashmiri people and the struggle of Kashmiri freedom fighters were displayed in the gallery.

In this connection, a rally was also held in collaboration with Faisal Islam Foundation and Punjab Arts Council Faisalabad.

The rally led by the Deputy Commissioner culminated from arts council and concluded at the same point after taking a round of Iqbal stadium.

The participants were carrying banners and placards inscribed with different slogans in favour of Kashmiri brethren. – APP

FCCI president pays visit to corona vaccination camp

It is very encouraging that people are getting corona jabs

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Despite the door-to-door corona vaccination, the FCCI (Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry) Corona Vaccination Camp has offered more facilities to the FCCI members and other people to get vaccination in a most comfortable and hassle free environment.

Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh President FCCI paid a surprise visit to the corona vaccination camp in the basement of FCCI and expressed satisfaction over the facility provided to the visitors. He said that it is very encouraging that people are getting corona jabs without making any queue or waiting for a long time. He said that visitors should not feel that they are in a sticky or oppressed hospital environment. He said that initially

this camp was established for the FCCI members and their families only but later on, it was opened for all and a large number of people other than FCCI members are also enjoying this facility.

He said that we are continuing this facility as our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and every individual walking-in is important for us and we will give them special treatment like our members.

He said that the district administration has provided us Sino-pharm, Pak Vac CanSino, Sinovac and CanSino but now we are trying to get Pfizer so that children under the age of 18 years could also be vaccinated.

He said that this camp will supplement the Government's efforts to achieve the target of hundred per cent vaccination as soon as possible.

SCCI seeks special relief package for industries

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) has urged the provincial government to take proactive steps for resolution of issues of Covid-hit industries and announce special incentives to fully revive trade and economic activities.

This was stated by SCCI acting president Imran Khan Mohmand during a meeting with Managing Director of Small Industrial Development Board (SIDB), Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Zafar Ali Shah here at the chamber house on Wednesday.

Deputy MD SIDB and secretary general Sajjad Aziz were present during the meeting.

On the occasion, SCCI acting chief apprised the visiting MD SIDB about issues pertaining to small manufacturing units and gave a number of proposals for their amicable resolution.

Imran Khan Mohmand noted that businesses and the industrial sector had adversely affected during covid-19 restrictions, which should be incentivized to revive economic and trade with full strength. – APP

KPTCA marks Kashmir Black Day

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) Wednesday marked the Kashmir Black Day to apprise the world of the Indian atrocities inflicted on the innocent Kashmiris in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) here at Nishtar Hall.

The KPCTA arrange a photo exhibition depicting pictures of innocent Kashmiri women and children killed and maimed by the Indian forces in IIOJK. Besides KPCTA Director, Yousaf Ali, General Manager Tourism Sajjad Hameed and others a large number of students of various educational institutions attended the event.

"We are observing the Kashmir Black Day to condemn Indian illegal occupation of the state and to reiterate our unwavering support to the Kashmiri people struggling for their right to self-determination," Yousaf said while speaking on the occasion. He said that IIOJK was an integral part of Pakistan and the day was not far that Kashmiris would be able to break the shackles of subjugation and join Pakistan. – APP

KP Minister invites Turkish investors to invest in IT sector

PESHAWAR: KP Minister for Science Technology and Information Technology (ST&IT), Atif Khan has invited Turkish investors to invest in Pakistan's IT sector and stressed on collaboration for the benefit of both brotherly countries.

He was addressing 'Pakistan Tech Summit' held at Istanbul, Turkey, said an official announcement issued on Wednesday. The two-day event was participated by over 200 entrepreneurs, technology experts and sector leaders at the Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University in the Turkish metropolis. The provincial minister said that Pakistan and Turkey have great potential and capacity to boost the IT sector through collaboration and both the countries can exploit and benefit from each other's expertise in the field.

He said that technology has diminished geographical boundaries and limitations and has transformed the whole world into a global village. He added that tech-



nology allowed a person to become a global citizen and offer countless opportunities to skilled and trained youth to compete in the international market. He said that Pakistani exports in the information technology sector had increased by 47% last year. Atif Khan said that 60% of Pakistan's population was youth around the age of 30 years and the government was focusing to channelize and utilize their skills. Meanwhile, Atif Khan also met with president of Turkish Maarif Foundation, Dr Birol Akg and exchanged views on areas of mutual interest and cooperation. – APP

Punjab govt to bear medical expenses of Shujabadi: CM Buzdar

MULTAN: The Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar said on Wednesday, Punjab government would bear all expenses of medical treatment of known Seraiki poet Shaker Hussain Shujabadi.

According to directorate general of public relations, Chief Minister Usman Buzdar instructed district administration to take special care of Shaker Shujabadi and other members of his family.

Earlier, a video went viral in which Shaker Shujabadi was being taken to clinic of a "Hakeem" (Herbal Practitioner) on motorcycle.

His son namely Waleed Shaker registered complaint that Shaker Shujabadi was completely ignored by the government.

He appealed government to help managing treatment of his father. He stated that he could not afford expenses on treatment of his father. – APP



FAISALABAD: Visitors viewing the displayed stuff during an exhibition to mark World Breast Cancer Day at UAF. – DNA

Virtual Da'wah int'l training course for foreigners concludes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Virtual Da'wah International Training Course for foreigners organized by Dawah Academy of the international Islamic University (IIU) in which as many as 432 participants hailing from 52 countries participated, concluded at the academy.

The 8 weeks long virtual course organized by the Training Department of Dawah Academy was built on the theme "Self and Time Management for Dawah workers". Speaking in the concluding ceremony, Professor Dr. Masoom Yasinzai, Rector International Islamic University said that Dawah is a pre-requisite to deal with the negativity disseminated by its enemies against Islam.

He called for devising comprehensive plans to propagate the true picture of Islam in order to counter Islamophobia. IIUI Rector said that world can get rid of terrorism and extremism by promoting tolerance and respect in the societies.

He added that Islam is a religion of peace and it is a practical example of tolerance, peace, and tranquility. He said specific elements are behind the negative propagation of Islam and they disseminate misperceptions about it.

"I can safely say that those who hate Muslims, hate them because they do not know them," said IIUI Rector. He added that if they understand Islam and its true message, they will change their mind. Dr. Masoom opined that Islamophobia was promoting violence against Muslims in the west.

He emphasized that institutions and centers such as Dawah Academy must promote true teachings of Islam and Islamic orientation programs for the Muslims who are minorities in various countries. IIUI Rector stressed for due role of educational institutions to build a counter narrative against islamophobia so that the world may know about the misconception being spread against Islam. Speaking on the occasion, the Re-

source Person of the course, Dr. Bashir Juma who is also an international trainer said that Islamic orientation is the key to reach to the world with Islam's true message. He also elaborated the topics and sessions of the course.

Dr. Muhammad Ilyas, Director General Dawah Academy said that the program is an omen of a vast exposure and reach of Academy. He said the training Department is all set to host more programs and it has already arranged more than 4 programs of such nature in previous quarter. He also told that the Academy through its units and centres playing its role in society.

He informed that Dawah Centre for Women organized competitions to celebrate Ashra of Rehmaatul lil Alameen (Peace be Upon Him) in which students participated in competitions of Husn e Qirat, Hizf ul Quran, Naat Khawani, Speech and Seerah Quiz. coordinator of the program Ihsan Malik, presented a detailed report of the course in the ceremony.

Tender Notice

Renovation and Miscellaneous Work at TDAP Karachi Office on 3rd Floor, Block-A, FTC Building

No. TDAP/GA/1(20)/2018

The Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) intends to hire services of a reputable and experienced "Contractors / Construction Firm", registered with relevant tax authorities and on Active Tax Payers Lists of Federal and Provincial governments to carry out renovation work as per BOQ (given in the tender document).

2. Detailed bidding documents and other related information can be obtained from the office of Assistant Director (MS) at the address given below on any working day between 10:30 a.m. to 04:30 p.m. by paying an amount of Rs. 1000/- (Non-Refundable) through pay order in favor of Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), Karachi on or before November 12, 2021 or can be downloaded from the website of www.tdap.gov.pk. In case of downloading from TDAP's website, the bidders will be required to submit the above tender fees of Rs. 1000/- upon submission of the bids.

3. Sealed bids will be submitted till 11:00 am on November 12, 2021, in the office of Assistant Director (MS) at the address given below and the bids will be opened on the same day at 11:30 a.m. in the presence of representatives of participating firms.

4. Bid Security equivalent to 2% of total bid value in the form of Pay Order/ Demand Draft in favor of Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), Karachi shall be submitted with the sealed proposals. Bids without the Bid Security will be rejected.

5. Trade Development Authority of Pakistan reserves the right to reject any or all bids and annul the bidding procedure in accordance with PPRA rules.

Assistant Director (MS)
Tel: 021-99205777

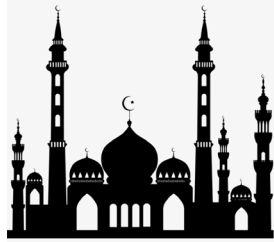


Trade Development Authority of Pakistan
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Fajr.....	04:59 am
Zohr.....	11:52 am
Asr.....	03:42 pm
Maghrib.....	05:20 pm
Isha.....	06:44 pm



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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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....	115
PIA Flight Info.....	114
PIA Cargo.....	9280979
Railway Inquiry.....	117
Railway Exchange.....	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.....	5555489
CAA.....	9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....	5611111
MH.....	561116
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



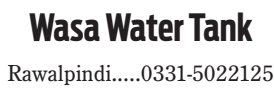
Complaints

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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Strategies needed to debunk CPEC disinformation

Conference initiated discourse on the opportunities and challenges that CPEC is facing currently and provided recommendations on dealing with those challenges and utilising the opportunities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-China Institute (PCI) organised a first-of-its-kind Webinar on "CPEC: Fact vs. Fiction" under its flagship event series, "Friends of Silk Road (FOSR)". The Webinar was attended by over 60 participants online, and featured six speeches, including Sher Ali Arbab, MNA, Chairman, Parliamentary Committee on CPEC, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman Senate Defense Committee & Pakistan-China Institute, Ms. Tehmina Janjua, Former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Dr Jawad Sayed, Professor at LUMS, Ms. Najma Minhas, Managing Editor of Global Village Space, and Sameer Chishty, Prominent

Corporate Leader. The dialogue was moderated by Mustafa Hyder Sayed, Executive Director of the Pakistan-China Institute. The conference chalked out a comprehensive strategy to debunk the myths being created through disinformation campaigns against CPEC. Moreover, it initiated discourse on the opportunities and challenges that CPEC is facing currently and provided recommendations on dealing with those challenges and utilising the opportunities. In his keynote speech, Sher Ali Arbab, Chairman, Parliamentary Committee on CPEC said that the Parliamentary Committee on CPEC has set up three pillars that act as a blueprint of its functioning i.e. it is above party lines, the pro-



ceedings of the committee are conducted in-camera for responsible messaging, and the Chairman of the committee acts as its spokesperson. He highlighted the role of parliament in shaping positive public opinion on CPEC through public interaction. While commenting on the pace of CPEC projects, he lauded the work on CPEC Phase One which

bridged the infrastructure gap and made energy shortage a relic of the past. He termed CPEC Phase-II a catalyst for industrial overhaul and called for the inclusion of Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey into CPEC. Tehmina Janjua, Former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, recalled the quote of President Xi Jinping during Prime Minister Imran

Khan's visit to China in 2019 i.e. "No matter how the international and regional situation changes, the friendship between China and Pakistan will always be unbreakable and rock-solid" and termed this saying a common sentiment shared by the people of Pakistan at all levels. She said that the constancy and its amazing capability to transcend the usual considerations of international politics is the striking feature of the Pakistan-China relationship. For the success of CPEC, we need to expand the beneficiaries of this important project. Potential beneficiaries in the region include Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asian Republics. She also called for a meaningful engagement

with the US, including on CPEC, to realize the dream of regional connectivity. Dr Jawad Sayed, Professor at LUMS, talked about the role that universities can play in shaping public opinion on CPEC and called for interdisciplinary research on CPEC. He called for diversity and integration as the key to the success of projects like CPEC. Najma Minhas, Managing Editor of the Global Village Space pointed out that the current narrative on CPEC is coming from the US and India, which basically aims to inject disinformation against Chinese involvement in Pakistan through CPEC. She said that "in order to project Pakistan's narrative on CPEC worldwide, we need to follow a three-pronged strategy."

Faizabad halted amid TLP protest march: CTP



STAFF REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: The City Traffic Police Rawalpindi (CTP) on Wednesday issued a detailed update on the link roads connecting the Faizabad interchange being blocked amid banned organization Tehreek-e-Labaik (TLP)'s Protest March towards the Federal Capital. The CTP issued the update to inform the masses on status of blocked routes along Murree Road according to which the locations blocked by containers included Mareer Hassan whose one side was closed by placing a container on the road towards Mareer Chowk. The Taimoor road was completely blocked by container, whereas both sides of Murree Road from Mareer towards Saddar Metro Station were blocked by containers, it added. However, Murree Road from Mareer chowk towards Liaquat Bagh was also blocked with the truck placed on one side of the road towards Liaquat Bagh. The Liaquat Bagh and College Road route was completely closed by containers including Iqbal Road and Dhok Khabba Road. Keeping in view the interconnectivity of the routes, Bhabhra Bazaar and Circular Roads were blocked by containers including Asghar Mall and Chah Sultan Roads. While approaching closer to the Faizabad interchange vicinity, Chandani Chowk and Rawal Road were blocked towards Sadiqabad and Commercial Market whereas Rawal Road was blocked at Shaheen Chowk point. Moreover, at 6th Road all linking routes were closed by containers, where Main Murree Road from Islamabad towards Saddar side was also blocked under the flyover.

Foreign Secy plants Chinar to pay tribute to Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood on Wednesday planted three saplings of Chinar (maple) tree to pay tribute to the three generations of Kashmiris facing Indian oppression. The saplings of Chinar, the native tree of the Kashmir Valley, were planted in the lawns of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to observe the Kashmir Black Day. The Foreign Secretary on the occasion said the gesture was to pay tribute to Kashmiris' struggle for self-determination and supreme sacrifices by their three generations who braved the 74 years of Illegal Indian occupation. — DNA

PCRWR announces "Essay Con 2021" on climate change

The deadline for the submission of essays is November 30. The essays should be written of around 800 words (margin of 200 words) in English language, the official informed

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Council for Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) in collaboration with Technology Times has announced its 14th essay writing contest "EssayCon 2021" under the theme of "Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change Impact and Environmental Degradation". The essay contest is being arranged in collaboration with United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and other partner organizations. The contest is an effort to harness the energy and creativity of the Pakistan's youth in promoting a culture of awareness on cli-

mate change impact and environmental degradation, an official of PCRWR told APP on Wednesday. It also aimed to inspire society to learn from the young minds and to think about how each of us can make a difference in the world. The deadline for the submission of essays is November 30. The essays should be written of around 800 words (margin of 200 words) in English language, the official informed. The top three essay winners will get cash prizes of Rs. 50,000, Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 20,000 respectively. About the terms and conditions, the official elaborated that the essays could be any form of writing like Expository, Descriptive, Narrative,

Compare and contrast, and Persuasive or argumentative. Technology Times reserves the right to cancel a submission in case of any type of copyright violation, replication, duplication or copying of the essay from any other source. Incomplete entries will be rejected and only a single chance would be given to the participants who are required to use it wisely and confirm every detail before submission. Essays are judged by a panel of highly qualified judges. Every judgment is opinion-free and anonymously done. The contest is for higher secondary to university students, either registered or not while the age limit for participating in the competition is 16-32.

About the evaluation process, the official conveyed that the judgment criteria will base uniqueness of ideas or originality, clarity of subject or focus on issues, content or interpretation, technical relevancy and language. In case of tie there will be additional 3 points of presentation (for the contestants only), which will be awarded on spot at the prize distribution ceremony. The essays can be submitted at www.technologytimes.pk/essaycon2021 while the participants can contact essaycon2021@technologytimes.pk and technologytimes@gmail.com for further queries. The last date for the submission of the essays is November 30, the official said.



ISLAMABAD: CDA chairman inspecting Work on plastic road project at the venue F-9 park environment office. — DNA

KCEU chief urges EU leaders to resolve Kashmir dispute

An open letter sent to EU officials says the Modi government policies to change the demographic character of IIOJK are being pursued in total disregard to the UNSC resolutions

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Kashmir Council Europe (KCEU), Ali Raza Syed, has called upon the European leaders to play their effective role in peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute according to wishes of people of Jammu and Kashmir. In this regard, Ali Raza Syed sent an open letter to the leading executives of the European institutions including David Maria Sassoli, President of the European Parliament; Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative on Foreign Affairs and Security Policy European Commission; Maria Arena, Chair of European Parliament's Human Rights Subcommittee; and Juan Fernando Lopez Aguilar, Chairman of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) Committee of the European Parliament on the occasion of Kashmir Black Day, the 27th October, Kashmir Media Service reported. In his letter, the KCEU Chairman writes, we invite the leading politicians and parliamentarians of the European Union to join the movement to resolve the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the wishes of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and to bring peace and stability to the troubled region which requires the repeal of the draconian laws im-

posed by Indian occupation authorities and the demilitarization of Jammu and Kashmir. The letter mentions that on 27 October 1947, Indian Army invaded Jammu and Kashmir and started a process which, over the ensuing years, has turned Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir into one of the most intensely militarized areas of the world. Given the significance of the extent

of the sufferings of the Kashmiri people, 27 October has been designated as "Black Day", a day on which the names of the victims of the Kashmiris' struggle for right to self-determination can be remembered and their memory honoured. Ali Raza Syed stresses for the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions saying that the World Body passed two resolutions

approving a ceasefire, demarcation of the ceasefire line, demilitarization of the state and a free and impartial plebiscite to be conducted under the supervision of the United Nations. These resolutions were passed on August 13, 1948, and January 5, 1949, which were accepted both by Pakistan and India.

"The never ending Kashmir dispute has led to barbaric killings of thousands of people in the valley, including women and children, by the Indian armed forces. Between January 1989 and 2021, Indian troops have martyred 95,875 Kashmiris, widowed 22,934 women, orphaned 107,842 children and molested or gang-raped 11,246 Kashmiri women. Over 8,000 young people have disappeared while in military or police custody and their whereabouts remain unknown. Many of those are feared to be buried in the thousands of unmarked graves discovered in the territory. In addition, large numbers of freedom fighters, human rights activists and political and intellectual figures have been detained without trial or are held under house arrest," the letter says. The policy of the Modi government to change the demographic character of IIOJK by bringing families from different parts of India and settling them in the occupied territory is being pursued in total disregard to the UNSC resolutions and of international law, it says.



Wheat cultivation to get momentum in rainfed areas

ISLAMABAD: Owing to the timely rain fall across rainfed areas in the country, wheat cultivation during Rabi 2021-22 is anticipated to gain momentum in these areas, which would supplement the overall targets set for grain sowing during the season. Rainfed area under wheat cultivation cover 10% of the total and the rains prior to start of the sowing season have provided sufficient moisture for preparing land to cultivate wheat on time, said Food Security Commissioner Dr Imtiaz Ali Gopang. Talking to APP here on Wednesday, he said that currently the atmosphere for sowing the wheat crop was favorable and it was expected that targets set for current sowing season would also be achieved that would have also positive impact on overall output. Besides, the government is also taking other measures as well to provide incentives to local farmers including availability of certified seeds, subsidized fertilizers and other inputs to encourage them not only to achieve production targets but surpass it to maintain food safety and security in the country, he remarked.

In this regard, the government is intended to announce minimum support price of wheat for the crops season 2021-22 prior to starting sowing season of the crop for bringing maximum area under cultivation and encourage the farmers by ensuring proper rate of their produce, he added.

Plastic road concept: CDA constructing 1 km as test

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The management of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) Wednesday started trials on the 'plastic road concept' here at the F-9 Park. Initially one kilometer road will be constructed in the federal capital, a news release said. The technology will be transferred to asphalt plant of MPO directorate after evaluating results. This is the first project of its kind in Pakistan which is being launched in collaboration with a private company. The CDA had signed a memorandum of understanding a month ago with a private beverage company, under which work has now started as a test case. If it will have positive results, this concept will be utilized in Islamabad and replicated in other cities of the country. It is expected that the plastic road will be more sustainable and durable than the conventional road. It is worth mentioning here that 500 to 600 tons of municipal waste is being collected in Islamabad on daily basis which contains 150 to 180 tons of plastic waste. By recycling the collected plastic, environmental pollution can be reduced and roads be constructed.

IRSA releases 68212 cusecs water

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) released 68212 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 68109 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1510.74 feet, which was 118.74 feet higher than its dead level of 1392 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded at 29300 and 35000 cusecs respectively. While water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1180.40 feet, which was 130.04 feet higher than its dead level of 1050.00 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water were recorded at 15597 and 10000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, and Sukkur was recorded at 46677, 36143 and 34905 cusecs respectively.

Briefs

Satrang Gallery exhibits Stages of Life

ISLAMABAD: Satrang Gallery on Wednesday showcased exhibition titled "Life in a play" that depicted artworks and paintings highlighting Shakespeare's stages of life.

The exhibition displayed artwork of the two artists namely Minaa Mohsin and Farazeh Syed aimed at depicting the feminist version within these scenes to highlight female dynamism – passion, creativity, assertiveness.

"Sometimes playfully depicted and framed, sometimes more intense, these paintings narrate the story of each unique character," said an official of the Gallery.

According to Satrang Gallery, these two brilliant painters have each created vibrant scenes for audiences and viewers to sink into the unheard melodies of Shakespeare's unmatched worldly wisdom.

These vignettes or slices of life were like the moving parts of a play, at times absurd or dramatic, sometimes contradictory, coming together to create a complete journey.

The official further briefed that a large number of people visited the exhibition from various walks of life including students, and old citizens also with maintaining proper Standard Operating Procedures (SOPS). – APP

IT sector projects get Rs 4,133.128 million

ISLAMABAD: The government so far provided funds amounting to Rs 4,133.128 million during the current fiscal year to execute Information Technology and Telecommunication projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2021-22).

The federal government had allocated 9,361.06 million for the ongoing and new schemes of the Information Technology and Telecom Division in the public sector development program for the financial year 2021-22.

An amount of Rs 7,050.000 million was allocated for ongoing schemes and Rs 2,311.056 million were earmarked for the new schemes for the Telecom Division

For new schemes, the government had allocated Rs 400 million in the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2021-22) for the establishment of an IT park in Karachi, Rs. 365.528 million for hybrid power solution Solarization for remote sites in AJK, Rs. 365.528 million for hybrid power solution Solarization for remote sites in Gilgit Baltistan, Rs 160 million for national centers of Research innovation and entrepreneurship in AAI and allied technologies (NCRIE-AI) feasibility study and Rs 100 million for raising smart capital through the private trading market at PSK (PSEB). – APP

Power generation capacity increases

ISLAMABAD: The country's power generation capacity witnessed a 9.3 percent increase during the last fiscal year due to prudent policies introduced by the government for gradually switching over to alternative and renewable energy resources.

"During the current fiscal year, the government has set a target to get additional 15.2 per cent growth, focusing on alternative and renewable resources," according to an official report available with APP.

Energy mix for power generation would need to gradually move towards domestic coal, renewable and hydro-power resources, as the least cost and sustainable option, the report said, adding in the next few years, more focus would be required in improving the electricity transmission and distribution (T&D) networks.

The government has introduced an effective Alternate and Renewable Energy policy that would be extended to Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The policy would be implemented on a fast-track basis across the country to increase the share of renewables in the country's energy mix. – APP

ICCI President calls for focusing on ASEAN region

Shakeel Munir said that the current level of two-way annual trade between Pakistan and ASEAN was around US\$7 billion, which could be further increased with greater efforts from both sides

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) said that ASEAN has emerged as the 5th largest economy in the world with an overall GDP of over USD 3 trillion and Pakistan should focus on this potential region for promoting trade and exports.

He said this while addressing a roundtable organized by Pakistan-ASEAN Business Forum. Zubair Tufail President United Business Group, Zafar Bakhtawari Secretary General UBG, Ambassadors of ASEAN countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, Myanmar & Brunei, Amer Ahmed Atozai Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs and others attended the Forum.

Shakeel Munir said that the current level of two-way annual trade between Pakistan and ASEAN was around US\$7 billion, which could be further increased with greater efforts from both sides.

He said that with almost 1 billion people of ASEAN, there was huge scope for Pakistan to enhance its economic engagement with this rising economic block for achieving beneficial results for its economy.

He stressed that Pakistan should



encourage frequent exchange of trade delegations to improve business linkages with ASEAN countries.

He said that Pakistan should also invite ASEAN countries to participate in CPEC projects and invest in its Special Economic Zones. He emphasized that Pakistan should accelerate efforts to become a Full Dialogue Partner (FDP) of ASEAN that would be a win-win arrange-

ment for both sides as Pakistan would be the only FDP of ASEAN, which would also be a member of SAARC, ECO and SCO. ICCI President urged that Pakistan should strengthen its connectivity with ASEAN in all domains including transportation, communication, cyber and ports. This soft and hard connectivity will be mutually beneficial for Pakistan, ASEAN and even regions like Central and West Asia

that are close to Pakistan. He said that Pakistan has good potential to enhance cooperation with ASEAN countries in many fields including tourism, science & technology, IT, higher education etc. He stressed that Pakistan should develop cultural exchanges and people to people contacts with ASEAN countries that will help generate better awareness about potential areas of mutual cooperation.

Zubair Tufail President, Zafar Bakhtawari Secretary General of United Business Group, Ambassadors of ASEAN countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, Myanmar & Brunei, Amer Ahmed Atozai Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs also addressed the forum and highlighted the importance of enhancing Pakistan's engagement with ASEAN countries.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Citizen Foundation Gen. Ehsan ul Haq (r), Chief Executive Capital Citizen Foundation pose for a group photo during launching ceremony of Capital Citizen Foundation. – DNA

PAC marks Kashmir black day

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Council of the arts arranged photo exhibition and protest walk to mark Kashmir black day. Naheed Manzoor was the chief guest of the ceremony. While addressing the ceremony Naheed Manzoor said, India illegally occupied Jammu & Kashmir 7 decades ago.

In the last seven decades, India has subjected the Kashmir people to the worst state terrorism, but the resolve of the Kashmiris did not waver.

The day is not far when Kashmiris will breathe freely. No one knows the value of independence better than Kashmiris, she added. Director Arts Council

Waqar Ahmed said that Kashmir is an incomplete agenda of 1947. Occupying India distorted the rights and identity of Kashmiris on August 5, 2021. October 27 and August 5 will always be remembered as a black day in history. Indian Army is involved in the genocide of Kashmiris in the occupied valley. The silence of the international community on the violation of human rights in Occupied Kashmir is a matter of concern. Even after 70 years, the United Nations has failed to implement the resolutions of the Security Council. Kashmiris should be given the right to vote. A large number of citizens participated in the exhibition. The exhibition will continue till October 30.

COMSTECH organizes webinar on Kala-Azar disease

She suggested continuous efforts to develop DNA and protein-based vaccine candidates to confer desired T cells response in preclinical models

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Visceral Leishmaniasis (VL) is a neglected tropical disease accounting for second highest mortality worldwide, with an estimated 50,000 to 90,000 new cases annually. India alone accounts for 50% of the global VL cases. Considering the growing drug-related toxicities, parasite resistance, HIV-coinfection, the development of an effective vaccine for Leishmaniasis remains a global priority, said Dr. Nahid Ali addressing COMSTECH webinar online on Wednesday.

She said, a clear understanding of host immunology and role of T cells in long-lasting memory generation is extremely essential to control hard-to-treat infections like VL. Although human VL is characterized by high Leishmania-specific antibodies, inadequate, depressed CMI response and lack of protective cytokines are hallmarks of disease progression, she informed.

Dr. Nahid said that her clinical studies showed that successful cure to this disease is possible. The life-long immunity against re-infection and relatively simple lifecycle of Leishmania parasites show feasibility of vaccine development against this disease, she mentioned. She suggested continuous efforts to develop DNA and protein-based vaccine candidates to confer desired T cells response in

preclinical models. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary introduced the speaker and said that it is really a very challenging work when we try to solve the problem of disease of interdisciplinary nature. Prof. Nahid Ali, received her Ph.D. degree from University of Calcutta in 1985. She is fellow of the World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), J.C. Bose national fellow, and one of the pioneers of liposomal delivery system used for vaccines and therapies. The webinar was attended by over 100 academics, scientists and the general public from OIC member states.



India obstacle in restoration of UN resolutions on IIOJK

Strongly condemning the grave human rights violations in IIOJK, he said Pakistan would continue to support unarmed Kashmiris at every forum

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said on Wednesday that India was an obstacle to the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir.

Addressing the participants of a photographic exhibition jointly inaugurated by him along with Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Husain, he said the blood of unarmed Kashmiris was being shed in illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Strongly condemning the grave human rights violations in IIOJK, he said Pakistan would continue to support unarmed Kashmiris at every forum.

He said that Indian oppression and barbarism in occupied Jammu and Kashmir had no parallel in human history. Referring to Indian atrocities in Kashmir, he said that pellet guns were being used against Kashmiris including women and children in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He said Modi regime was trying to im-



pose extremist policies of RSS in occupied Kashmir and crush Kashmiris legitimate freedom struggle.

He said that Hindutva and RSS thinking had prevailed in India and minorities were being targeted.

He said that Pakistan would continue to provide moral, political and diplomatic support to Kashmiris. He said that Modi's extremist thinking prevailed in occupied Kashmir and a reign of terror, oppression and barbarism has been unleashed in IIOJK.

Prime Minister Imran Khan has proved to be a true advocate and courageous ambassador of Kashmiris, he said adding that Prime Minister Imran Khan highlighted Indian atrocities in illegally occupied Kashmir at all forums.

Farrukh Habib said that for the first time, the Western media have sharply criticized atrocities in illegally occupied Kashmir by the Modi government. He called for resolution of the Kashmir issue in accordance with the UN resolutions by giving Kashmiris their basic right to self-determination.

He said that this exhibition depicting bloodshed was manifestation of Indian state terrorism in IIOJK. – APP

AIU organizes Seerat competition

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) will host Naat and speech competitions on November 2 in connection with Eid Milad-un-Nabi among students of colleges and universities in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The topic for speech competition is "The Role of Youth in Building and Development of Islamic State in the Light of Seerat-un-Nabi" while students will recite the Naat of their choice. According to Rana Muhammad Tariq Javed, Director Student Affairs of AIU, invitation letters have been dispatched to the Heads of Colleges and Universities asking them to submit their nominations for these two competitions.

They can send their entries by post or e-mail till November 1. The first prize of Rs. 5,000, second prize of Rs. 3,000 and third prize of Rs. 2,000 will be given to winner in both competitions. The event will take place at the university's auditorium and VC, AIU, Prof Dr Zia Ul-Qayyum will preside it. Detailed information can be obtained about these competitions from Student Counselor, Faisal Altaf at 051-9057812 and 0333-5065855.

Railways retrieve 478 acres land

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has retrieved around 478 acres precious land worth billion of rupees from illegal occupants under its anti-encroachment operation across the country during the present government tenure.

"The encroachment operation has been launched with the assistance of railway police and district administrations," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP. Giving details, he said the department retrieved 245 acres land in Punjab, 123 acres from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 94 acres from Sindh and 16 acres from Balochistan.

The official said that out of the total land, 83 acres were commercial, 298 acres were residential and 97 acres were the agricultural land of the Pakistan Railways.

He said the government was taking several steps to retrieve encroached land from the land grabbers including detailed survey was being carried out to identify the encroached land, occupied by the individuals and under illegal occupation of various government departments.

The official said the campaign was being monitored by the Divisional Superintendents, Headquarters office and Ministry of Railways.

The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and joint procedure order have been issued since for strict implementation of this policy, the official added.

He said that First Information Reports (FIRs) were being lodged and cases were registered and sent to Pakistan Railways Judicial Magistrates for expeditious trial. The issue regarding illegal occupation and possession of Pakistan Railways land by government departments and institutions has also been taken up with the concerned departments, he added. – APP

ANF rehabilitation centers treat 13,200 drug addicts

ISLAMABAD: Two leading treatment and rehabilitation centres, working under the Anti Narcotics Force, in Islamabad and Karachi have so far treated around 13,200 drug addicts.

The center, established in 2005 in Islamabad Capital Territory, has so far rehabilitated 6652 drug addicts, a senior ANF official said.

The federal capital centre is consisted of 45-bed hospital, while the Karachi hospital has the capacity to accommodate 205 patients including 25 female and juveniles each. The Karachi hospital is being managed by the Sindh government.

Since its establishment, the Karachi hospital treated a total of 6,548 drugs addicts till Aug 2021.

Replying to a question, he said no such hospital has been established in Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. – APP

Improving ties

AFTER years of deep-rooted mistrust, Bangladesh and Pakistan are looking to enhance bilateral and economic ties. This is a promising opportunity given that there is much that we can learn from Dhaka's economic growth trajectory.

PM Imran Khan extended an invite to his Bangladeshi counterpart last July and ever since, two meetings in total have taken place between High Commissioner Ahmed Siddiqui and the PM Hasina. This is a monumental step forward considering that the relationship between Pakistan and Bangladesh has been on the rocks due to the staunch stance her government took against the events of 1971 in the past. We must work towards finalising the dates for the visit so that close corroboration between the two countries can be facilitated.

With the potential of official dialogue continuing, our government can learn from the way Bangladesh rose up from the ashes of the civil war. It is now expected to become the next Asian tiger as its growth rate has consistently revolved around 7.8 percent in comparison to Pakistan's 5.8 percent. Its debt is half of what Pakistan has accumulated over the course of time and its foreign exchange reserves are four times larger than ours. This is an indicator of a country that was successful in manoeuvring the similar problems that we face, and have continued to face, nationally.

It is important to address past grievances, resolve any remaining animosity and promote positive relations with Bangladesh and it is good to see that the government is proactively taking steps towards achieving this objective. Finalising the dates for the visit is the first step, what follows is the potential to evolve into regional partners in a mutually beneficial arrangement.

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Global warming

ACCORDING to the United Nations World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), Asia suffered its hottest day on record in 2020. The implications of this are rather frightening; extreme weather and global warming has escalated to the point of no recovery. Thousands of people have lost their lives either in environmental disasters or through their trickle-down effects.

Billions of dollars have also been lost in trying to recover and prevent the worsening situation. With the COP26 summit approaching in a few days, an urgent plan of action must be devised to eliminate the pressure from the Asian continent and employ sustainable long-term solutions. The UN's Climate in Asia report indicated that each country had been sufficiently affected. Food and water insecurity is on the rise, health risks have increased, environmental degradation is escalating as floods, droughts, and storms come and go unexpectedly.

Pakistan particularly, must explore all the avenues through which the effects of climate change can be mitigated. First and foremost, we must ensure that we switch to more sustainable and renewable sources of energy. We are fortunate enough to receive sunlight for most of the year and for over 12 hours of the day, the perfect environment to support solar energy systems.

We must also instill a sense of responsibility on a local level as well as each individual should be educated on the smallest ways in which they can limit their carbon footprint and improve the city and village environments. Already, floods, excessive heat spells and humidity limits human productivity and forces the country to come to a standstill. This is especially a problem for Pakistan which has experienced immense economic losses due to activity in urban centres coming to a halt in light of standing water or floods. Rapid urbanisation has in turn led to hotter cities, opening up risks of ailments such as heat strokes.

Millions of rupees are lost through this and yet, viable preventative solutions are not employed. Afforestation programmes, creation of reservoirs and clean drainage systems are essential for preventing floods. They will also ensure that in times of drought, this excessive water can be redirected towards fulfilling the country's needs. We must also look to change our attitude towards building concrete jungles. There must be a focus on developing means to tackle climate change such as a healthy green-grey balance and cutting down on unnecessary emissions.

Another Black Day & year of sufferings for Kashmiris

Bilal Hayee



Hence, 27 October will be another Black Day in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K) which remained the most densely militarized zone in the world today

AST October, while explaining to the Azerbaijani readers on why people of Jammu and Kashmir observe Black Day on 27 October, I intuitively wrote "Sooner than later, the struggle of the people of Azerbaijan for complete liberation of their territory will result in fruition". To our utmost delight and jubilation, the decades' long struggle of the people of Azerbaijan, supported by the well wishes of friends, led to their glorious victory in the 44 Day Patriotic War in November 2020. The Government and People of Pakistan have stood shoulder to shoulder with the resilient people of Azerbaijan in this epic struggle for liberation of their occupied territories. In the spirit of brotherhood, Pakistan will continue to extend its diplomatic, moral and economic support as Azerbaijan embarks upon the next phase of reconstruction and development of its territories for rehabilitation of the hundreds of thousands of IDPs. Often juxtaposed with the erstwhile dispute of Nagorno-Karabagh (now a matter of the past),

the dispute of Jammu and Kashmir, unfortunately, still awaits a resolution. With more than 11 resolutions of the United Nations calling for peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute by implementing a UN mandated plebiscite (referendum) allowing the Kashmiri people to exercise the promised right of self-determination, there is no light at the end of the dark tunnel. The year 2021 has been yet another year of suffering and misery for the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. On 27 October, the people of Jammu and Kashmir will again vent their anger and frustration and protest the controversial and illegal Instrument of accession which was signed by the Hindu Ruler of Jammu and Kashmir with the Indian Government in 1947.

Hence, 27 October will be another Black Day in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K) which remained the most densely militarized zone in the world today. According to the American magazine Harper, Kashmir's doctor to patient ratio is 1 to 3060 while its troops to civilian ratio was 1-7. Following the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution in August 2019, there has been steady decline in both the economic and law and order situation in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Instead, the gross human rights violations at the hands of the occupying forces continue unabated.

Recently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan unveiled a dossier highlighting the systematic human rights violations being committed in the IIOJ&K. As per the information contained in the said dossier, since 1989, a deliberate campaign by the Indian Army/ paramilitary forces against the Kashmiris has manifested in brutal tactics such as crackdowns, curfews, illegal detentions massacre, targeted killings, sieges, vandalism of properties, torture, enforced disappearances, and sexual violence against women, extrajudicial killings and maligning of indigenous freedom struggle as terrorism. India's usurping of basic human rights of Kashmiris has increasingly radicalized the youth who have been constrained to resort to a resistance struggle for achieving their legitimate right of self-determination and right to life.

Adding fuel to this fire, post 5 August 2019, Modi government is conspiring to pave way for Indians to settle in Kashmir in order to fulfil the long-standing demand of Hindu extremist

organization, RSS. Besides promulgation of Delimitation Commission on 6 March 2020 and Domicile Law on 31 March 2020, demographic transformation is underway with final aim of turning Muslims into minority and impacting the outcome of any referendum in Kashmir. Such Indian maneuvers are prejudicial to UNSC Resolutions and international laws especially the Fourth Geneva Convention which prohibits the Occupier to transfer civilians from the 'Occupying Power' into the 'Occupied Territory'. Pakistan expects from the International community to immediately intervene and stop this brutal and prolonged suppression of rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Besides, following specific actions would be needed to prevent further deterioration in the plight of the people in IIOJ&K: International community including United Nations and its relevant Human Rights machinery, civil society organizations, media houses and other defenders of human rights must fulfil their obligations towards besieged Kashmiris by playing their part to end the Indian rule of tyranny and oppression.

The UN should compel Government of India to allow free access to Special Procedure Mandate Holders of UN Human Rights Council for independent investigation of human rights violations. The UN should record names of individual and units involved in war crimes and place sanctions on the individuals and entities. The EU, the UK and other law-abiding countries should impose sanctions on India under their specific global human rights sanction regimes for perpetrating state-sponsored war crimes. The international community should not show callousness and apathy towards Kashmiris, must force India to comply with its international and moral obligations and allow Kashmiris to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination as enshrined in international law and the relevant UNSC resolutions. Pakistan believes that it is the inalienable right of the people of Jammu and Kashmir to allow them the exercise of the promised right of self-determination. No amount of time, distortion of facts and use of brute force by India can deprive the people of Jammu and Kashmir from this right."

— The writer is Pakistan's Ambassador to Azerbaijan

Why Israel is trying to criminalise Palestinian civil society

Yara Hawari



This attack on Palestinian organisations is not happening out of the blue. It is the latest escalation of Israel's systematic campaign...

ON October 22, the Israeli defence ministry issued a military order designating six Palestinian NGOs as "terrorist organisations". The six targeted organisations are: Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Al-Haq, Bisan Center for Research and Development, Defense for Children International-Palestine (DCI-P), the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC), and the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees (UPWC). The ministry, citing 2016 anti-Palestinian terror legislation, has accused these organisations of being affiliates of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a Marxist-Leninist political party. More specifically they are accused of forming "a network of organisations active undercover on the international front" on behalf of the PFLP. The Israeli regime has yet to provide any proof to back its claims, but to Palestinians, it is clear that this is its latest bid to criminalise

Palestinian civil society. These particular organisations are renowned internationally for their critical human rights and social work. Addameer, for example, provides crucial legal and social support to Palestinian political prisoners and their families. Another organisation, Al-Haq, has spent decades documenting human rights abuses by the Israeli regime, collecting invaluable data and winning many international awards. The Union of Agricultural Work Committees supports Palestinian farmers in the face of ongoing oppression and land theft by the Israeli regime.

This attack on Palestinian organisations is not happening out of the blue. It is the latest escalation of Israel's systematic campaign to stifle Palestinian civil society that has been ongoing for over seven decades. After the establishment of the Palestinian Authority under the Oslo Accords in the 1990s, the Palestinian civil society took over the leading role in exposing and challenging the crimes of the Israeli regime. Thus, Palestinian civic organisations emerged at the forefront of the Palestinian struggle, which is what put them in Israel's crosshairs.

More recently, in the last decade, there have been coordinated efforts led by various non-governmental groups working in tandem with the Israeli ministry of strategic affairs to target and defame Palestinian NGOs which work on Palestinian human rights. The terror designation effectively criminalises the work of the six NGOs and allows the Israeli regime to close down offices, seize assets, arrest staff and even prohibit funding or public expressions of support for their activities. It could also make third parties and foreign partners apprehensive about engaging with these organisations and their work.

While this designation is an escalation, it is not the first time the Israeli regime has falsely applied the terrorism label to Palestinian organisations or individuals. The label is frequently bandied about by Israeli officials and Israel's supporters to discredit and defame those who document Palestinian rights violations and those

who resist such violations. The tactic is simple and can be quite effective.

For example, last year the European Union began implementing a funding clause requiring Palestinian beneficiaries of its financial support to vet all individuals working for them to ensure they are not involved with any Palestinian political party on its "terrorist list". Considering that a considerable number of Palestinian political parties are on the list, the move amounts to political persecution. This coordinated attack on Palestinian civil society has also included allegations of misuse of funds or corruption in a bid to try and pressure international funders to withdraw their financial support. It has also involved regular raids on NGO offices to intimidate their staff and partners and disrupt their work.

In July, for example, Israeli security forces broke into the office of Defense for Children International. The NGO, which works with Palestinian children detained by Israel, reported that Israeli soldiers took computers and files relating to some of the cases it is working on. Addameer has also faced countless raids on its offices over the years which have seen damage and theft of equipment and files. In the face of ever-escalating abuse and intimidation by the Israeli regime, these organisations and others have continued to work for the benefit of the Palestinian people.

Although various international bodies and figures have come out against the terror designation and in support of the work that these NGOs do, it is not enough. This is not happening because Israel is becoming more totalitarian and more oppressive. Rather this is happening because of decades of Israeli impunity and unwillingness by the international community to hold the regime accountable. The international community needs to recognise its role as an Israeli crime enabler and finally take decisive action against Israel's repeated violations of international law.

— Yara Hawari is the Palestine Policy Fellow of Al-Shabaka, the Palestinian Policy Network

China's rise is a threat US has faced for a century

Hal Brands

The US-China competition should be seen as the next go-around. China's naval buildup and maritime coercion are meant to make it pre-eminent in the East Asia and its oceanic approaches. Meanwhile, Beijing's BRI, a tangle of infrastructure projects, trade deals and geo-economic endeavors reaching from Southeast Asia to Europe, are intended to pacify China's continental frontiers and spread its influence across the world's largest landmass

THE US-China rivalry can be seen through many lenses. It is, as President Joe Biden has said, a competition between democracy and autocracy. It is a contest between an established power and the upstart seeking to claim its place. It is a race to master advanced technologies that will drive economic growth and military strength in the 21st century.

But most fundamentally, the rivalry is the latest chapter in the central story of modern geopolitics — the clash between Eurasian empires that seek to control the world's strategic "heartland" and the maritime powers that seek to thwart those designs.

The terminology comes from British geographer Halford Mackinder, who — in a brilliant lecture delivered in 1904, and then in updates in 1919 and 1943 — made two basic arguments about the course of global affairs. First, technological progress, symbolized by the completion of railroads spanning Russia's vast territory, had made it possible for strong, well-organized states to project power across the vast Eurasian landmass. Second, the end of the age of exploration and imperial expansion had eliminated the safety valves that had previously dissipated great-power tensions by directing them outward.

The coming era would thus feature intense, violent collisions. Ambitious Eurasian states would try to expand, militarily or otherwise, across that supercontinent and the vital industrial "crescent" — made up principally of Western Europe and East Asia — on its flanks. If successful, they might use that position to control the adjacent oceans, as well. This meant, Mackinder warned, that Eurasian aggrandizement must be opposed by the world's great sea powers, especially the US and UK, as well as whatever threatened the continental allies they could find.

Mackinder equivocated, over time, about whether Germany or Russia was the primary threat. His intellectual interlocutors, such as Yale University's Nicholas Spykman, deemed it more likely that countries located in the Eurasian "rimlands" — Spykman's renaming of Mackinder's crescent — would overawe the heartland than vice versa.

But nuances aside, the main geopolitical events of the 20th century — World War I, World War II and the Cold War — were indeed contests between aspiring Eurasian hegemony and countervailing alliances led by overseas powers. Indeed, Mack-

inder's intellectual heirs ran US policy: As the historian John Lewis Gaddis and I pointed out in a recent essay, the golden rule of American statecraft for at least a century has been to prevent hostile states from using Eurasian primacy as a springboard to global empire.

The US-China competition should be seen as the next go-around. China's naval buildup and maritime coercion are meant to make it pre-eminent in the East Asia and its oceanic approaches. Meanwhile, Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative, a tangle of infrastructure projects, trade deals and geo-economic endeavors reaching from Southeast Asia to Europe, are intended to pacify China's continental frontiers and spread its influence across the world's largest landmass.

"Access to Eurasia's resources, markets and ports," writes my former Johns Hopkins colleague Daniel Markey, "could transform China from an East Asian power to a global superpower." These projects could be mutually reinforcing: If China eliminates threats on one periphery, whether maritime or territorial, it can then devote greater attention to the other.

All this is a familiar challenge for Washington: As early as 2002, Defense Department official Andrew Marshall channeled Mackinder in writing that America must wage a long competition with China "for influence and position within the Eurasian continent and the Pacific Rimland." The US has responded by strengthening barriers to China's Pacific expansion — most recently, the Aukus partnership with Australia and the UK, which is about far more than a contract for nuclear submarines — while seeking partnerships with powers, such as India, that can contest Beijing's Eurasian gambit. Why does this geopolitical backstory to the US-China competition matter? For one thing, it reminds us that China's behavior, and its resulting rivalry with America, is more normal than we often think.

Beijing is using 21st-century tools such as fiber-optic cables and 5G telecommunications networks to influence other countries. It aims to create a high-tech authoritarianism that will be smarter and more economically efficient than anything that came before. China hasn't yet engaged in anything like the rampant military aggression that characterized prior Eurasian struggles. But broadly speaking, Chinese statecraft fits comfortably within the contours of contemporary global politics. There really is nothing new under the sun.

Yet reading Mackinder also reminds us that China faces long strategic odds, because bids for Eurasian primacy have usually ended in disaster. The reason is relatively simple: A hyper-powerful country located within Eurasia would pose a mortal threat to the countries around it, which gives them strong incentive to band together — and to ally with the New World superpower whose fundamental strategic interest lies in stopping any rival from attaining hegemony in the Old. For years, China skillfully avoided this trap by building economic power while downplaying its geopolitical agenda. It quieted diplomatic and military resistance by offering real commercial gains to countries it sought to influence.

But recently, Beijing's conduct has become brasher and more alarming. So it has begun to trigger the type of encirclement — the revival of the so-called Quad, the formation of Aukus, the hostility of countries from the Western Pacific to South Asia and beyond — Mackinder might have envisioned. China's Eurasian challenge isn't surprising to those with a long historical memory. The surprise would be if Beijing managed to succeed.

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Briefs

Riyadh provides '\$4.2b'...

FROM PAGE 01
He informed that the rate of interest on the loan would be 3.2 percent. Talking about the inflation, the advisor said that oil prices in Pakistan were the lowest as compared to other countries, including regional ones, except the oil producing countries. He said, keeping in view the purchasing power parity, Pakistan was one of the cheapest countries in the world. He said, although income was low, the prices of commodities were also low as compared to the other countries of the world. The Minister categorically denied having any link between the Saudi Arabia's this extended facility and International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme. He said that talks with IMF were nearing successful completion and assured that within couple of days the programme would be finalized. He said that the agreement had already been made before he flew from Washington. He said that with the \$4.2 billion Saudi Arabian Facility and upcoming agreement with the IMF would have positive impact on market, so there should be no uncertainty. Meanwhile, speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister for Energy, Hammad Azhar informed the reporters that the inflation was a global phenomenon as the whole world was passing through commodity cycle. Owing to Covid-19, almost all the countries gave stimulus packages which had paced up economy at a time when production was hit by shutdowns to prevent Coronavirus, he added. So every country, irrespective of being poor or rich, witnessed hike in commodity prices, he remarked. He also pointed out that oil prices in Pakistan were low, except the oil producing countries, whereas the gas prices were not increased since 2019, which have gone up by five to ten-fold in European countries. Likewise, he added prices of Urea fertilizer were low whereas the government had to provide Rs 450 billion tax relaxations to lower the burden of increasing oil prices in international market. He expected that the world commodity cycle would break within around 6 months and the prices in world market would come down leaving positive impact on inflation in Pakistan. On Financial Action Task Force (FATF), he said that Pakistan has made tremendous progress on two simultaneous plans. He said, the country had completed 26 out of 27 action points of earlier plan and majority of the FATF members had expressed satisfaction made over the remaining one point. Likewise, out of 7 points of FATF June plan 4 have been completed, which he said was history in FATF to have completed 50 percent of action plan in first review.

PM Imran thanks Saudi crown prince

FROM PAGE 01
"Saudi Arabia would deposit \$3 billion cash in the State Bank of Pakistan and also provide \$1.2 billion worth of oil on deferred payments," said the information minister while talking to The Express Tribune. It is the second financial assistance package that the kingdom has extended to Pakistan in the past three years, aiming to help the country manage a brewing external sector crisis.

COAS visits HQ...

FROM PAGE 01
skills for enhancing their optimal combat potential. Pakistan Army, is a well trained and battle hardened cohesive force ready to take on any challenge confronting defence and security of Pakistan, COAS remarked. Despite challenges, our focus remains on enhancing conventional capability of Pakistan Army including ISR, Air Defence, Cyber & mechanisation, COAS reiterated. Only a well trained army equipped with future battlefield technologies can safeguard sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, COAS emphasised. Earlier on arrival at HQ southern Command COAS was received by Lieutenant General Muhammad Chiragh Haider, Commander Southern Command.

T20 WC: England beats Bangladesh by 8 wickets

Eoin Morgan's England, the world's number one-ranked T20 team, top Group 1 with two big wins after a six-wicket thrashing of holders West Indies in their tournament opener

SPORTS DESK

ABU DHABI: England raced to a second successive victory at the Twenty20 World Cup with an eight-wicket drubbing of Bangladesh on Wednesday in the two nations' first ever meeting in the format. Opening batsman Jason Roy smashed 61 off 38 balls as England romped to their victory target of 125 in 14.1 overs in the Super 12 clash in Abu Dhabi. Roy reached his seventh T20 half-century with a straight six in his 50th match and put on a key partnership of 73 with Dawid Malan, who made an unbeaten 28.

Left-arm quick Tymal Mills took three wickets to combine with spinners Moeen Ali and Liam Livingstone to restrict Bangladesh to 124. Eoin Morgan's England, the world's number one-ranked T20 team, top Group 1 with two big wins after a six-wicket thrashing of holders West Indies in their tournament opener. Bangladesh, who were beaten in their opening Super 12 match by Sri Lanka, lost regular wickets after electing to bat first in Abu Dhabi.



After giving away 10 runs in the opening over of the innings, Moeen hit back to be on a hat-trick in his second over, only to be denied by Mushfiqur Rahim, who top-scored with 29. Moeen, an off-spinner, had Liton Das caught at deep square leg for nine and then sent back

Mohammad Naim trudging back to the pavilion for five. Bangladesh found themselves in trouble at 26-3 when Chris Woakes claimed Shabib Al Hasan's key scalp with Adil Rashid taking a good catch running backwards. Shabib fell for four. Mushfiqur and skipper

Mahmudullah Riyad, who made 19, tried to repair the damage in a 37-run partnership before Livingstone broke through. Livingstone trapped Mushfiqur lbw, but England had to use the umpire referral to have the decision in their favour after the onfield official ruled it not out. Bangladesh kept faltering as a run-out cost Afif Hossain his wicket for five and Mahmudullah departed, for 19, soon after with Livingstone getting his second wicket. Number nine Nasum Ahmed hit an unbeaten 19 off nine balls to give the Bangladesh total some respect as he smashed Rashid for two sixes and a four in the 19th over.

But the effort remained well below par with the England batsmen having little trouble in their batting reply despite Jos Buttler's wicket for 18. Roy smashed five fours and three sixes in his attacking knock that took the steam out of the Bangladesh bowling. Malan, playing in his first T20 World Cup match, got useful batting time after the left-hander did not get a chance to bat in the first match. Jonny Bairstow hit the winning boundary in his unbeaten eight.

French footballer avoids jail as Madrid court accepts appeal



SPORTS DESK

MADRID: Bayern Munich defender Lucas Hernandez will not go to a Spanish jail for violating a restraining order in 2017 after a Madrid court on Wednesday accepted an appeal by the French player. "We consider that the appeal should be upheld and the order to enter prison suspended," the court said in a statement. The suspension of the sen-

tence will be for a period of four years as long as Hernandez does not commit any further crime and the payment of a fine of 96,000 euros (\$111,000), the court said. Hernandez, a World Cup winner with France in 2018, was arrested four years ago in Spain for violating a court order banning him from contacting his partner after a violent altercation between the pair. He and his partner, Amelia Lorente, were both con-

victed of domestic violence in February 2017. She hit and scratched Hernandez, while the player hit her in the ribs, back and face, according to the court ruling at the time. Neither made a complaint against the other, but both were charged by Spain's public prosecutor. The then-Atletico Madrid player and his girlfriend were each sentenced to 31 days of community service. They were also ordered not to see each other for six months. Four months later though, Hernandez was arrested at a Madrid airport. He was in the company of Lorente, who was not arrested as her own restraining order had not yet been formally served. They were returning to Spain after marrying in the United States. The couple have since had a son. Hernandez was sentenced in 2019 to six months in prison, a sentence he had appealed. It was the rejection of this appeal, on the grounds that he was a repeat offender, that led to this summons before a

court in Madrid. The court said Wednesday it had accepted Hernandez's appeal based on his current family situation and the low probability that he would commit a crime again. "It cannot be ignored that the person who he was not supposed to approach consented to be approached," the court said in a reference to Lorente. The court also pointed out that Hernandez lives with Lorente and their son and "there have been no new incidents between the couple."

"There are no records of him having committed any new crimes, which can be taken into account to conclude that it is not necessary for the sentence to be carried out to prevent him from committing another crime," the court added. Hernandez became the most expensive player in Bundesliga history when he joined Bayern from Atletico in 2019 for 80 million euros. Bayern currently sit at the top of the Bundesliga and are the top of Group E in the Champions League.

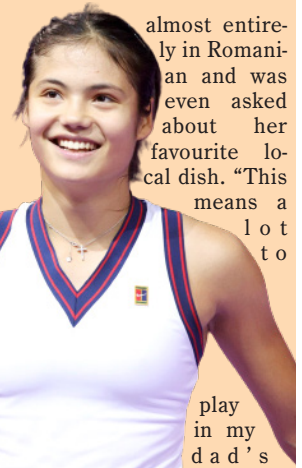
Emma fights back for first win since US Open

CLUJ: Emma Raducanu fought back at the Transylvania Open to earn her first win since becoming the US Open champion. The 18-year-old Briton was beaten in the second

round at Indian Wells following that historic victory at Flushing Meadows last month. But the world number 23, seeded three in Romania, had the perfect response against Slovenia's Polona Hercog, 30. Playing in her father Ian's homeland for the first time, Raducanu won 4-6 7-5 6-1 to move into the second round. Despite being a Grand Slam champion, this was her first WTA tour win - although no fans were present in Cluj-Napoca to see it because of Covid-19 restrictions. Raducanu smiled and laughed throughout her post-match interview, during which she spoke

almost entirely in Romanian and was even asked about her favourite local dish. "This means a lot to

me," she said. "It feels like a huge win. "It is a shame there aren't fans here, but I hope they were watching and I just wanted to do them proud. "I was on a losing streak so I am really pleased to have come through that. It's my first win, I knew that in my head, so I was battling really hard to get on the board." Raducanu, still looking for a new coach after parting with Andrew Richardson following her US Open triumph, asked for patience before the WTA 250 event. - Agencies



country was experiencing a severe economic crisis for reasons, both internal and external. He mentioned that there had been severe drought in Afghanistan for the last two years and the situation had been compounded by a high inflation rate. He pointed out that following the Taliban takeover of Kabul, major donors had stopped funding the Afghan government, stressing that earlier the donors used to cater for roughly 70 percent of Afghanistan's budget. Qureshi said the sudden withdrawal of foreign assistance had created a huge gap and warned that 90 percent of the Afghan population could fall below the poverty line next year. For its part, he said, Pakistan was trying its best to help stem the downslide and continued to provide urgently needed food-stuff and medicines to Afghanistan. He mentioned in this regard facilitating provision of international humanitarian assistance by land and air and revising custom duties on Afghan products.

Govt to deploy Rangers...

FROM PAGE 01
the interior minister said that the government wants to establish peace as there is a lot of pressure on Pakistan. "We have decided to summon the Rangers for a period of 60 days to maintain law and order situation in the province," Rasheed said. "Like Karachi, Rangers have been called in Punjab under Article 147." The minister said that since the ambassador of France is not present in Pakistan, the proscribed organisation seems to have "another agenda". "Yesterday, I had warned that foreign powers want to impose sanctions on Pakistan," Rasheed said. "The TLP has turned into a militant organisation as its members had opened fire on policemen using Kalashnikovs." "I am still warning the protesters to return home," Rasheed said, adding that the government cannot keep schools and hospitals closed due to the protests. The minister said that the government tried holding talks with the proscribed organisation and kept its word, but "the TLP broke its promises."

TLP not a religious...

FROM PAGE 01
Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said every individual has the right to have his own particular belief, but no one will be allowed to blackmail the state. He said the state and the government demonstrated utmost restraint and avoided use of force against the violent protesters of banned TLP. Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said the banned TLP is not a political organization and instead a militant group. He said previously the banned TLP activists had martyred six police officials and injured over 700 people and this time they martyred three more policemen and injured 49 others. He said it is now responsibility of all the institutions to treat banned TLP as a militant outfit.

FM Qureshi seeks political...

FROM PAGE 01
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FM Qureshi calls on...

FROM PAGE 01
leadership and said that Pakistan attached high importance to its bilateral relations with Iran, based on geographic proximity, common border and shared objectives of peace and development. He added that the bilateral relations had been further strengthened due to recent high-level engagements. Foreign Minister Qureshi thanked President Raisi for Iran's consistent support on Kashmir issue, specially from Supreme Leader. The people of Kashmir looked towards Iran's steadfast support in their just struggle. The Foreign Minister briefed President Raisi on Pakistan's efforts to help achieve stability in Afghanistan. Given the precarious economic situation in Afghanistan, he called for sustained engagement and urgent provision of humanitarian assistance to Afghan brethren by the international community.

BGO say virus 'biggest challenge', 100 days from start

BEIJING: Beijing Winter Olympics organisers said Wednesday that protecting the Games from the coronavirus is the "biggest challenge", as China races to stamp out an outbreak 100 days before the event starts. The Chinese capital will in February become the first host of a Summer and Winter Games, and last week welcomed the Olympic flame with a low-key ceremony. "The pandemic is the biggest challenge to the organisation of the Winter Olympics," Zhang Jiandong, executive vice president of the Beijing Organising Committee, told a press conference. China's strict rules "can reduce the risks and impact of Covid-19", he said, adding that those in the Games' strict bubble who do not comply with anti-epidemic measures will face consequences. He did not say what. Zhang told reporters that "all preparations are complete" and venues finished. Case numbers remain comparatively low in China - where the virus emerged towards the end of 2019 - but authorities have maintained a strict zero-Covid approach through border controls and rigorous local lockdowns. The 2022 Games, coming just six months after the pandemic-delayed Tokyo Summer Olympics, will be held in a strict "closed loop" bubble. The estimated 2,900 athletes must be fully vaccinated or face 21 days' quarantine upon arrival in the Chinese capital. The Games - running February 4-20 - will make use of some of 2008's venues, including the "Bird's Nest" national stadium for the opening and closing ceremonies. Only people living in China will be allowed to buy tickets to attend. Officials from the Hebei government, which neighbours Beijing, said Wednesday that the province is building mobile labs to handle up to 40,000 samples for daily Covid-19 tests during the Games. On Tuesday, Beijing's organising committee released images of the medals for the Games, named "Tong Xin", meaning "together as one". - Agencies

Shoaib Akhtar walks off as Host derogates him on National TV

STAFF REPORT

KARACHI: Pakistan's fiery fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar walked out of a live cricket show on state-owned TV channel PTV Sports after the anchor, Dr Nauman Niaz, told him to "leave the show" following an argument. Various clips circulating on social media suggested that the unwanted incident started when Shoaib Akhtar mentioned Lahore Qalandars' player development program to praise Haris Rauf - the man of the match in Pakistan's win against New Zealand. The anchor dismissed Akhtar, instead suggesting that Shaheen Shah Afridi was the product of U19 cricket. To this, the speedster repeated that he's referring to Haris Rauf. However, the anchor said he [Shoaib Akhtar] was being over smart and should leave the show. The show immediately went on to a break after that. Following resumption of



the show, Akhtar was still on set but looked uncomfortable. At one point, both tried to play down the incident by pretending it was pre-planned and that they're trying to pull each other's leg. The fast bowler, however, said in a video statement that it was an attempt to calm down the situation after he was insulted in front of all the legends of the world. It is worth mentioning that among the participants of the show

were cricket stars Viv Richards, David Gower, Azhar Mahmood, Rashid Latif, Aqib Javed and Sana Mir. "Dr Nauman was obnoxious and rude when he asked me to leave the show. It was embarrassing, specially when you have legends like Sir Vivian Richards and David Gower sitting on the set with some of my contemporaries and seniors and millions watching," Akhtar said on Twitter.

"I tried to save everyone from embarrassment by saying I was pulling Dr Nauman's leg with this mutual understanding that he will also politely apologise and we will move on with the show, which he refused to do. Then I had no other choice," he added. Fans on social media have voiced their support for Akhtar after the episode, criticising the PTV Sports anchorperson for his conduct.

Chelsea survives Southampton shootout

Goals in 14 second-half minutes from Callum Chambers and Eddie Nketiah took Arsenal through at the Emirates

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Chelsea needed a penalty shootout for the second consecutive round to reach the quarter-finals of the League Cup as they edged past Southampton, while a much-changed Arsenal beat Leeds 2-0 on Tuesday. Kepa Arrizabalaga was the Chelsea hero as he made a string of late saves to deny Saints a place in the last eight as the game at Stamford Bridge ended 1-1 after 90 minutes. Both goals came minutes either side of half-time as Kai Havertz headed Chelsea into the lead before Southampton hit back quickly when Che Adams bundled the ball home after Kepa parried Kyle Walker-Peters' shot. The Spain goalkeeper saved from Will Smallbone, Mohammed Salisu and Lyanco to take the tie to a shootout.

Kepa then denied Theo Walcott from the spot and Smallbone blasted over as Chelsea progressed despite Mason Mount's penalty being saved by Fraser Forster. Two goals in 14 second-half minutes from Callum Chambers and Eddie Nketiah took Arsenal through at the Emirates. Mikel Arteta had named a

strong side in the previous two rounds with the Gunners not involved in European football for the first time in 25 seasons. But the Spaniard made nine changes from the side that started Friday's 3-1 win over Aston Villa. Leeds boss Marcelo Bielsa attempted to lift his side from a slump with just four changes from a 1-1 draw with Wolves on Saturday as England international Kalvin Phillips made his return from injury. The visitors enjoyed the better of the first-half, but paid a heavy price for failing to make it count. Chambers had barely been on the pitch for a minute after replacing Benjamin White when he forced the ball over the line from a corner to open the scoring. Eddie Nketiah then made the most of a rare start to seal the tie against his former club. The England under-21 international pounced on a slack header towards his own goal from Liam Cooper and scooped the ball over Illan Meslier before getting a slice of luck as his mishit finish bobbed into the net. League One side Sunderland are also into the quarter-finals as they beat Queen's Park Rangers 3-1 on penalties after a 0-0 draw at Loftus Road.



Briefs

African Union
suspends
Sudan over
coup

NEWS DESK

ADDIS ABABA: The African Union (AU) has said it suspended Sudan from all its activities after the country's military overthrew the civilian-led transitional government in a coup.

The African Union Political Affairs Peace and Security on Wednesday tweeted the news of the suspension, an expected move typically taken in the wake of military coups.

In a communique, the pan-African body said the suspension would be in place until "the effective restoration" of the transitional authority steering the country towards elections.

It came as the World Bank also on Wednesday followed the United States in suspending aid to Sudan following the widely condemned military takeover.

Meanwhile, state oil company workers and doctors said they would join a growing campaign of civil disobedience called by a coalition of unions against the power grab.

Dutch court
awards
Crimean gold
to Ukraine

WEB DESK

AMSTERDAM: A Dutch appeals court has ruled that a collection of ancient Crimean gold artefacts, claimed by Ukraine and museums in the Russian-annexed territory, should be returned to the Ukrainian state.

The pieces, including a solid gold Scythian helmet and a golden neck ornament each weighing more than 1kg (35 oz), were on display in the Netherlands when Russia annexed the peninsula from Ukraine in 2014.

Reading a summary of Tuesday's decision, presiding Judge Pauline Hofmeijer-Rutten said that the national culture interests of Ukraine outweigh those of the museums in Crimea.

"The Allard Pierson Museum is no longer obliged to return the pieces to the Crimean museums," she said. "The rights of the Ukrainian state, based on the Law of Museums ... take precedence."

Kyiv welcomed the ruling, which can be appealed before the Dutch Supreme Court. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said it was a "fair decision" and hailed the "long-awaited victory" to return the treasure.

"We always regain what's ours. After the 'Scythian gold', we'll return Crimea," Zelenskyy tweeted.

Top EU court
fines Poland
over judicial
reform

AGENCIES

BRUSSELS: The European Union's top court has ordered Poland to pay 1.1 billion euros a day (\$1.2bn) over the country's long-standing dispute with the bloc over judicial independence.

The Wednesday ruling by the Court of Justice came after the EU's executive commission asked for "financial penalties" to ensure compliance with a ruling from July. Poland has been embroiled in a long-running dispute with Brussels over judicial reforms it says undermine the independence of courts.

The row heated up in July when the Court of Justice ordered the country to suspend the controversial disciplinary chamber of its top court.

"The Vice-President of the Court orders Poland to pay the Commission a periodic penalty payment of 1,000,000 euros per day, from the date on which that order is notified to Poland and until such time as that Member State complies with the obligations arising from the order of July ... 2021," the ruling read.

The court said the penalty was "necessary in order to avoid serious and irreparable harm to the legal order of the European Union and to the values on which that Union is founded, in particular, that of the rule of law".

Australian MPs ask India to let Kashmiris decide their fate

He underscored that other global issues like Palestine always get the limelight and somehow the issue of Kashmir has been put on back burner

ISLAMABAD: Australian parliamentarians have called upon India to let the Kashmiris exercise the right to self-determination, which is an inalienable right to Kashmiris as enshrined in the UN charter, to decide their future by themselves.

The voice was raised in a seminar organized by Pakistan Consulate General in Sydney, Australia, to observe the October 27, as Kashmir Black Day.

As per the communique, the event chaired by the Consul General of Pakistan Muhammad Ashraf was attended by members of New South Wales Parliament, Australian Federal Parliament and senators representing different political parties, besides a large number of Australians especially the members of Australian-Pakistani, Australian-Arab, Australian-Turkish and Sikh communities, Kashmir Media Service reported.

The speakers at the seminar highlighted the illegality of the Indian occupation of Kashmir and the catastrophic human rights situation in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. President Kashmir Council Australia, Dr Ali Sarfaraz apprised the audience on the current deteriorating situation of human rights in IIOJK.

The Consul General, Muhammad



Ashraf briefed the audience on the background of the Kashmir dispute and stated that Kashmiris across the globe observe 27th October as the Black Day every year to commemorate the illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir by India on 27th October 1947.

He highlighted the plight of Kashmiri people under curfew, lockdown, and communication blockade. He called upon the international community to play its role in ensuring the right to self-determination for the Kashmiri people.

General Secretary Islamic Forum for Australian Muslims (IFAM), Usaid Khalil, expressed his solidarity with the oppressed people of Kashmir.

He underscored that other global issues like Palestine always get the limelight and somehow the issue of Kashmir has been put on back burner.

He proposed to form a forum of Australians for Kashmiris so that the issue gets highlighted in Australia.

Chief Executive of Australian Federation of Islamic Council (AFIC),

Keysar Trad, stated that Gaza and Kashmir had been called as open-air prisons, but the situation was even worse than prisons as the prison wardens are not allowed to kill the prisoners as Indian army is doing in IIOJK.

He praised the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, among other Muslims leaders for taking up courageous stand to condemn the Indian atrocities.

Member of New South Wales Legislative Council, Paul Lynch, regretted the conduct of the Indian government on the human rights

abuses in IIOJK and he stressed that human rights are global, and the governments must condemn the human rights violations indiscriminately, regardless of their political and economic interests.

In his concluding remarks Muhammad Ashraf reiterated the illegitimacy of Indian occupation of Kashmir as underlined by independent researchers, historians and observers.

He stressed that all panelists have agreed to raise the issue of Kashmir globally as human rights are of paramount importance. — APP

CIPS services will improve Pakistan's banking sector

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: Cross-Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS) related facilities would improve Pakistan's banking sectors to accelerate trade and investment opportunities in the CNY (Chinese Yuan Renminbi), said Shaikh Muhammad Shariq, Chief Representative of the National Bank of Pakistan, according to China Economic Net.

Addressing the Pakistan Investment Forum and the Cross-border E-commerce Conference held in Paki-

stani Embassy Beijing, he said that under China - Pakistan Economic Corridor, the two countries explore the establishment of multi-level cooperation mechanisms and strengthen policy coordination, and also strengthen financial reform and opening-up, control financial risks to create a good financial environment for CPEC, focusing on the regulatory side, financial institutions and financial markets, adding that another area of cooperation is amongst free trade zones and explore RMB offshore financial business.



BAKU: Pakistan embassy Baku hosted an event to mark Kashmir Black Day. Azerbaijani officials, representatives of academia, think tanks, media and students attended the event. — DNA

Suu Kyi denies 'incitement' charges

YANGON: Aung San Suu Kyi, the popularly-elected leader of Myanmar who was removed by the military in a February 1 coup, has denied a charge of incitement to cause public alarm in her first testimony before a court since her arrest. The generals, whose coup plunged Myanmar into turmoil, have brought numerous charges against the 76-year-old and she could face years in prison if found guilty.

On Tuesday, she denied a charge of incitement relating to two statements that her party published in February that condemned the military regime and called on international organisations not to work with them, Myanmar Now news agency reported.

Suu Kyi "was able to defend her innocence very well", a member of her defence team, who requested anonymity, told the media outlet.

The lawyer refused to disclose further details because the military has barred her legal team from speaking to



the media about her hearings. The generals detained Aung San Suu Kyi and senior members of the civilian government hours before Myanmar's new Parliament was due to sit following the general election in November.

The coup triggered nationwide protests and a mass civil disobedience movement, to which the military has responded with force. More than 1,000 people, including children, have been killed, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, a rights group that has been tracking deaths and arrests since the coup. — Agencies

Uzbek FM Kamilov holds talks with the President of Iran

No limitations for expansion of Iran-Uzbekistan ties: Raisi

DNA

TASHKENT: Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov held talks with President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi.

Abdulaziz Kamilov arrived in Tehran to attend a meeting of the foreign ministers of Afghanistan's neighboring countries.

"I hope that at the meeting of the foreign ministers of the countries neighboring with Afghanistan, it will be possible to reach a common vision for solving the problems of Afghanistan," the head of Iran stressed.

Kamilov said: "Given that the superpowers have failed to do anything for Afghanistan, the meeting in Tehran is of great political importance."

At the meeting, the President of Iran characterized the relations between Iran and Uzbekistan as fraternal and developing. He stated that Iran does not see any restrictions in the development of relations with Uzbekistan in political, economic and cultural

spheres. Abdulaziz Kamilov, in turn, noted: "The two countries have great potential for the development of relations, and we

are determined to use this potential. Uzbekistan strives for close cooperation with Iran in various regional and international areas."



ASEAN announces new strategic pact with Australia

"This milestone underscores Australia's commitment to ASEAN's central role in the Indo-Pacific and positions our partnership for the future"

AGENCIES

JAKARTA: Australia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations agreed on Wednesday to establish a "comprehensive strategic partnership", a sign of Canberra's ambition to play a bigger role in the region.

The pact would further strengthen Australia's diplomatic and security ties in a fast-growing area that has become a strategic battleground between the United States and China.

Concrete strategic objectives of the partnership were not immediately announced, but Prime Minister Scott Morrison promised Australia would "back it with substance".

"This milestone underscores Australia's commitment to ASEAN's central role in the Indo-Pacific and positions our partnership for the future," he said in a joint statement with Foreign Minister Marise Payne. "Australia supports a peaceful, stable, resilient, and prosperous region, with ASEAN at its heart."

Brunei, serving as chair of ASEAN, said the agreement "marked a new chapter in relations" and would be "meaningful, substantive and mutually beneficial".

After the announcement, Australia said it would invest \$154 million in projects in Southeast Asia on health and energy security, counter-terrorism, fighting transnational crime, plus hundreds of scholarships.

China has also sought an agreement on the same strategic level with ASEAN. Premier Li Keqiang met ASEAN leaders on Tuesday, and the bloc's leaders will meet Chinese President Xi Jinping in November at a special summit, to be held virtually, two diplomatic sources told Reuters.

Australia already has bilateral strategic partnerships of various levels with Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Morrison also sought to reassure ASEAN that a trilateral security pact agreed last month between the United States, Britain and Australia, under which Australia will get access to nuclear-powered submarines, would be no threat to

the region. One ambassador to ASEAN, who asked not to be identified, said Australia clinching the comprehensive strategic partnership with ASEAN was "quite something" in the wake of regional reservations over its new AUKUS pact with Washington and London.

AUKUS has raised some concerns in Southeast Asia that China could see it as a move by the West to challenge its growing influence in the region, particularly in the South China Sea.

The United States and allies have increased patrols to challenge Beijing's vast maritime fleet which it deploys to buttress its claims to sovereignty over most of the South China Sea.

"AUKUS adds to our network of partnerships that support regional stability and security," Morrison said.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo said he was concerned AUKUS "could spark rivalry in the

region", according to his foreign minister, Retno Marsudi.

U.S. ally the Philippines has backed AUKUS but its president, Rodrigo Duterte, on Wednesday said it "must complement and not complicate our working methods for cooperation".

Military analysts have said the nuclear submarines Australia will buy from the United States have unmatched stealth and underwater longevity. China has opposed the pact and said it could be damaging and intensify an arms race.

U.S. President Joe Biden was due to join the virtual East Asia Summit later on Wednesday, with leaders of China, India, Australia, New Zealand, Russia and South Korea, Japan and ASEAN members.

In an earlier meeting, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida stressed to Southeast Asian leaders his country's strong opposition to challenges to a free and open maritime order, underscoring regional concerns about China's growing military clout.

He said he had also mentioned the human rights situations in Chinese-ruled Hong Kong and in Xinjiang as well as the importance of peace and stability in the waters dividing China and Taiwan.



Pak eyes Chinese co-op to enhance e-commerce

BEIJING: The Commercial Counselor of Pakistan Embassy in Beijing, Badar uz Zaman said that with the growing 4G and 5G internet accessibility, the Pakistani e-commerce market is going upward very fast, while Pakistan is looking for Chinese enterprises to explore the opportunities in the e-commerce industry in Pakistan, reports China Economic Net.

Addressing the participants of the Pakistan Investment Forum and the Cross-border E-commerce Business Negotiation Conference here, he said, "We need to attract the Chinese e-commerce application, developers, e-commerce payment solutions providers, and insurance companies so that we can develop a complete environment where e-commerce transactions can increase", he mentioned.

While talking to China Economic Net, he said that the delivery services area was also discussed in detail with the Chinese enterprises, of which many showed interest. "We are facing a shortage of goods delivery services. If these services are introduced by China, like SF Express, ZTO, and other companies that are very efficient here so we good enhance our e-commerce and supplies chain industry.

Badar uz Zaman explained the investment-friendly policies of the Pakistan government and strong consumer demand in the Pakistan market. He said that they could start a business very quickly in the special economic zones and industrial zones in Pakistan. — APP

IRGC ready to expand military ties with Pakistan

TEHRAN: The deputy commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in a meeting with the director general of Warfare and Training in Joint Staff Headquarters (JSHQ) of Pakistan Army, stressing the impact of educational diplomacy on defense diplomacy and foreign policy, announced the IRGC's readiness to develop and increase military training ties and interactions between the two countries.

Brigadier General Gholamreza Noshadi in the meeting with Rear Admiral Abdul Basit Butt, emphasized the role and impact of educational diplomacy on defense diplomacy and foreign policy of the two countries and announced the readiness of the IRGC to develop and increase the level of ties between the two neighboring countries in military education.

The director General Warfare and Training in Joint Staff Headquarters (JSHQ) of Pakistan Army, for his part in the meeting praised the IRGC's capabilities and technological advances in the field of aerospace and expressed surprise and satisfaction with the IRGC's high level of progress and operational readiness despite extensive sanctions.

At the meeting, he emphasized increasing the level of cooperation and interaction between the two countries' military training. — APP

Germany records highest daily cases

BERLIN: Germany's daily COVID-19 cases climbed to a six-month high on Wednesday, as the country braces for a potential surge in infections this winter.

The Robert Koch Institute (RKI) reported 23,212 more coronavirus cases in the past 24 hours and 114 coronavirus-related fatalities.

The last time the institute recorded over 23,000 cases was on April 30.

Germany's active cases climbed to 174,000 on Wednesday, marking a new high in the current fourth wave of the pandemic.

The institute warned that the infections are likely to rise in the coming weeks, as people spend more time indoors during the colder fall and winter months, and while a large number of people remain unvaccinated.

So far, 55.2 million people, or 66.4% of the population, in Germany have been fully vaccinated. The government's goal had been to fully vaccinate at least 70% of the population by the end of summer. — APP

Briefs

Sudan PM released as protesters face tear gas

NEWS DESK

KHARTOUM: Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok was brought home late Tuesday, his office said, after a day of intense international pressure following his removal in a military coup. Hamdok was "under close surveillance" while other ministers and civilian leaders remained under arrest, his office added, after the army dissolved Sudan's institutions on Monday. Earlier in the day, the United States had said it would suspend aid over the coup and the EU had threatened to do the same. Meanwhile UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres demanded Hamdok "be released immediately" ahead of an emergency Security Council meeting that began at 2000 GMT. The talks among the top UN powers could produce a joint text condemning the putsch later Tuesday or on Wednesday, a diplomat speaking on condition of anonymity said. Before the meeting, Dmitry Polyanskiy, Russia's deputy ambassador to the UN, said the council "should appeal to stop the violence from all sides."

KSA destroys Houthi drones

AGENCIES

RIYADH: Saudi air defenses destroyed explosive drones by Yemen's Houthi militia targeting Abha airport and Najran, both located in southern Saudi Arabia. The militia has continued to target the Kingdom on a near daily basis, often selecting civilian targets in the south of the country. Houthi attempts to target civilians has been labeled as war crimes by the Kingdom. The militia has attacked civilian infrastructure in the past including the international airports in Abha and Jazan. The Arab coalition has been supporting the internationally recognized Yemeni government regain full control of the country after the Houthis seized the capital, Sanaa, in 2014. In March, Saudi Arabia announced a roadmap called the Riyadh Initiative to halt fighting in Yemen and reopen Sanaa airport, as well as continuing talks to find a solution to the conflict. The proposal was seen as a welcome step internationally, but has been rejected by Houthi leadership.

ECP issues show cause notices to Fawad, Swati



SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has issued another show cause notice to Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry and Railways Minister Azam Swati over allegations levelled by them on the commission. According to details, the commission had summoned Fawad Chaudhry today but no lawyer from his side appeared before the commission. ECP, while issuing the notices, adjourned the hearing till November 16. It merits mention that Fawad Chaudhry had criticized the election commission over raising questions on electronic voting machines that government plans to use in the next general elections. Azam Swati had also leveled serious allegations against the ECP and CEC of taking bribes during elections.

Diplomats, businessmen to re-evaluate, Pak-ASEAN ties

Director General Foreign Office Amir Ahmad Datozi said that there are huge opportunities for Pakistan in the economies of ASEAN countries with a GDP of \$ 3 trillion



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Indonesia Mr. Adam M. Tugio, Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr. Amir Athoazi, President United Business Group Zubair Tufail, Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Senior Vice President Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mian Rahman Aziz Chan are sitting at the stage on the occasion of Pakistan ASEAN business forum. Senior diplomats from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Senior business leaders on Wednesday expressed the need to re-evaluate the economic and trade relations between ASEAN and Pakistan in order to further enhance mutual economic and trade potential, which will open new avenues for economic and trade cooperation between the two sides. Direct Air links to ASEAN countries and Pakistan in the near future, Bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA), Trade Dialogue and aggressive economic diplomacy, Business-to-Business and Government-to-Government Cooperation, elevation from the sectoral to full dialogue partner, strong multilateral linkages between Institutions could pave new avenues for economic and trade cooperation, senior diplomats and business leaders give proposal during the round table dialogue jointly organized by Pakistan ASEAN, Business Forum and United Business Group (UBG) in Islamabad. Under the auspices of Pakistan

ASEAN Business Forum, Chairman ASEAN Islamabad Committee and Indonesian Ambassador to Pakistan Adam M. Tugio participated in the forum as Chief guest and former President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce, Zafar Bakhtawari hosted the forum. While senior business leaders from Pakistan and Ambassadors from ASEAN countries and Pakistan including Director General Foreign Office Amir Ahmad Datozi, President United Business Group Zubair Tufail, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Muhammad Shakeel Munir, Co-Chairman Pakistan ASEAN Friendship Association, Ahsan Bakhtawari, Ambassador of Thailand to Pakistan Mr. Chakkrir Krachaiwong, Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan Nguyen Tien Phong, Charge'de Affairs of Malaysia to Pakistan Dedy Faisal Ahmed Saleh, Minister Counsellor of Myanmar San You Kyaw, Farmer Presidents ICCI Mohsin Khalid and Ahmed Waheed, Senior Vice President Lahore CCI Mian Rehman Aziz Chan, Senior Vice President, Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce Sadaf Asim Abbasi, Muhammad Azhar Chaudhry from Faisalabad Chamber and Noman Shamim expressing their views and called for enhancing bilateral economic and trade cooperation between ASEAN countries and Pakistan. The speakers said that there has been a major policy breakthrough under the present Pakistan's government, when the government has shifted its policy from geopolitical to geo-economic approach, which will further strengthen

Pakistan's economic and trade relations with the potential trading partner like ASEAN. They said that relations between the two governments, business communities and the people to people contacts were considered important, as well as expanding bilateral trade in accordance with trade and economic capabilities and implementation of economic and trade policies and agreements. While addressing the session Chairman ASEAN Islamabad Committee and Indonesian Ambassador to Pakistan Adam M. Tugio said that in order to strengthen economic and trade ties between ASEAN and Pakistan, the relationship between the government, the business community and the people needs to be re-established. He said that Pakistan also has a free trade agreement with China and the same FTA has been signed between ASEAN and China from which both countries can benefit. He said that Pakistan and ASEAN need to work on more potential sectors and increase their regional approach for increasing bilateral trade. The Ambassador said the two sides are pursuing integrated policies on trade and economic relations, which are expected to yield good results in the near future. He said that Pakistan and ASEAN need to work on more sectors and increase their regional approach to increase bilateral trade. On the occasion, Director General Foreign Office Amir Ahmad Datozi said that there are huge opportunities for Pakistan in the economies of ASEAN countries with a GDP of \$ 3 trillion. He said the two sides are pursuing

integrated policies on trade and economic relations, which are expected to yield good results in the near future. Speaking on the occasion, President United Business Group (UBG) Zubair Tufail said that the volume of bilateral trade between ASEAN and Pakistan is only \$7 billion which is far below its potential. The ASEAN countries developed economically through the regional economic and trade alliance and the development of ASEAN countries Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand is unprecedented. On the occasion, General Secretary, UBG and former ICCI President Zafar Bakhtawari said that a Free Trade Agreement was needed between Pakistan and ASEAN to promote economic and trade relations between the two sides. There should be a direct air link between ASEAN countries and Pakistan to enhance bilateral ties on both sides. He said that industry should be shifted from ASEAN and industrial cooperation should be further enhanced. Addressing the forum, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Shakeel Munir said that economic and trade relations between Pakistan and ASEAN need to be further enhanced. In this regard, there is a need to improve relations in business communities on both sides and exchange of trade delegation. On the occasion, the Vietnamese Ambassador Nguyen Tien Phong, said that in order to achieve economic and trade potential in ASEAN countries and Pakistan, mutual talks and implementation of agreements are needed. He said that Pakistan and ASEAN are two major markets between which co-

operation could open new avenues for economic and trade cooperation. Regarding multilateral trade in Association of SouthEast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Pakistan's trade interests with this trading bloc, the Vietnamese Ambassador said that Vietnam, being an active member of ASEAN, would play its full role in paving the way for trade to Pakistan. He added that ASEAN is a very effective trading bloc of the world and has signed FTAs with China, Japan, Australia and New Zealand from which all the regional countries are benefiting. Ambassador Phong said that Pakistan also has good trade and economic relations with ASEAN countries, which need to be further enhanced. The ambassador said that the Golden Jubilee of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Vietnam in 2022, would be marked in a dignified manner in which the development of bilateral diplomatic and trade relations between the two countries would be reaffirmed. He said over the course of these five decades, Pakistan-Vietnam relations have been excellent on the diplomatic, trade and economics fronts and added the two countries supported each other in every international forum and mutual cooperation. He said that trade, economic, cultural and people-to-people contacts between the two sides would have to be further enhanced. On this occasion, the Ambassador of Thailand Mr. Chakkrir Krachaiwong, hinted at the signing of a free trade agreement between Pakistan and Thailand. Malaysia's Charge'de Affairsurges increase in ASEAN-Pakistan trade volume.

ISIS terror attack in Iraq kills 15

WEB DESK

BAGHDAD: The death toll from a Daesh/ISIS attack in eastern Iraq has risen to 15, according to a local medical source on Wednesday. Daesh/ISIS militants had attacked the village al-Rashad in Diyala province with sniper rifles and machine guns Tuesday evening. The medical source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said 13 other people were injured in the attack. The Iraqi Defense Ministry earlier said 11 people had been killed in the Daesh/ISIS attack. The attackers had fled the scene unscathed. Meanwhile, Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi ordered the Iraqi army to step up intelligence gathering to help avert similar attacks. In recent months, Daesh/ISIS terrorists have escalated their attacks, especially in the area between Kirkuk, Salahuddin, and Diyala, known as the Triangle of Death. In 2017, Iraq declared victory over Daesh/ISIS by reclaiming all territories the terrorist group controlled since the summer of 2014, about one-third of the country's territory. The group, however, still maintains sleeper cells in large areas of Iraq and occasionally launches attacks.

Covid positivity ratio drops below 1.35%

ISLAMABAD: The national tally of Covid-19 pandemic on Wednesday reported one of the lowest positivity ratio recorded during past 24 hours amid decline in per day positive cases, disease trend and death rate. The National Command and Operation Centre (NCO) in a tweet on its official handle shared the latest disease statistics. The nerve centre of the country in its fight against the pandemic wrote that some 38,430 tests were conducted across the country with 516 more people tested positive for the contagious disease. There were 1,445 Covid infected patients under treatment in critical condition in various Covid dedicated healthcare facilities of the country. The National Covid positivity ratio during past 24 hours was recorded 1.34%. - APP

India's SC probes spying charges against BJP govt

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: India's top court on Wednesday established a committee of experts to look into accusations that the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi used Israeli military-grade spyware to monitor political opponents, journalists and activists. The Supreme Court order came in response to petitions filed by a group of Indian journalists, rights activists and opposition politicians following an investigation by a global media consortium in July. The committee, headed by a retired judge, is expected to give its findings by year-end. India's opposition has been

demanding an investigation into how the Israeli spyware, known as Pegasus, was used in India. Modi's government has "unequivocally" denied all allegations regarding illegal surveillance. India's information technology minister Ashwani Vaishnav in Parliament dismissed the allegations in July, calling them "highly sensational," "over the top" and "an attempt to malign the Indian democracy." But the government in an affidavit did not tell the court whether it used the Israeli equipment for spying, citing security reasons. On Wednesday, the court said the state cannot get a free pass every time by raising security concerns. "Violation of the right to privacy, freedom of speech, as alleged in pleas, needs to be examined," the Press Trust of India cited Chief Justice N.V. Ramanna as saying. Based on leaked targeting data, the findings by a global media consortium provided evidence that the spyware from the Israel-based NSO Group, the world's most infamous hacker-for-hire company, was allegedly used to infiltrate devices belonging to a range of targets, including journalists, activists and political opponents in 50 countries. The company said in July it only sells to "vetted government agencies" for use against terrorists and major criminals and that it has no visibility into its customers' data.

Amb. Imtiaz hosts briefing session on Kashmir issue

TOKYO: To commemorate Kashmir Black Day, Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmed hosted a briefing session for representatives of prominent Japanese media and think tanks at the Embassy. In his remarks, the Ambassador highlighted the internationally recognized legal and political dimensions of the Kashmir dispute with special reference to illegal occupation by Indian Security forces in 1947. He added that for the last 73 years India has unleashed a reign of terror and brutalities against innocent Kashmiri people, who have however, shown unmatched resilience and continued struggle for their just cause. - DNA

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Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman
Mobile: 0300 8553342

European Union brings relief to earthquake victims in Pakistan

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: European Union is allocating Euro 180,000 (over 36 million Pakistani rupees) to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to families affected by the devastating earthquake that struck Pakistan's south-western province of Balochistan in early October. The aid will benefit over 4,500 people in the worst-hit district of Harnai. The EU funding supports the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in delivering immediate assistance through the distribution of emergency shelter materials and household items, such as tents, tarpaulins, blankets, kitchen sets and hygiene kits to ensure the basic needs are met. Training on hygiene promotion will also be organised to ensure good hygiene practices in

affected communities. Special attention will be paid to those most in need, especially people whose homes were destroyed or severely damaged in the aftermath of the strong tremor. The funding is part of the EU's overall contribution to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). More than 21 people were killed and over 300 others injured when a strong 5.9-magnitude earthquake hit near Balochistan's Hamai district in the early morning hours of 7 October. With a shallow depth of nine kilometres, the earthquake caused substantial damage to a number of homes and buildings, leaving hundreds of people homeless. Consecutive landslides blocked roads leading to the affected area, disrupting rescue and recovery efforts. Harnai,

located about 160 kilometres east of in the provincial capital, Quetta, is one of the most affected areas, although damage was also reported in Quetta and in the city of Sibi. The European Union together with its Member States is the world's leading donor of humanitarian aid. Relief assistance is an expression of European solidarity towards people in need around the world. It aims to save lives, prevent and alleviate human suffering, and safeguard the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by natural disasters and human-made crises. Through its European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the European Union helps over 120 million victims of conflicts and disasters every year. For more information, please visit ECHO's website.