



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Armenia must be held accountable for war crimes: Ambassador

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Jen Psaki tests Covid positive

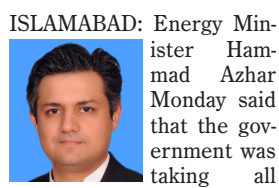
DNA



WASHINGTON: White House press secretary Jen Psaki, who dropped off President Joe Biden's international trip shortly before he departed, has tested positive for coronavirus after members of her household did, she said in a statement Sunday. Psaki said she last saw Biden Tuesday outside while masked, before the President departed for Rome for the Group of 20 Summit, and that she had tested negative several times in between. Psaki said she was disclosing the positive test result "out of an abundance of transparency," adding that she has experienced mild symptoms and is working remotely.

Efforts underway to avert gas crisis

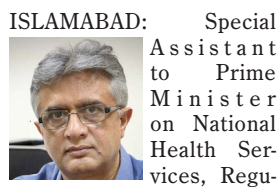
SHAHEEN HANIF



ISLAMABAD: Energy Minister Hammad Azhar Monday said that the government was taking all possible measures to avert the looming gas crisis in the country. Speaking to media, Hammad Azhar said that they had arranged 11 LNG cargoes for the month of November. However, two of the LNG trading companies have unofficially informed the authorities about the non-provision of two LNG cargoes for this month, he added. The minister maintained that talks were under way with the companies about the matter.

Healthcare authority to be set up

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination Dr. Faisal Sultan on Monday said that the government has decided to set up a healthcare management authority in the federal capital to improve the services of primary and secondary healthcare system.

PM to unfurl 'mega relief package' soon

The meeting of PTI core committee also discussed plan to deal with energy issues

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Monday said Prime Minister Imran Khan would soon announce a 'Mega Relief Package' for direct facilitation to over 10 million citizens bearing brunt of the global inflation. In a media talk after the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) core committee meeting, he said two major agendas including a mega package to control inflation and upcoming local government elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa came under discussion. Other than that, the minister said the core committee expressed concerns over the constant increase in fuel prices at international market. "Though, the government has taken numerous steps to prevent its impact to pass on to masses, but 'the concerning thing is that as to how long will it be controlled,'" he added. The meeting also discussed an action plan to deal with the energy issues, he added. "There has been confusion that either the elections of mayors of cities and districts in Punjab would be held directly or indirectly. It has been decided that the elections will be held in direct way and the cities will elect their own mayors through direct elections," the minister said while divulging the details about upcoming local government polls in the two provinces. "This was the promise made by the prime minister to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf from the very

PM directs steps to cut prices of essential items

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday directed the authorities concerned to take necessary measures to bring down prices of essential commodities to give maximum relief to common man. Chairing a meeting to review overall economic situation in the country, the prime minister was apprised of inflationary trend in the international commodity market and petroleum prices. The prime minister said, "Like our exemplary response to COVID-19 pandemic, we are working hard to mitigate negative impacts of international inflation, especially in petroleum products and food items." He said stabilising macroeconomic indicators in the country was the government's top priority to spur economic growth. Earlier, the prime minister was briefed about overall economic situation in the country. The meeting was attended by Economic Affairs Minister Omar Ayub Khan, Energy Minister Muhammad Hammad Azhar,

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FM Portal launched for overseas Pakistanis

FM Qureshi says that all foreign missions of Pakistan were connected online and were active on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Monday launched the 'FM Portal' for Pakistanis living in 187 countries as a platform providing them quick solutions to their problems. In his address at the launch of the initiative under Vision FO here at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he urged the envoys to connect with the Pakistanis living in the countries of their assignment and address their problems in a prompt way. FM Qureshi said that all foreign missions of Pakistan were connected online and were active on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. The portal has been launched in line with Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision and the Foreign Minister's 'Digital Diplomacy Agenda' and 'Public Diplomacy Initiative'.

Qureshi, Australian FM discuss student issues



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and his Australian counterpart Marise Payne on Monday discussed the whole range of issues relating to bilateral relations and regional cooperation. Qureshi, who received a telephone call from the Australian FM, appreciated the steady progress in multi-dimensional bilateral relations over the years based on mutual trust and understanding. FM Qureshi reaffirmed Pakistan's strong desire and commitment to consolidate and further enhance cooperation in diverse fields in line with the shared objectives of peace and development.

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

We're digging our own grave; UN Chief warns world leaders

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson kicked off COP26, welcoming delegates to Glasgow in his classic jocular fashion

NEWS DESK/DNA

GLASGOW: At the opening of the World Leader Summit at COP26 in Glasgow, United Nations Secretary General António Guterres told world leaders, "we're digging our own grave" and that the world must take immediate action at this climate conference to avert it. While he cited stark examples of the rapidly changing planet due to "our addiction to fossil fuels," which he said is pushing humanity to the brink, he also highlighted what can be accomplished to this keep the 1.5

Erdogan skips COP26 over security concerns

NEWS DESK

GLASGOW: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday he had cancelled his planned attendance at the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow because of a dispute over the security protocol. Erdogan had been due to travel to Scotland after holding a crunch meeting with US President Joe Biden on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Rome. But he told reporters on board his flight back to Turkey that the Glasgow event organisers had failed to address his delegation's security concerns. "When our demands were not met, we gave up on going to Glasgow," the Anadolu state news agency quoted Erdogan as saying. "This was not only about our own security, but also about the reputation of our country."



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan receives briefing from economic team. - DNA

US, Pakistan launch Single Window project

This will benefit businesses and consumers. The US Government, through the US

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The United States and Pakistan successfully launched the first phase of the Pakistan Single Window project, which aims to boost trade by lowering costs, decreasing paperwork delays, and making it easier to import and export commodities with Pakistan. This will benefit businesses and consumers. The U.S. Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and Pakistan's Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) inaugurated the project today with the Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Mr. Shaukat Tarin, and officials from the State Bank of Pakistan, the Pakistan Single Window Company, and

Continued on Page 06

American jury slams US treatment of Pak detainee

WASHINGTON: Seven senior US military officers who last week sentenced a Guantanamo Bay detainee to 26 years in prison issued an appeal for clemency in his case, calling his torture by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) a "stain" on America in a letter published on Sunday.

In the first-ever public account of torture by someone detained in the wake of the September 11 attacks, Pakistani national Majid Khan told the sentencing jury how he was raped, beaten and waterboarded by CIA interrogators. Khan was sentenced at the US naval base in Cuba on October 29, after pleading guilty to helping in Al Qaeda plots in 2002. - DNA

TLP didn't demand envoy's expulsion

Mufti Muneeb says TLP also did not demand severing of ties with the EU or closure of the French embassy

NAZIR SIYAL



KARACHI: Mufti Muneebur Rehman dispelled on Monday the impression that the proscribed Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) had demanded the expulsion of the French ambassador and the closure of the embassy and to break ties with the European Union. This was a blatant lie," the cleric said during a press conference in Karachi. "So how can trust be established when government officials speak lies publicly?" he questioned, adding that those who participated in the negotiations did not have personal agendas and were patriots, calling the whole process a "marathon intellectual exercise". Mufti Muneeb was

GT Road cleared

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: A day after reaching an agreement with the government to end the march towards Islamabad, the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) on Monday cleared the GT Road and moved their sit-in to a nearby open ground, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan said. Khan, who is the head of the steering committee overseeing the implementation of the accord with the outfit, shared the development in a tweet. He "appreciated" the TLP leadership for "honouring their commitment". According to the federal minister, the government was also implementing its side of

Continued on Page 06

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HYDERABAD: PML-N senior leader Ahsan Iqbal, Chairman of STP Dr Qadir Magssi and others are addressing a press conference at STP house. — DNA

DC listens public complaints at public service court

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: On the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar, under the Revenue Awami Khidmat Services the problems of public regarding revenue were listening on first and second working days of every month and in this regard the monthly revenue services was held at DC office. Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad listen the public complaints regarding revenue matters and directed the revenue officers for speedy solution of the applications. Deputy Commissioner said that the delay in the matters of public would not tolerated and responsible revenue officer and staff would accountable. He said that the Department of Revenue

was at the forefront of public service and holding Revenue Awami Public Service would not only solve the problems of the people but also increase their confidence. Deputy Commissioner said that the problems of the people's under one roof are being addressed by listening to the problems related to the revenue department. He said that speedy solution of issues and grievances related to the revenue department including issuance of domicile, farad, registry, income certificate and other revenue matters are being solved on spot. He said that officers of the revenue department including Assistant commissioners and revenue officers and ADLRs were also directed to ensure attendance in the court. Citizens can

approach the concerned Tehsil Office on the first and second working day of every month for resolving revenue related issues. He also went to the applicants and took feedback to them about solution of their complaints. He said that the monitoring officers appointed by SMBR have also inspected the process of listening public complaints. During the Revenue Awami Khidmat Services a total of 82 applicants identified the problems in Tehsil City and Sadar out of which 67 were solved on spot while the remaining applications were directed to be processed and reported within three days. The Revenue Awami Khidmat Services were also held at Tehsil Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandlianwala and Chak Jhumra.



3rd Int'l PACES competition kicked off at Lahore: ISPR

NEWS DESK

LAHORE : In an impressive and colorful opening ceremony on Monday the 3rd International PACES (Physical Agility and Combat Efficiency System) competition commenced at Fortress stadium Lahore. Inspector General Training and Evaluation Lieutenant General Syed Muhammad Adnan was the chief guest on the occasion, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) media release. The PACES is a real test of physical strength and endurance of the participants and being one of the toughest competitions for international and national army teams the event is regarded as a true reflection of the physical standards and endurance of the soldiers.

Some 101 international players from Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Sri Lanka, UAE and Uzbekistan were participating in the competition, whereas, observers from Egypt, Indonesia, Japan and Myanmar were also part of the event.

The ceremony was attended by a large number of spectators from all walks of life.

"Organizing a mega event like PACES competition with a large number of international players participating, signifiers and reinforces Pakistan's stance of being a sports friendly, peace loving and hospitable nation," the ISPR media release said.

It added that Pakistan enjoyed a respectable and trustworthy relationship with her friends and partners.

KMU students win first position in Int'l competition

PESHAWAR: A team of Khyber Medical University - Institute of Dental Sciences (KMU-IDS) headed by Dr. Shiraz bagged first position in an international quiz competition organized by Pakistan Prosthetics Association and Pakistan Association of Dental Research in Lahore.

The students were awarded a cash prize of Rs. 30,000. A large number of dental doctors, experts and students from abroad and across the country participated in the said conference.

The conference was attended by Dr. Madiha Riasat, Assistant Professor and Dr. Amna Mansoor along with a team of students on behalf of the KMU-IDS Kohat on the directives of Dr. Faheem Khattak, Principal, KMU-IDS, Kohat, whereas Dr Brekhna Jamil, Director, KMU Institute of Health Profession Education also

participated in the conference as a guest speaker. Meanwhile, Vice Chancellor KMU Professor Dr Zia ul Haq and principal KMU-IDS Dr Fahim Khattak, expressed happiness over the success of KMU-IDS students and described this achievement as a great source of inspiration for other students of the University and especially KMU-IDS. They said that it was gratifying that KMU students not only played a significant role in academic and research but also proved that they have achieved success in every field by winning first position in national quiz competitions. On this occasion, VC KMU Professor Dr Zia ul Haq also announced to give honorary certificates to these students by the university and reiterated to continue encouraging such students also in future. — APP

PPP KP to celebrate foundation day anniversary

NEWS DESK

PESHAWAR : Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter to celebrate the 54th foundation day anniversary of the party by organizing a big public meeting.

PPP Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to address the public meeting. In this connection a meeting of the party leaders was held here in the Provincial Secretariat on Monday. Those who attended the meeting were included Provincial Senior Vice President (SVP), Ayub

Shah, Tahir Abbas, Malik Tehmash Khan, Malik Saeed Khan, Sartaj Duranpur, Zulfiqar Afghani, Sharif Khan, Ibrar Nehqi, Yawar Naseer, Anwar Zeb Comrade, Shah Zulqarnain, Tariq Rahim, Ghulam Mustafa, Khalid Khan Achar, Adil Ali Shah, Farhat Shabab, Shah Rehman Shinwari, Mian Arif Gul, Nawab Khattak, and other office bearers of the party. The reviewed in details preparations, arrangements and strategy for the success of public meeting on the foundation day anniversary and constituted a committee for the purpose.

PTI govt believes in performance: Buzdar

NEWS DESK

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar has said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) led government believes in performance and delivery instead of hoodwinking people with hollow slogans. In a statement issued here, the CM said the government promoted the concept of balanced development in the province and due to which south Punjab had joined the development journey. He said that development was started in south Punjab with Rs 190 billion in the current financial year. The development budget was ring-fenced along with a compilation of the separate ADP book, he added. He said that credit goes to the PTI government for allocating a separate budget to ensure development and prosperity in south Punjab.

Usman Buzdar said that development was a fundamental right of the people living in south Punjab districts and added that another commitment was fulfilled by giving administrative autonomy to the south Punjab secretariat. The cabinet had also passed the south Punjab secretariat's rules of business, he said. The CM said that the past governments fooled south Punjab's inhabitants with hollow slogans.

FTO introduces new facilities for taxpayers

This country has given us respect, dignity and identity and we must pay back its loan by working with extreme honesty, commitment and dedication: Dr. Asif Jah

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The office of the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) will introduce a new system for the facilitation and immediate redressal of the taxpayer's complaints, said FTO Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah. He was addressing an awareness session in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here today. He said that just two weeks ago, he received a message from Karachi that a consignment of 130 tractors had been stopped despite clearing all the duties. He said that he himself talked to the Commissioner Karachi and the consignment was released within only four hours. He said that the office of the Tax Ombudsman will also introduce a mobile app while the FTO portal would also be launched on the pattern of Prime Minister's portal. He expressed concern over the rampant complaints of stopping consignments enroute to their destination and said that he will soon issue a clear directive to stop this practice forthwith. He said that the ultimate objective of FTO is to facilitate, facilitate and facilitate the taxpayers. He said that FTO desks would also be established at all airports to resolve the custom related complaints there and then. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah said that we are only due to Pa-

kistan. "This country has given us respect, dignity and identity and we must pay back its loan by working with extreme honesty, commitment and dedication. He termed taxpayers as the backbone of the national economy and said that he will work as their advocate. "I am ready to go to any forum including chairman FBR or member customs for the immediate redressal of their genuine complaints", he said and requested the taxpayers to submit their workable proposals and assured that he will try his optimum best to implement the same. Regarding yet another intervention of FTO he said that Suzuki motors received 17% sales tax at the time of booking cars but at the time of delivery it was reduced to

12%. He said that he intervened in this issue and ordered a refund of the extra sales tax received from the concerned persons. He said that chairman FBR has also been directed to ensure implementation of this order. On the directive of FTO, Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue Syed Mahmood Hussain Jafari said that last year refunds of Rs. 40 billion were paid in Faisalabad. Earlier Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh President FCCI in his address of welcome said that the number of taxpayers has reduced instead of enhancing the tax net. "Its natural outcome is that additional burden is being put on the existing tax payers", he said and added that Faisalabad is emerging as a new regional hub of industry and trade.

"We are expecting maximum local and foreign investment in M3 and Allama Iqbal Industrial Estates", he said and added that the Government is also trying to facilitate them through one window operation. He said that FIEDMC has already launched this operation while FCCI was also playing its role in the marketing of these industrial estates. He also quoted the last week's visit of Chief Minister Usman Buzdar during which he had inaugurated a facilitation desk. Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh said that FCCI is not only playing its traditional role to bridge the gap between Government and private sector but we have crossed this limit and are working in unison with Government departments.



Lahore again tops list of world's most polluted cities

Experts say AQI is unhealthy for people with sensitive temperaments. A rate of 580 AQI is extremely dangerous for everyone

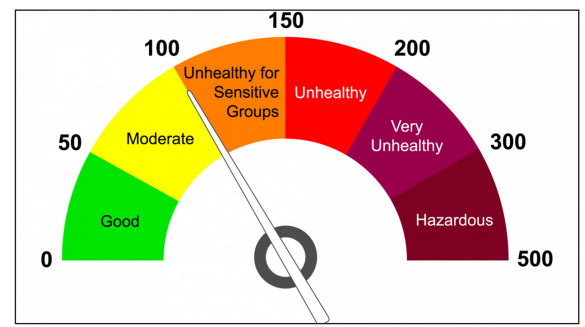
NEWS DESK

LAHORE: City of garden and cultural capital Lahore has once again topped the list of world's most polluted cities. "Lahore ranks the most polluted city in the world," according to air pollution data released by the US Air Quality Index on Monday. According to the index, Lahore reported a particulate matter (PM) rating of 397. New Delhi came in third with a PM of 174, while India's Mumbai ranked the fourth-worst city with a PM of 165. Experts say AQI is unhealthy for people with sensitive temperaments. A rate of 580 AQI is extremely dangerous for everyone. If the AQI is be-

tween zero and 50, it means that the air quality is good. The AQI between 51 and 100 means that the air quality is moderate. However, air quality between 101 and 150 can be a danger to people with respiratory diseases and sensitive nature. If the air quality is between 151 and 200, it becomes un-

healthy, which also endangers the health of the common people. If the AQI is between 201 and 300, a health emergency should be declared immediately, while if the AQI is between 301 and 500, the general public may face severe health risks. It is pertinent to mention here that smog is becoming

a disease all over the world, smog is destructive to the heart and lungs as well as the brain. Even a slight increase in pollution greatly increases the risk of dementia. As soon as the smog season begins, people with heart and respiratory diseases are advised to take special precautions, but perhaps very few friends know that it is also considered destructive to mental health. According to experts, one microgram per cubic meter of pollutants in the air increases the risk of dementia by 16%. In this context, the citizens of Lahore need to be very careful that the highest rate of pollution in the country is generally recorded in Lahore.



Secretary gets briefing on corona vaccination drive

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Secretary Archeology Punjab Saqib Manan visited Faisalabad and presided over a high level meeting at DC Office and was briefed on the objectives of the Reach Every Door (Red) Corona Vaccination Campaign. Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad, ADC HQ Muhammad Khalid, CEO Health Dr. Kashif Mahmood, CEO Education Ali Ahmed Sian besides Deputy District Health Officers and other officers of the Authority were also present. The Secretary Archeology Punjab said that he has been appointed in charge

of monitoring the targets of the vaccination campaign in the district on the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar. He said that the Corona Vaccination Campaign on the doorstep is of great importance and the rest of the day should be spent on achieving the targets. He urged the district administration and the district health authority to play a proactive role in making the campaign a success and use all means of publicity to vaccinate the citizens. Deputy Commissioner informed that during the campaign nearly 600 out reach and fixed teams are active and all available resources are being utilized to achieve the

goals. He also pointed out some of the problems faced during the implementation of the campaign. Later, the Secretary Archeology Punjab visited the point in the streets and reviewed the arrangements available for vaccination of the citizens. He also checked the record of vaccination of the people. During the visit, the Secretary Archeology while talking to the media representatives, he appealed to the people to get vaccinated. He asked the citizens through the media to get vaccinated and protect their lives and the lives of their loved ones from corona. He said that our commitment is a Pakistan free from corona.

LHC acquits Czech model in smuggling case

NEWS DESK

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday acquitted a Czech model, Tereza Hluskova, who was arrested in 2018 on charges of attempting to smuggle heroin from Pakistan to Abu Dhabi. A division bench of the LHC, headed by Justice Ali Baqar Najfi, heard the case of the foreigner model. In April 2, 2019, the Czech model had challenged her sentence in the Lahore High Court, stating that her case was not based on facts and the sentence "negated the true facts of the case".

The model said that she was innocent and the trial court decision was contrary to the facts. She said she came to Pakistan to work as a model and to learn Islamic studies, and that someone put narcotics in her luggage.

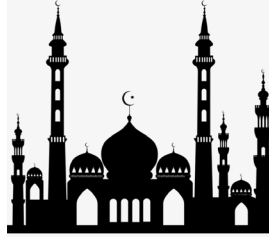
In March 2019, Additional Sessions Judge Shehzad Raza sentenced the Czech model to eight years and eight months in prison along with fine in the drug smuggling case.

The foreigner was arrested from Lahore airport in 2018 while allegedly trying to smuggle eight-and-a-half kilograms of heroin. Customs officials had registered a case against the accused.



FAISALABAD: Secretary Archeology Punjab Saqib Manan visiting outreach point regarding Reach Every Door corona vaccination campaign. — DNA

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr..... 05:02 am
Zohr..... 11:51 am
Asr..... 03:37 pm
Maghrib..... 05:16 pm
Isha..... 06:40 pm



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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



Departments

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



Complaints

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....0331-5022125

Italian embassy to host meetup with top architect

In 1988, Arch. Casamonti co-founded the studio "Archea" in Florence. Today, with its offices in Rome, Milan & Florence, over a 100 architects are working at Archea

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The embassy of Italy in Pakistan has arranged a session with Prof. Marco Casamonti teaches Architectural Design at the Faculty of Architecture-University of Genoa.

Back in 1988, Arch. Casamonti co-founded the architecture studio "Archea" in Florence. Today, with its offices in Rome, Milan and Florence, over a hundred architects are working at Archea.



portant architectural exhibitions and reviews. Archea has participated in many of the most important national and international architectural competitions and consultations, obtaining numerous awards and prizes.

The new Antinori Winery in San Casciano Val di Pesa, the Day Centre for the Disabled in Seregno, the International Grape Exhibition Garden in Yanqing, the Liling World Ceramic Art City in China and the transformation of the Former Wine Warehouse in Trieste have just been completed.

ASAP's drive to make 1M Pakistanis quit cigarettes

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Expressing grave concern over the increasing number of smokers in the country, a nation-wide drive has been launched to educate Pakistanis on the need to quit cigarettes.

Inspired by UK Government's long running STOPTober Campaign focused on making smokers in United Kingdom to quit smoking during the month of October, the ASAP aims to replicate the learning and results of the campaign in Pakistan for the benefit of public health.

to make people quit cigarettes, right now," Abeer Mirza, founder and CEO of ASAP, told media here. He added that ASAP supports tobacco control policies and measures taken by the government, however, cigarette use statistics over the past decade show these have not achieved the desired result.

In a country with over 15.6 million cigarette smokers, Pakistan is in dire need of innovative solutions to help curb the public health impact of cigarettes. ASAP through this campaign aims to create awareness on better solutions that have been successful in other countries like UK, Europe and Japan.

CDA constitutes committee to report on encroachments

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority and ICT has nominated three Member designated committee to prevent and report on encroachment. This committee consists of Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) and Director Land and Rehabilitation CDA as authorized officers under Government Property (Elimination of Encroachments) Ordinance 2021.

Twin cities' normalize after victorious TLP talks

RAWALPINDI: The daily life business revived in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad on Monday after a ten-day lockdown of major thoroughfares to contain Tehreek-i-Labbaik (TLP) sit-in was called off after successful negotiations with the government. The routine activities in the twin cities restored with shops, schools and businesses reopened at and around Faizabad Interchange.

VCs meet regarding undergrad, PhD policies

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A three-day meeting of the Vice Chancellors and Rectors of public and private universities was held to review HEC's Undergraduate Education Policy as well as Policy on PhD Programmes.

PR retrieves 70 acres land from illegal occupants

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has retrieved around 70 acres state land worth billions of rupees from illegal occupants under its anti-encroachment operation in Peshawar Division. The department with the help of local district administration had demolished shops and illegal constructions erected on the railway land, an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

he added. He said the government was making serious efforts to retrieve encroached land from the land grabbers. A comprehensive survey was being carried out to identify the land encroached and occupied by miscreants.

Judicial Magistrates for expeditious trial of encroachers. 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.

Bilateral trade ties to be strengthened with Sri-lanka

Sri-lanka HC appreciated the efforts of the RCCI for the promotion of trade activities



NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: A delegation of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) led by President Na-deem Rauf called on Sri Lankan High Commissioner Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama at the Sri Lankan embassy in Islamabad. Executive members Usman Shaukat, Sardar Tanveer Sarwar and Khawaja Farooq were also present on the occasion.

deep historical, cultural and trade ties with Pakistan. Bilateral trade relations can be further strengthened in many areas. Mutual relations in the fields of pharmaceuticals, food, gems and jewelry, tourism and education can be enhanced. The High Commissioner appreciated the efforts of the Rawalpindi Chamber for the promotion of trade activities and added that the High Commission will provide all possible assistance to the Chamber for the exchange of trade delegations. On this occasion, the President of the Chamber Na-

deem Rauf briefed the High Commissioner about the ongoing activities of the Chamber and future programs. The President said that there are many opportunities for cooperation between the two countries in various fields, especially in the fields of construction, tourism, education, gems and jewelry, marble and pharmaceutical. He further suggested that bilateral relations can be strengthened at the level of the Chamber of Commerce. He also invited the High Commissioner to visit the Chamber, which he accepted.

LPG price increase by Rs 155.8

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Monday issued a price-revision notification of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) for the month of November, increasing the commodity price by Rs155.8 per 11.8-KG cylinder. According to the notification, the authority increased the locally produced LPG price by Rs13.20 per kilogram. After the revised price, the LPG cylinder would be sold in the open market at Rs 2,559.35 during the month of November, which was available at Rs 2,403.55 in October. Whereas, the per Metric Ton (MT) LPG rate has been fixed at Rs216,894.16 for the month of November. The commodity sale price per MT was Rs203,691.57 in October. The new price would be effective from November 1. - APP

Gold prices increase Rs500 per tola

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs 500 and was sold at Rs117,800 in the local market on Monday against its sale at Rs117,300 the previous day. Karachi Sarafa and Jewellers Group reported. The price of 10 gram 24 karat also increased by Rs429 to Rs100,995 against its sale at Rs100,566 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat increased to Rs92,578 from Rs92,185. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained static at Rs1440 and Rs1234.56 respectively. The price of gold in international market increased by \$1 to \$1784 from its sale at \$1783, the Jewellers Group reported.

75 more dengue cases reported

RAWALPINDI: As many as 75 more dengue cases arrived in the three public sector hospitals of the Rawalpindi city during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases 2546. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr.Sajjad-Mehmood, said here on Monday that among the new cases, the HFH had registered 37, DHQ 21, while 17 confirmed patients were registered with Benazir Bhutto Hospital (BBH) in 24 hours, he added. - APP

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Briefs

Opp not serious to hold talks with govt on public issues

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson Punjab government Hasaan Khawar on Monday criticized that opposition was not serious for holding any dialogue with government on the issues of common people and these corrupt parties were only organizing public gatherings to pressurize the ruling party to get rid of their corruption cases.

Talking to a private news channel, he urged that opposition should hold a dialogue in the best interest of public, adding, they were not showing seriousness for electoral and National Accountability Bureau reforms with government to resolve delaying matters in the parliament.

He asked the opposition that they should accept the government's public mandate and let the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf to complete its constitutional tenure. "If PTI failed to deliver, people will not vote us in the next elections, he said adding, opposition shall play its own positive role for highlighting the issues of public instead of creating chaos and uncertainty in the country". - APP

CPI inflation remains in single digit at 9.1% in Oct

ISLAMABAD: Consumer Price Index (CPI), based on monthly inflation, remained in single digit by witnessing an increase of 9.19 percent during the month of October 2021 as compared to the corresponding month of the last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported Friday. The Urban CPI was recorded an increase of 9.55% while Rural CPI recorded an increase of 8.66%, according to PBS data. According to break up figures, the food products that witnessed decline in prices in urban areas on year-on-year (YoY) basis included tomatoes (48.52%), pulse moong (29.12%), onions (28.35%) and potatoes (19.26%).

The food products that witnessed increase in prices in urban areas included vegetable ghee (43.03%), mustard oil (41.92%), cooking oil (40.02%), chicken (34.69%), pulse Masoor (17.62%), meat (17.11%), fruits (15.84%), wheat flour (12.97%), gram whole (12.44%), beans (12.26%) and milk (9.45%).

The non-food items prices of which increased in urban areas on YoY basis Liquefied Hydrocarbons (71.03%), electricity charges (Combine) (32.14%), motor fuel (27.6%), footwear (16.12%), washing soap/detergents (12.45%), motor vehicle accessories (11.98%), woolen readymade garments (11.86%) and plastic products (10.30%).

On the other hand, in rural areas the food items the prices of which decreased on YoY basis included tomatoes (54.61%), onions (28.79%), pulse Moong (27.04%), potatoes (18.15%) and condiments and spices (14.09%). - APP

Admin seals two plazas for unauthorized construction

RAWALPINDI: District Council Rawalpindi taking action against illegal construction has sealed two commercial plazas in Mandra and Daultala areas of Gujjar Khan.

According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities concerned on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Muhammad Ali took action in accordance with the law against the rules violators. He informed that the administration on the directives of the DC had already sent a reference to Anti-Corruption Department for legal action against the owners of the plazas. The spokesman said that Assistant Commissioner, Gujjar Khan after taking action also sent a report to the Anti-Corruption Department.

The DC had warned the rules violators of strict action saying that no one would be allowed to violate the rules, he said adding, indiscriminate action against illegal and unauthorized construction would continue. - APP

Pakistanis are top recipients of Indonesian scholarships

Adam Mulawarman Tugio, Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan in his keynote address stated that this debate will open up new avenues for the students of Indonesia and Pakistan

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A Young Scholar Discussion on the topic "Pakistan-Indonesia Bilateral Ties: Exploring Untapped Potentials" was jointly organized by Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad and The Embassy of Republic of Indonesia, Pakistan at Rawalpindi. Adam Mulawarman Tugio, Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan in his keynote address stated that this debate will open up new avenues for the students of Indonesia and Pakistan. Main aim of such discussions is to provide exposure to the students that will enhance their communication, analytical and critical skills. He also stated that such initiatives boost people to people contact. He further stated that the Pakistani students are the top recipients of Indonesian scholarships.

Brig. Abid Hussain Bhutta (Retd), Member Board of Experts CGSS in his address stated that Pakistan and Indonesia have tremendous potential which have grown with the passage of time. Pakistan and Indonesia have enhanced their cooperation and have become strength of each other. He further stated that people to people contact is the foundation of strength of relations between two countries.

The discussion was based on three main themes which were

• Pakistan and Indonesia: Ideas for



Strengthening Bilateral Ties

• Using Media as a Tool for Public Diplomacy: Case Study of Pakistan and Indonesia

• Pakistan-ASEAN: Shared Future and Way Forward.

Students of Bachelors level from Indonesia and Pakistan participated and shared their analysis with the audience. During the discussion, young scholars mentioned that Pakistan and Indonesia's bilateral relations are deeply rooted in mutual respect and support at regional and global level. Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Indonesia the foundation of which was laid by late President Sukarno and

his contemporary leadership in Pakistan including Quaid-e-Azam. Late President Sukarno provided unprecedented support to Pakistan in the past. Discussing Pakistan-ASEAN Relations, panelists mentioned that Pakistan provides the ASEAN regional states the shortest route to global sea trade. Pakistan and ASEAN agreed to cover cooperation in many areas including trade; industry; investment; environment; science and technology; drugs and narcotics; tourism and human resources development. Young scholars also discussed that bilateralism is the conduct of political, economic, or cultural

relations between two sovereign states. It is in contrast to unilateralism or multilateralism, which is activity by a single state or jointly by multiple states, respectively. When states recognize one another as sovereign states and agree to diplomatic relations, they create a bilateral relationship.

Public diplomacy is no longer defined as intergovernmental diplomacy, but can become P2P or people to people because the implementers and targets of public diplomacy can become public itself. It was also discussed that ASEAN's success as a regional organization and East Asia's undisputed eco-

nomical potential have long been recognized, with states from different parts of the world wishing to strengthen their engagement with ASEAN. Pakistan is no exception. In line with Pakistan's "Vision East Asia" policy, Pakistan has worked tirelessly to forge a closer partnership with ASEAN.

The debate was moderated and supervised by Ms. Larab Fatima Hassan, Communication & Coordination Executive, CGSS, and Mr. Boy Dharmawan, Minister Counsellor/Political Function, The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, Islamabad. The event was attended by 80 participants.



ISLAMABAD: Daniel Sloper, Australian's Special Representative on Afghanistan and Dr. Geoffrey Shaw, Australian High Commissioner is calling on Federal Minister for State and Frontier Region, Sahabzada Muhammad Mehboob Sultan in his office to discuss the current situation of Afghanistan. - DNA

IT Minister for rapid build-up of IT force against cyber attacks

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecom, Syed Amin-ul-Haque on Monday said there were millions of cyber-attacks every day all over the world, including 5.5 million attacks for ransom through malicious software, which called for rapid response through build-up of IT force.

He was speaking at the inaugural session of two-day IT programme titled "Digital Pakistan Cyber Security Hackathon 2021" which was the first of its kind and launched from Karachi. Lahore and Islamabad would be the next destinations. Hackathon has been organized attached department of Federal Ministry of Information Technology. It was attended by 266 cyber security experts from different districts of Sindh who would undergo special test

in which they would qualify for the next stage.

The successful cyber security experts would not only receive huge cash prizes but become a part of Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) that would be soon formed by the Ministry of IT.

The purpose of "Cyber Security Hackathon" was to train and prepare cyber security experts in the country under the country's first cyber security policy issued

by IT Ministry. It would also test the capabilities of existing experts and train cyber security experts at the national level.

These experts would prevent and respond to cyber-attacks on national and private institutions. Federal Minister for IT and Telecom, Syed Amin-ul-Haque said during last year such attacks did cost almost US \$ 20 billion to international organizations. With increase in the use of tech-

nology and online activities around the world, various types of cyber-crimes were also on rise.

He said seriousness of the cyber security situation could be judged through the international statistics released on this account. Millions of cyber-attacks were also being done in Pakistan every day.

Therefore, he continued, there was need to increase the number of these experts over time.

The minister revealed that many Pakistani institutions including banks and important companies had been targeted by cyber-attacks. A few weeks ago, the website of Federal Board of Revenue was hacked and the most important data was compromised. In June this year, Pakistan's leading musical streaming website "Patari" was cyber-attacked and hackers released data on 257,000 users on the Dark Web.



Post-earthquake Ehsaas relief payments commence to all families

Around 18,000 households in Harnai will benefit from relief cash. In the interest of transparency, all disbursements are being made through biometrically enabled Ehsaas payment system"

ISLAMABAD: Ehsaas relief cash disbursements have begun today to all families of earthquake hit Harnai, as an immediate relief. After the Prime Minister's approval on Oct 9, 2021, the federal government had announced a relief package for all families of Harnai. Speaking to media, Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar, SAPM said, "The Rs. 12,000 Ehsaas cash will be disbursed to each and every household of Harnai. Around 18,000 households in Harnai will benefit from relief cash. In the interest of transparency, all disbursements are being made through biometrically enabled Ehsaas payment system."

She also thanked the provincial government of Balochistan, armed forces, Ehsaas' regional team and other stakeholders for their collaborative support in ensuring smooth delivery of Ehsaas relief cash.

Ahmad Agha visited Ehsaas payment campsites in Harnai this afternoon to inaugurate Ehsaas disbursements to affected. He reviewed the arrangements and met with people collecting cash. In Harnai, Governor Balochistan was also joined by senior officers of Armed Forces, Commissioner Sibbi Division, DG Provincial Disaster Management Authority, and senior officials of Ehsaas including DG Balochistan and DG Conditional Cash Transfers. Smooth payment operations have begun in all three Tehsils; Sharag, Harnai and Khost. Districtwide, seven Ehsaas payment campsites have been set up at Civil Hospital Sharag, Municipal Committee office, Civil Hospital, RHC Hospital Sharag, PMDC Rest House Sharag, Livestock Office Harnai and Civil Hospital Khost. Amongst them, Civil Hospital Harnai and RHC Hospital Sharag will exclusively serve pay-

ments to women whereas both men and women will be served payments from Civil Hospital Khost.

Dr. Sania also made an appeal to all resident families of Harnai to collect relief cash of Ehsaas from the nearest payment sites in the district.

Under Ehsaas shock-responsive registry, the registration desks have also been established post-earthquake in the affected areas of Harnai to register the deserving households for financial assistance through the regular cash transfer programmes of Ehsaas. Harnai was badly affected by an earthquake on Oct 7, 2021, that hit different parts of Balochistan. To assess the preliminary extent of post-catastrophic support needed from the federal government, Dr. Sania had made a visit to Harnai, instantly after the earthquake on the special directives of Prime Minister. - APP

OGDCL makes three discoveries in 1st quarter of FY 2021-22

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) has made three discoveries of hydrocarbon deposits in different areas, having expected cumulative daily production potential of 37 million cubic feet (mmcf) of gas and 2,850 barrels (BBL) of oil, during the first quarter of the Fiscal Year 2021-22.

"The discoveries include Wali-1 (Kawagarh), Wali-1 (Hangu), and Wali-1 (Lockhart) in district FR Lakki, KP province. Preliminary reserves estimates attributable to these discoveries are 293 billion cubic feet of gas and 15 million barrels of oil, combined 71 million barrels of oil equivalent," the company said in its official report available with APP.

As of September 30, 2021, the OGDCL's exploration acreage stood at 91,795 square kilometers (sq. km) representing 42 percent of the country's total area under exploration.

The company's exploration portfolio currently comprises 50 owned and operated joint venture exploration licenses. Additionally, the OGDCL possesses a working interest in nine exploration blocks operated by other exploration and production companies.

In order to discover oil and gas reserves, the company during the period under review acquired 336 Line km of 2D seismic data, representing 42 percent of total 2D seismic data acquisition in the country. - APP

Theater Wallay to organize workshops

ISLAMABAD: Theatre Wallay would organize a series of workshops from November 7th for aspiring actors, drama enthusiasts, or those generally interested in improving public speaking skills.

Talking to APP, Director Theatre walay Fiza Khan said that the workshops would use basic theatre games and activities to build confidence, overcome anxiety, improve communication skills, and work on voice and body.

She said the workshops would offer non-actors the opportunity to work on navigating their social interactions-build confidence and strategies for effective communication and collaboration.

The participants will also learn to express themselves more fully with vocal and body language training and learn to overcome stage fright and manage anxiety in public interactions, she added. - APP

FGEHA asked to provide details of G-14 acquisition

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) directed the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) to provide record of land acquisition, plot offer letters, payment vouchers and details of those affected in G-14.

The letter, signed by FIA Deputy Director Syed Rizwan Shah, has been sent to the FGEHA director general. It states that the inquiry has been registered at FIA Anti-Corruption Circle, Islamabad and is under probe with Assistant Director Sajid Mehmood.

The authority has been directed to provide duly certified copies of Built-Up Property (BUP) Award of G-14/3 along with Qabzul Wasool (land acquisition) and duly certified complete record of plot offer letters, issued to the af-

fectured persons of G-14 in G-15/3. The FIA has also asked for certified record of change of addresses in FGEHA.

Duly certified copies and complete GPS maps prepared by the urban unit of G-14/3, copies of CNICs of affected persons of BUP Award of G-14/1, G-14/2, G-14/3, who got payments from FGEHA and duly certified service record of Afzal Khan, surveyor of the authority have also been sought.

It is worth mentioning that FIA has been investigating the allegation of malpractices and corruption in land acquisition of G-14 by the authority.

Earlier, the agency had summoned six officials who dealt with issues related to the sector. On the other hand, the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority had already announced that it will fully cooperate with the agency.

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For further information please contact the following.

Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman
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Data vulnerabilities

THE National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) experienced a disruption in services due to a cyberattack on Saturday. This seems to be a regular occurrence for state institutions as previously, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) was also hacked and its services were suspended for two weeks during which it recovered. Despite the fact that the authorities claim no important information has been compromised, no guarantee can be made as to what was accessed and the extent of the breach. The government's focus now must be to launch an investigation that results in answers, and proposes solutions that will strengthen cybersecurity.

All over the world, state institutions are regularly subjected to external interference as many try to hack the system for personal gain, ransom or to prove a point. However, Pakistan seems to be experiencing it rather frequently. There are bound to be adverse repercussions for such attacks, especially considering that millions of people utilise the NBP's services. This means that the bank stores personal and private information for a significant chunk of the population; some of which may be in the wrong hands right now. The same risks apply as when the FBR—the largest data centre of Pakistan—was hacked two and a half months ago. One would assume that after having gone through the process a fair number of times, our authorities would have installed the necessary firewalls and protections to prevent such a breach of confidentiality and privacy.

There is clearly more to be desired from the government and the State Bank's statement about the close surveillance of the issue is the first step. What must be determined is the degree of harm that this attack has caused the country, its national kitty and the people.

Given that twice now, the crime has targeted financial institutions, there is a very real probability that monetary gains are a motive. This direction of investigation must be explored and a harsh precedent must be set against the perpetrators so that future crimes of the same nature are discouraged.

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Mob justice

IN yet another display of vigilante justice that has unfortunately become a regular occurrence in this country, the Charsadda police on Saturday arrested 13 people on the charge of burning alive a wheelchair-bound man, who was suspected of killing a boy over the alleged theft of a goat. Reports reveal that protesters demonstrating against the killing of the youth turned into a mob and headed over to the disabled suspect's residence and set it on fire, also burning him alive. The man's mother was also seriously wounded in the arson attack but thankfully she was rescued by the city police. Chief Minister Mahmood Khan also took notice of the incident and has directed the police to ensure fair and transparent investigation of the case.

There is little that can be done now in the aftermath of this tragic incident which only further underscores the deteriorating rule of law in the country. Such incidents shed light on the weakness of the state and its inability to impose its writ and they also expose the failings of our weak judicial system. Even in cases where an individual is under investigation, we have witnessed incidents where the vigilantes want to administer their own barbaric form of justice. This is a longstanding issue plaguing our society and little to no progress has been made over the years to counter mob justice. There is need for stricter legislation which specifically criminalizes the act of lynching and establishes special courts for speedy trials. In addition to this, measures such as specialized police training and campaigns that create deterrence should also be taken into consideration.

However, we must also remember simply criminalizing mob lynching won't be enough and that such trends come about due to a particular set of social and psychological factors. Therefore, while addressing the legal aspects of this issue, the contributing social and psychological factors should also be considered.

Recipe for societal progression: From rags to riches

Abdul Rashid Shakir



Ehsaas Amdan (Income) Programme, launched in February 2020, is aimed at creating opportunities for the most disadvantaged people through the transfer of small income-generating assets in 23 districts across Pakistan

ERADICATION of poverty from a society goes hand in hand with its socio-economic uplift. The logical corollary of these twin phenomena is spiralling up the Human Development Index (HDI) and availability of better living standards for its members by affording them nutritious food, decent accommodation, quality education, better healthcare, lower gender inequalities, and more civic amenities.

It goes without saying that continuity and consistency of poor-friendly Government policies both at the Federal and grassroots levels is a must to reap full fruits of this hard-earned socio-economic development in a society. Major Government policies in this regard include effective social safety nets and targeted subsidies for the downtrodden; ease of doing business for the entrepreneurs; affordable electricity, gas and other commercial utilities for the businesses to thrive; and progressive income and withholding tax regime.

Practical examples of Scandinavian countries in the West and Singapore and China in the East bear vivid testimony to the efficacy of protracted and consistent Government policies aimed at socio-economic uplift of the masses. China's remarkable achievement in bringing around 800 Million people out of the cruel clutches of extreme poverty in the last four decades needs honourable mention. Besides China, Singapore is the only country which transformed into a bustling first-world country from an underdeveloped third-world country just in a lifespan of a single generation after its independence from Malaysia in 1965.

A critical appraisal of all welfare states of Americas, Europe, Far East and South East Asia reveals that unemployment benefits for the out of work community members, better education and healthcare coverage for all, free legal aid for the destitute and targeted subsidies in the essential commodities and basic utilities for the deserving are their hallmarks.

A cursory glance at the social and legal orders of early Islamic communities, especially that of Riyasat-e-Madina founded by the greatest visionary of all time: our beloved Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SAW), reveals how fair, just and philanthropic they were in their character. Care for the needy, help for the poor, sympathy for the oppressed, and symbiotic code of ethics for the haves and have nots to ensure peaceful coexistence were at the core of their values System.

Very much cognisant of this trodden path to prosperity, Government of Pakistan launched Ehsaas Programme as an umbrella initiative to steer all kinds of interventions aimed at the socio-economic welfare of its people, especially for those in the lower, middle and lower middle income categories.

With a manifest aim to provide effective and comprehensive safety nets for the marginalised and the vulnerable, Ehsaas Programme rolled out Ehsaas Kafaalat on 31 January 2020. Under this program monthly cash hand-outs @ Rs 2000 per household is distributed among 7 Million poorest and the most deserving women in the country on the basis of a digitally enabled Ehsaas survey.

Ehsaas Amdan (Income) Programme, launched in February 2020, is aimed at creating opportunities for the most disadvantaged people through the transfer of small income-generating assets in 23 districts across Pakistan. In this Rs 15 Billion project, 60,364

productive assets worth Rs. 3.62 Billion have been transferred to the ultra poor and vulnerable poor households till 30 June 2021.

Ehsaas Interest Free Loans (IFL) Programme is a major component of the National Poverty Graduation Initiative. By the end of the first year since its launch in July 2019, 1.35 Million interest free loans worth Rs. 47.77 Billion have been disbursed, 46% of which are secured by female borrowers.

Acclaimed by the World Bank, Ehsaas Emergency Cash (EEC) is one of the most effective programmes world wide under which Government of Pakistan delivered Rs. 179.8 Billion as one-time emergency cash assistance @ Rs. 12000 per household to 14.8 Million families at the risk of extreme poverty in phase-I, whereas additional 4 Million deserving households are catered to under Phase-II of the programme to offset critical financial miseries induced by COVID-19 pandemic.

Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) like Ehsaas Education Conditional Cash Transfers, Ehsaas Nashonuma (health and nutrition) Conditional Cash Transfers are also remarkable interventions of the Government for the promotion of primary, secondary and higher secondary levels education through graduation stipends in 154 districts across the country, and the provision of special nutritional food for pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and children less than two years of age through quarterly cash stipends.

Ehsaas Langars (soup kitchens) and Ehsaas Koye Bhooka Na Sooye are innovative programmes for the supply of meals twice a day to the poor and daily wage earners in major cities across Pakistan. Under these programmes, each Langar (soup kitchen) is serving two meals every day to 600-800 poor people, whereas food trucks are delivering free of cost meals twice a day to daily wage earners in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Peshawar and Gujranwala. Panahgahs (shelter homes), Dar-ul-Ehsaas/Orphanages and Child Care Centers being run under the umbrella of Ehsaas Programme are offering quality shelter and life care facilities to the marginalised sections of the society. Keeping the global best practices in view, it can easily be concluded that Pakistan can become a true welfare state like Riyasat-e-Madina if we could ensure continuity and consistency of philanthropic policies both at the Federal and provincial/regional levels in the years to come.

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Turkey narrowly averts a new crisis with the West

Yasar Yakis

Both the content and the method of the ambassadors' initiative were at odds with established practice. A resident ambassador is not expected to interfere in the internal affairs or the judiciary procedures of their receiving country. Firstly, according to widespread practice, a diplomatic demarche is only carried out in the receiving country if it is a positive message for the host. If it is a negative message, the demarche must be carried out in the capital of the sending state. The foreign ministry invites the foreign ambassador to the ministry or releases a statement

TURKISH President Recep Tayyip Erdogan last week said he instructed Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu to declare the ambassadors of 10 countries — the US, Canada, Germany, France, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and New Zealand — to be personae non gratae. The reason for this was a joint statement made by these ambassadors on Oct. 18 inviting Turkey to release Osman Kavala, a well-known philanthropist and businessman.

No ambassador would take such an initiative without the instruction of his country's authorities. Therefore, there must have been coordination among the various capitals before agreeing to such a joint action. Since there are absentees among the EU, NATO and Western bloc countries, we may presume that some capitals disagreed with this initiative and chose not to antagonize Turkey unnecessarily. Both the content and the method of the ambassadors' initiative were at odds with established practice. A resident ambassador is not expected to interfere in the internal affairs or the judiciary procedures of their receiving country. Firstly, according to widespread practice, a diplomatic demarche is only carried out in the receiving country if it is a positive message for the host. If it is a negative message, the demarche must be carried out in the capital of the sending state. The foreign ministry invites the foreign ambassador to the ministry or releases a statement. This prevents its ambassador from being rebuffed in the receiving state. So these 10 countries chose the wrong capital to issue such a statement.

Secondly, even if the ambassadors were instructed to make such a statement, diplomatic niceties require that they should do it individually by paying a visit to the foreign ministry

of the host country and expressing politely the feelings of the sending country on the subject matter in question. A common action will annoy — and possibly hurt — the host country. This is exactly what happened in Ankara with the statement of these 10 foreign ambassadors.

Having said all this, Erdogan's reaction was not proportionate with the initiative of these ambassadors. He probably did not figure out that declaring an ambassador undesirable is the last step before declaring war on a country. To declare as undesirable the ambassadors of 10 countries — including a superpower like the US, many NATO allies and a big trading partner like Germany — is probably going to remain as a unique case in the annals of diplomatic relations.

To overcome the crisis, the Turkish Foreign Ministry and the US State Department agreed last week to issue a statement saying Washington "maintains compliance with" Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. The State Department made the promised statement on Oct. 25, but this was nothing more than a confirmation of facts, as it said that the US will continue to remain compliant with the convention, as it has been in the past. The Turkish version of the text stated — with a grammatically incorrect phrase — that the US "confirms compliance" with Article 41. Even if the two texts do not tally, this constructive ambiguity saved the day.

"Our goal is never to create crises," Erdogan said after a Cabinet meeting one day after the US statement. "It is to protect the rights, laws, honor and sovereignty of our country."

Probably realizing the damaging consequences, he felt compelled to consider this attitude of the State Department as the US taking a step back. His conciliatory tone suggests he now understands the various implications if these ambassadors were to be declared personae non gratae. Furthermore, Erdogan was also preparing for the weekend's G20 meeting in Rome and the UN climate summit in Glasgow. He had a long catalogue of issues to sort out with US President Joe Biden and maybe refrained from casting a shadow over these important meetings. The pro-government Turkish media celebrated the outcome as Erdogan standing strong. What is lost in this stormy atmosphere is Kavala's fate. He was acquitted by the Turkish courts after being accused of organizing and financing the Gezi Park protests in Istanbul in 2013, but he has remained in custody for more than four years. The European Court of Human Rights last year ordered Turkey to release him immediately. The Turkish government has not so far said that it will not implement the ECHR verdict, but Kavala is being kept in custody because of an indictment that has been under preparation for more than a year. The gist of the ambassadors' demarche was to secure Kavala's release. Turkey has not only recognized the ECHR's jurisdiction, but it has also passed a separate law that provides that, in cases where an international convention contains a provision that contradicts Turkish legislation, the provisions of the international convention will have primacy. At the end of the day, 10 countries have spent out what they had in mind and it does not look as if they have stepped back, while Turkey remains defiant and Kavala continues to serve a sentence without ever being convicted.

- Source: ARAB NEWS

Lebanon's government is playing the wrong game show

Faisal J. Abbas

The Saudi "wishlist" of what the Kingdom requires of any Lebanese government is not what some people seem to imagine. There is no "control room" in Riyadh demanding that Lebanese ministers mind their language

AFTER Saudi Arabia recalled its ambassador from Lebanon, some suggested that the Kingdom had been over-sensitive to mere words. Nothing could be farther from the truth. As the Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan observed, statements by the Lebanese Information Minister George Kordahi in support of the Iran-backed Houthi militia in Yemen were only a symptom of the root problem in his country; and that problem is the dominance of Hezbollah — the de facto rulers of Lebanon, and for a very long time. Kordahi himself is an irrelevance. Even during his media heyday — which, let us not forget, began

only when he joined a successful broadcaster, namely the Saudi-owned MBC — his chief claim to fame was as host of the Arabic version of the popular quiz show Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Even now, with a serious ministerial job, Kordahi's ability remains limited to reading someone else's script off a teleprompter — in this case, a script written by Hezbollah. That is why his inaccurate statements about the war in Yemen were not surprising. What was surprising was the weakness of the response from Najib Mikati's government.

The Saudi "wishlist" of what the Kingdom requires of any Lebanese government is not what some people seem to imagine. There is no "control room" in Riyadh demanding that Lebanese ministers mind their language. What is needed is a strong government in Beirut to stop Hezbollah from supporting the Houthis in their targeting of civilians in Saudi Arabia with missiles and drones, and to halt Hezbollah's illicit drug trafficking into the Kingdom. The Saudi response to the latter has been to ban all imports from Lebanon, but what was the alternative? These poisons were being smuggled into the Kingdom inside shipments of fruit, grain, and other apparently innocent consignments. If Lebanese authorities cannot be relied upon to halt this vile trade at its source, then the Kingdom has no choice but to take preventive action itself.

As for the government in Beirut, if a prime minister cannot dismiss a wayward junior minister who has jeopardized national interests with inaccurate and irresponsible statements, then what good can be hoped for from such a leader or such a government? Mikati's first pledge upon taking office was to restore ties

with Arab countries, but what those Arab countries — especially Saudi Arabia — want is actions, not words (and if words are all they have to offer, they should at least be more carefully chosen than those of George Kordahi).

Other critics say Riyadh is playing hardball with a weak and shattered country, and that if the Kingdom wants to support its Lebanese brothers it should do so unconditionally. Again, that is so far from the truth as to be delusional. KSR relief, the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre, was among the first to send aid to Lebanon after the devastating Beirut port blast in August 2020 — Noor Nugali of Arab News was there to document it. The Kingdom has made it clear that it has no intention of expelling Lebanese expatriate workers, who continue to be appreciated for the talent, diligence and expertise they bring to Saudi Arabia. However, when terrorists are attacking the Kingdom's civilian population, targeting its infrastructure and bombing its airports, do critics seriously expect this country — indeed any country — to support a government harboring a minister who actively supports those terrorists?

Let us be clear: Saudi Arabia is not the reason for Lebanon's woes, Hezbollah is. Saudi Arabia did not assassinate Rafik Hariri, occupy Beirut or store explosives in a civilian port — Hezbollah did. If Lebanese politicians cannot confront these truths, the very least they could have done is to convince their information minister of the sad reality: His days of Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? are over, and the government of which he is a part — manipulated, hijacked and controlled by external forces — is now The Weakest Link.

Briefs

PM to unfurl 'mega relief package' soon

FROM PAGE 01
first day that he would ensure direct democracy. Now, its preparations are in final stages," he maintained. Fawad said the process for nomination of candidates for local bodies' elections would be started soon as all the preparations had been finalized in that regard while party workers especially in Punjab were told to mobilize political workers. Likewise, campaign for local bodies' election was also being run in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The core committee also discussed issues pertaining to the Election Commission of Pakistan including the notices served upon him and Minister for Railways Azam Swati, and called for their withdrawal.

PM directs steps to cut prices of...

FROM PAGE 01
Industries Minister Makhdoom Khuro Bakhtiar, Information Minister Ch Fawad Hussain, Minister for National Food Security Syed Fakhar Imam, Planning Minister Asad Umar, Advisor on Commerce Abdul Razzak Dawood, Advisor on Finance Shaukat Fayyaz Tarin, Special Assistant to PM Dr Shehbaz Gill and Governor State Bank Dr Reza Baqir.

FM Portal launched for overseas Pakistanis

FROM PAGE 01
The mobile application has been developed by the National Information Technology Board with the help of the Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit. It will provide services in the standard procedure for document verification, the launch of QR code, and digital system to reduce the chances of counterfeiting and verification of documents through courier services within Pakistan. It will also help in online verification of power of attorney for overseas Pakistanis through missions. Under the initiative, the setting up of NADRA counters has been planned at 16 missions abroad for issuance of succession certificates and administrative letters to overseas Pakistanis. The Foreign Office is also consulting with the police departments of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan to digitize the issuance of police character certificates according to the Punjab and ICT police. In addition, so far 14 missions have been given access to digital records of 'mutation' and 'registration' documents of the Punjab Land Record System.

Qureshi, Australian FM...

FROM PAGE 01
He also took up the issue of Pakistani students enrolled in different Australian universities who have not been able to travel to Australia due to COVID-19 restrictions and sought Australia's cooperation to facilitate their early return. Foreign Minister Qureshi briefed his counterpart on Pakistan's constructive role in support of efforts for peace and stability in Afghanistan. He underscored the importance of inclusion, continued engagement of the international community with Afghanistan, and urgent coordinated steps for mobilization of much needed humanitarian and economic assistance for Afghanistan. The Australian foreign minister conveyed profound gratitude for Pakistan's facilitative role in safe evacuation of their nationals and others from Afghanistan, and reciprocated the desire for further strengthening of bilateral relations. While expressing satisfaction on the current level of engagement, the two foreign ministers agreed on further enhancing high-level interactions.



ISLAMABAD: Sir Vivian Richards and David Gower call on Prime Minister Imran Khan at Islamabad. - DNA

All set for COAS Pakistan Open Int'l Taekwondo Championship

International referees from Pakistan and abroad will be joined by a various other International referees for the smooth conduct of this prestigious championship

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Over One Hundred foreigner taekwondo players and officials from thirteen different countries will be in action along with 375 Pakistani athletes and officials in the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Pakistan Open International Taekwondo Championship (G-1) starting from November 6 at Liaquat Gymnasium Islamabad. This was revealed by Pakistan Taekwondo Federation (PTF) President Col (Retd) Wasim Ahmed along with women wing president Saba Shamim during the press conference here at local hotel on Monday. He said that all the arrangements have been finalized of three days championship and teams including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Albania, Nepal, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Oman, Egypt, Iran, Turkey, Morocco, United Arab Emirates



(UAE), El-Salvador, Croatia, and WT Refugee will fight for 16 gold medals in different categories. "We invited Indian team for this prestigious event but they did

not respond even India having good taekwondo players but no positive response received from Indian side", He said, adding that we have enough entries and a

large number of players and officials will be in the Islamabad for this mega championship. PTF President said that the young boys and girls mostly aged 18 and

above would be going to participate in seniors' fixtures. "International referees from Pakistan and abroad will be joined by a various other International referees for the smooth conduct of this prestigious championship.

Col (Retd) Wasim Ahmed thanked the support given by the Chief of Army Staff and his office, not only in encouraging the proposal in initial stage but also by providing assistance so that better ties can be developed with other countries through the sports diplomacy. President PTF also acknowledged and appreciated support provided by the South Asian Taekwondo Federation President Omar Saeed as well as sponsors Combox Sports, Fruit Nation, Go Petroleum, Bank Islami, The Bank of Punjab, Nayyab Labs, Korean Embassy, Islamabad Serena Hotel and Shangrila Resorts for facilitating the taekwondo event.

Anett beats Simona Halep to win Transylvania Open

The Estonian is now the eighth and final qualifier for the season-ending WTA Finals, to be held in Guadalajara

SPORTS DESK

CLUJ-NAPOCA: Anett Kontaveit put on a dazzling display of power tennis to beat Simona Halep in the final of the Transylvania Open in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 6-2, 6-3, a win that not only gave her a fourth title in her last seven tournaments, but also secured her a spot in the upcoming WTA Finals in Guadalajara. Kontaveit is the eighth and final qualifier for the season-ending event in Mexico, joining Aryna Sabalenka, Barbora Krejickova, Karolina Pliskova, Maria Sakkari, Iga Swiatek, Garbine Muguruza and Paula Badosa in the field. The Estonian passed Ons Jabeur for the last spot in Guadalajara by winning Cluj-Napoca, and apologized to the Tunisian in her trophy speech. "I'm so sorry, Ons, that I had to do this to you," she said. "I'm really looking forward to next year—hopefully we can both make it!" Jabeur was one of the first people to tweet congratulations to Kontaveit: It looked like it was going to be a tight final



between Kontaveit and Halep early on—after trading holds in the first two games, Halep brought up a break point with Kontaveit serving at 1-all. But the Estonian dug out the hold for 2-1, broke for 3-1 and never looked back until she had the first set after 28 minutes. Halep started building some momentum from there, jumping out to a 2-0 second-set lead, but Kontaveit caught fire again, winning five games in a row to build

a 6-2, 5-2 lead—Halep fought off a few match points, held and closed the gap to 6-2, 5-3, but Kontaveit's swift served it out in the next game. The two finished with similar unforced errors, Kontaveit with 28 and Halep with 29, but the Estonian hit more than twice as many winners in the match, 21 to 9. It was all over after an hour and 10 minutes on court. "I'm kind of speechless," said Kontaveit, who had never won a set against Ha-

lep in three previous meetings. "This week was incredible for me. Of course I'd like to congratulate Simona—you're such a huge role model, I've looked up to you for so many years, and you've beaten me so many times. "It was an honor to share a court with you." "Anett, you crushed me. But I had an amazing week," Halep said. "It was a tough year. To be honest, I wasn't expecting to play so well this week, but playing at home is always better. I'm sad that I couldn't win, but Anett was too good today. "Next year I will be here again." Halep also gave a special shout-out to her husband, Toni Luruc, whom she married last month. "As this is my first speech this year I would also like to thank my husband for the first time," she said. "Thank you for being in my life." Following an injury-marred year, Halep was actually playing her first WTA final in more than 13 months, since winning Rome last September—it was the milestone 40th WTA final of her illustrious career, and she's now 22-18 in those.

Cameron Norrie continues ATP Tour Finals bid

PARIS: British men's number one Cameron Norrie continued his bid to reach the ATP Finals with a solid opening win at the Paris Masters. Norrie, now ranked 13th in the world, won 6-2 6-1 against Argentina's Federico Delbonis. Norrie, 26, could still take one of the remaining two spots at the season-ending finals, which start in Turin on 14 November, with a deep run in Paris. Fellow Britons Dan Evans and Andy Murray play later on Monday. Norrie has enjoyed the best season of his career to move into contention for a place in Turin, which has taken over from London as the host city for the year-ending event. The left-hander has reached six finals this year, most notably when he won the prestigious title in Indian Wells last month, and his improved consistency has seen him rise from 74th in the world to the top 15. However, Norway's Casper Ruud and Italy's Jannik Sinner go to Paris in pole position to qualify for the eight-man finals. After beating Delbonis, Norrie said it is "pretty cool" to still be in the race. "To be in the question of that event at this stage of the year shows the improvements I've had this year," he told Amazon Prime. "To be playing these matches with a little added pressure and motivation is exactly where I want to be." Following up Indian Wells with another Masters title could seal Norrie's spot, although he will face tougher opponents than Delbonis in the French capital. A strong field at the indoor hard-court event includes Novak Djokovic and Daniil Medvedev - the world's top two men's players. Norrie, the 10th seed, will now play American Reilly Opelka or Serbia's Filip Krjajnovic after easing past Delbonis, whose losing streak was extended to a 10th match. British number two Evans faces Kazakhstan's Alexander Bublik, before former world number one Murray plays American qualifier Jensen Brooksby about 18:30 GMT. World number one Djokovic returns to court on Tuesday for the first time since his hopes of a calendar Grand Slam were ended by Russia's Medvedev in September's US Open final. The 34-year-old Serb will play Marton Fucsovics on Tuesday after the Hungarian survived a fightback from Italy's Fabio Fognini to win 6-1 6-7 (6-8) 7-6 (7-5). - Agencies

Buttler stars as England thrash Sri Lanka

DNA

SHARJAH: Jos Buttler scored a sensational maiden T20 international on a slow Sharjah surface as England beat a game Sri Lanka by 26 runs to all but secure a place in the World Cup semi-finals. Buttler completed a 67-ball century with a last-ball six to propel England to 163-4 from their 20 overs - after Eoin Morgan's side, batting first for the first time in the tournament, stuttered to 36-3 in the powerplay and 47-3 from 10 overs having been inserted by Sri Lanka skipper Dasun Shanaka. Buttler and Morgan (40 off 36) shared a fourth-wicket partnership of 112 in 78 balls, with England racking up 116 runs from their final 60 balls as Buttler backed up his blistering 71 not out from 31 deliveries against Australia in Dubai on Saturday night with another star performance.

The 31-year-old - who struck six sixes and as many fours - reached fifty from 45 balls but took just another 22 to pass three figures for the second time in all T20 cricket, having scored a maiden century in the format for Rajasthan Royals in the Indian Premier League earlier this year.

Sri Lanka looked cooked at 76-5 in the 11th over of the run chase, only for Wanindu Hasaranga (34 off 21) - so impressive with ball earlier while taking 3-21 with his leg-spin - and skipper Shanaka (26) to put on 53 from 36 deliveries for the sixth wicket to reduce the requirement to 35 from 20.

That stand was broken in the 17th over as Jason Roy and Sam Billings - the latter on as sub fielder Tymal Mills, who injured his right quad mid-over - completed a superb relay catch at deep extra-cover to remove Hasaranga, before Shanaka was brilliantly run out by an aware Buttler in the 17th.

Sri Lanka then tumbled to 137 all out in 19 overs as England followed their walloping of West Indies, battering of Bangladesh and annihilation of Australia with a fourth successive victory. That should be enough to secure a semi-final berth with their net-run rate so healthy but it will be guaranteed if they beat South Africa in their fifth and final group game, also in Sharjah, on Saturday evening. England may have rubberstamped a last-four spot by then, though, if South Africa lose to Bangladesh on Tuesday or if Australia come unstuck against Bangladesh on Thursday or West Indies in Saturday's early game. Sri Lanka came unstuck against England - their semi-final hopes now over after a third defeat in four - which will frustrate coach Mickey Arthur as his side started so strongly with the ball before altering their bowling plans and being Buttlered.



We're digging our own grave; UN Chief...

FROM PAGE 01

Enough of treating nature like a toilet. Enough of burning and drilling and mining our way deeper. We are digging our own graves," he said at the opening ceremony. "We need maximum ambition from all countries on all fronts to make Glasgow a success." UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson kicked off COP26, welcoming delegates to Glasgow in his classic jocular fashion. Johnson drew an analogy between fictional British spy James Bond defusing a ticking bomb in a film and world leaders attempting to solve the climate crisis: "The Doomsday device is real, and the clock is ticking to the furious rhythm of hundreds of billions of turbines and systems ... covering the Earth in a suffocating blanket of CO2." He emphasized the risk that inaction poses to future generations: "If we don't get serious about climate change today, it will be too late for our children to do so tomorrow."

US, Pak launch Single...

FROM PAGE 01

the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry in attendance. The Pakistan Single Window enables parties involved in trade and transport to register standard information and documents with a single-entry point and thereby fulfill all import, export, and transit-related regulatory requirements. Previously, traders were required to secure approval from a variety of government offices, duplicating efforts and paperwork, which led to increased costs and delays. Today's announcement rolled out the Subscription and Customs Registration system, along with the Commercial Bank integration module, which are the first steps in helping to reduce these costs and delays, and which will benefit consumers and businesses alike. "This project will help reduce the time and cost of doing business in Pakistan, and it will unlock the country's potential to become a hub for regional and international trade and transit," stated USAID Deputy Mission Director David Young at the inauguration. "By making trade simpler, the Pakistan Single Window will help to unlock Pakistan's economy." Speaking at the event, the Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Mr. Shaukat Tarin, said, "The Pakistan Single Window concept and its framework is the embodiment of this government's vision of deep meaningful reforms impacting all sectors and every aspect of government, promoting trade competitiveness with enhanced transparency and efficiency." The Pakistan Single Window project is managed by USAID's Pakistan Regional Economic Integration Activity (PREIA), a five-year initiative that aims to improve the development of Pakistan's trade sector. The public-private dialogue forum supports the United States' objectives to improve Pakistan's trade environment by building the institutional and human capacity of both public and private stakeholders.

GT Road cleared

FROM PAGE 01

the agreement signed yesterday. The development came after second meeting of the steering committee was held in Lahore. Meanwhile, reports said that the TLP workers would remain in Wazirabad till the release of their chief Saad Rizvi, who has been in jail since April. The internet services and traffic flow remained disrupted in the vicinity of GT Road where police and Punjab Rangers contingents were deployed to contain the protesters. On Sunday, an agreement was reached between the TLP and the government to end the protest. Mufti Muneeb, who mediated between the government and the TLP, had termed the accord a "victory for Islam and Pakistan".

Briefs

36% surplus witnessed in Pak-BD trade

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's goods and services trade with Bangladesh witnessed surplus of 36.90 percent during first three months of current financial year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The overall exports to Bangladesh were recorded at \$ 175.389 million during July-September (2021-22) against exports of \$ 127.487 million during July-September (2020-21), showing growth of 37.57 percent, SBP data revealed. Meanwhile, on year-to-year basis, exports to Bangladesh during September 2021 also increased by 65.72 percent, from US \$ 41.619 million to US \$68.974 million. Similarly on month-on-month basis, exports of Bangladesh were rose by 24.54 percent during September 2021 in comparison with exports of US \$ 55.382 million in August 2021, SBP data said. Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed increase of 35.24 percent in three months, from US \$5.353 billion to US \$ 7.241 billion. On the other hand, the imports from Bangladesh during the period under review were recorded at \$ 17.446 million against \$ 12.118 million last year, showing an increase of 43.96 percent. Meanwhile, year-to-year basis, imports from Bangladesh during September 2021 also increased by 79.30 percent from US \$4.305 million last year to US \$7.719 million. — APP

Australia recognizes Sinopharm vaccine

CANBERRA: Australia on Monday said it has recognized China's Sinopharm vaccine for those traveling into the country. Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) said it has obtained "additional information demonstrating these vaccines provide protection and potentially reduce the likelihood that an incoming traveler would transmit COVID-19 infection to others while in Australia or become acutely unwell due to COVID-19." The recognition of the Chinese vaccine by Australia comes when the bilateral relations between the two countries are at their lowest ebb, caused by Canberra's demand to probe the origin of coronavirus. The country also recognized Covaxin, manufactured by Bharat Biotech of India. Canberra had already recognized another Chinese vaccine manufactured by Sinovac, a statement by the TGA said. The recognition of Chinese and Indian vaccines "means many citizens of China and India, as well as other countries in our region where these vaccines have been widely deployed, will now be considered fully vaccinated on entry to Australia." "This will have significant impacts for the return of international students, and travel of skilled and unskilled workers to Australia," the statement added. — Agencies

Hopes fade for French climbers

KATHMANDU: Hopes faded Monday for three French climbers missing in the Himalayas after an avalanche, with their national climbing federation putting the chances of finding them alive at "practically zero". The trio were attempting to scale Minto Eiger, a 6,000-metre (19,700-foot) peak near Mount Everest in Nepal, and were last heard from via satellite phone from their camp on October 26. The French Federation of Alpine and Mountain Clubs (FFCAM) said Monday that the men appeared to have abandoned their summit attempt and turned back when the avalanche hit. "At the bottom of the cliff face, rescuers found three bags and equipment from their bivouac," the FFCAM said in a statement. "Hopes of finding survivors are at present practically zero." Mingma Gyalje Sherpa, a member of the search and rescue team mobilised by the Nepal National Mountain Guides Association, said however that the operation, hampered by poor weather, would continue on Tuesday. — APP

Work underway to identify remains of missing Azeris

"We cooperate in this direction with the structures of various countries. The Russian Prosecutor-General's Office is negotiating with Armenia in this direction," Aliyev said

DNA

BAKU: Prosecutor-General Kamran Aliyev has said that the work is underway to open unknown graves to identify Azerbaijani citizens who went missing during the first Karabakh war in the early 1990s. He stressed that nearly 4,000 Azerbaijanis went missing during the first Karabakh war. "After the liberation of the territories from Armenian occupation [in the 2020 Second Karabakh War], the remains were found during excavation work. DNA tests were taken from the relatives of the missing persons to identify the remains," he noted. The prosecutor-general stressed that over 150 missing Azerbaijanis have been identified so far. Moreover, Aliyev noted that Armenia also participated in finding the graves, but the main work was carried out by Azerbaijan. "We cooperate in this direction with the structures of various countries. The Russian Prosecutor-General's Office is negotiating with Armenia in this direction," Aliyev said. Some 4,000 Azerbaijanis are still missing, including 719 civilians, among them, 326 elderly, 267 women, and 71 children as a result of Armenia's aggression. Their plight still remains unknown.

A Moscow-brokered ceasefire deal that Baku and Yerevan



signed on November 10 brought an end to 44 days of fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani army declared a victory against the Armenian troops. The signed agreement obliged Armenia to withdraw its troops from the Azerbaijani lands that it has occupied since the early 1990s. It should be noted that on November 1, 2021, Baku hosted the first meeting of the Council of Prosecutors-General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States (Turkic Council).

The meeting considered the importance of expanding mutual and effective cooperation between law-enforcement agencies of the Turkic world, addressing threats to regional security, peace, and stability. After the opening speeches, the statute of the Council of Prosecutors-General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States was signed. The high-level meeting was attended by the prosecutors-general of Turkey, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, the Turkic

Council deputy secretary-general, the president of the International Association of Prosecutors, and other representatives. The meeting was also attended by the ambassadors of the Turkic Council member countries and Hungary in Azerbaijan. On October 3, 2009, at the 9th summit of the heads of the Turkic-speaking States in Nakhchivan, a decision was made to create the Council of Prosecutors within the framework of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States.

Baku hosts presentation of national clothes "Karabakh"

DNA

BAKU: The International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation in Baku has hosted a presentation of the collection of national clothes "Karabakh," prepared by famous Azerbaijani fashion designer Gulnara Khalilova, Report informs. The event was attended by officials, ambassadors accredited in Azerbaijan, heads and representatives of international organizations, culture and art workers. Opening the event, President of International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation Gunay Efendiyeva noted that this presentation is timed to coincide with the date of the Great Victory. The president of the Foundation also stressed that Turkey marks the 98th anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic, and congratulated the Turkish state and people in the person of Turkish Ambassador to Azerbaijan Cahit Bagci.

Uzbekistan interested in Azerbaijani SMBs

BAKU: Uzbekistan is interested in studying the experience of Azerbaijan's Agency for Small and Medium-sized Businesses (SMB) Development in the area of SMB houses and SMB development centers. This was stated during the meeting of the agency's board chairman, Orkhan Mammadov, and the head of Center for Economic Analysis and Reforms under the Uzbek presidential administration, Obid Hakimov. During the meeting, arranged as part of the Azerbaijan Investment and Culture Summit, the parties also briefed on the agency's support and services to entrepreneurs. The Uzbek delegation paid

special attention to the activities of SMB houses and development centers. The parties also discussed other issues of mutual interest and prospects for cooperation. The summit, organized by the Small and Medium Business Development Agency and the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum with the support of the economy and culture ministries was held on October 27-29. The event was attended by ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, representatives of international organizations, businessmen, investors, startups, youth organizations, as well as representatives from more than 20 countries. — DNA



GLASGOW: Special Assistant to Prime Minister Malik Amin Aslam addresses a high-level event 'Accelerating Adaptation in Asia through large-scale Nature-based Solutions' held on November 1 on the sidelines of the two-week global climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland. — DNA

Bilateral Trade between Pakistan and Kazakhstan increases

DNA

KARACHI: Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo, President FPCCI, has said that it is phenomenal to witness more than a three-fold increase in bilateral trade volume between Pakistan & Kazakhstan to \$20mn in the last month over its preceding month, where it stood at \$6mn only. This demonstrates the potential of bilateral trade between the two brotherly countries, he said. Yezhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, apprised the audience of the upcoming Joint Working Group Meetings, i.e. for Transportation on Novem-

ber 12 & for Trade & Investment on November 15. He also invited FPCCI members and exporters from Pakistan to participate in JWGs to collectively create an enabling environment for commercial & economic cooperation between the two countries. Representing Pakistan's Ambassador in Kazakhstan, H.E. Sajjad Ahmed Sechar, Mr. Muhammad Farooque, Trade & Investment Counsellor in Embassy of Pakistan in Kazakhstan, said that now Pakistan is a signatory of internationally & regionally significant convention on logistics & transportation called Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR); and, can benefit from

it through cutting cargo costs substantively. Mr. Ayan Yerenov, Chairman of Chamber of International Commerce, Kazakhstan, said that there will be a high-profile meeting of Joint Business Council of Kazakhstan & Pakistan in the second-half of January 2022 & a Trade Exhibition in the second-half of March 2022. Mr. Jamal Mir, a Senior Member of FPCCI, said that, based on his vast experience in trading with Central Asian countries, he can say that the absence of smooth visa processing is a major impediment for increasing bilateral trade volume between the two countries.

Mr. Shamas-Ur-Rehman, a Focal Person in Karachi for Kazakhstan in an honorary capacity, said that Pakistani business, industry and trade community is willing to participate in all the events with Kazakhstan to explore new vistas and sectors for enhancing bilateral trade relations. Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo reiterated his resolve, as President FPCCI, to spearhead Pakistan towards an expanded border and land-based trade volumes & routes; which happens to stand at more than 70% in rest of the world; but, Pakistan is still lagging behind in that critical facet of enhancing exports swiftly in a sustainable manner.

Cultural heritage centers to be created in Uzbekistan

TASHKENT: A Presidential Resolution "On measures to further improve the continuous training system for qualified personnel in the field of tourism, cultural heritage and museology" was adopted. According to the Resolution, the International University of Tourism "Silk Road" was renamed into the International University of Tourism and Cultural Heritage "Silk Road". The university has become the basic higher education institution of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization for the training of personnel in the field of tourism, cultural heritage management and museology, as well as a scientific institution for scientific and innovative research in these areas. From the 2022/2023 academic year on the basis of Shakhrisabz, Margilan and Khiva colleges of tourism and service, Shakhrisabz, Margilan and Khiva technical schools of tourism and cultural heritage (Technical schools of cultural heritage) will be created. Also, on the basis of the Tashkent College of Tourism and Service, the Tashkent branch of the University was created. The University starts its activities: International Research Institute "Silk Road"; The Silk Road Museum; - Art Residence "Silk Road"; Art Gallery "Silk Road"; Center for retraining and advanced training of restorers. — Foreign Desk

Israel to evict Palestinians from Sheikh Jarrah

The case is not said to be connected to the Palestinian families who are facing eviction from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah, which was the spark for protests against mass evictions in the occupied East Jerusalem neighbourhood and Israel's 11-day bombardment of Gaza in May

AGENCIES

OCCUPIED JARUSALEM: Palestinians are to be evicted from their property after the Israeli High Court of Justice yesterday ruled to expropriate land for what it calls public needs. The judgement authorised the takeover of a parking lot and car wash belonging to Palestinians in the neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah in occupied East Jerusalem in order to clear the area for a garden and a path next to a planned hotel. The case is not said to be connected to the Palestinian families who are facing eviction from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah, which was the spark for protests against mass evictions in the occupied East Jerusalem neighbourhood and Israel's 11-day bombardment of Gaza in May, which killed 253 Palestinians, including 66 children, and forced tens of thousands to flee their homes. According to Israeli law, private land can be expropriated if it is needed for public use, such as for a park, infrastructure or public buildings. Under international law, however, Sheikh Jarrah is occupied territory and therefore cannot be subject to the decision of the Israeli High Court.



Nevertheless, the occupation state makes no such distinction and conceals the racist nature of its rule through a maze of legal mechanisms, which is one of the reasons why critics have said that Israel practices apartheid for extending sovereignty to all

the territory in historic Palestine without giving the same rights to half of the population in the territory that are non-Jewish. Commenting on this very issue acclaimed Israeli philosopher Yuval Noah Harari, who in September predicted Israel's future as an

apartheid, argued that as far as the Israelis are concerned there is no Palestine and no Palestinian Authority (PA). Harari argued that Israel has full sovereignty over historic Palestine and the PA exists merely to absolve Israel of any blame when for example it wants to shirk responsibility and to avoid the accusation that it is practicing apartheid by pointing to the PA as a self-governing authority. Yesterday's ruling is also further indication of the use of a tactic as old as the Israeli state that has been used to expropriate Palestinian land. A report by Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem on land grab highlighted how the occupation state uses a complex legal and bureaucratic mechanism to take control of the territory owned by Palestinians. The principal tool used to take control of land is to declare it "state land". Other methods employed by Israel to take control of land include seizure for military needs, declaration of land as "abandoned assets", and the expropriation of land for public needs. Israel often uses the seized lands to benefit illegal settlements, while prohibiting the Palestinian public from using them in any way.

UK vows action against France in fishing row

LONDON: Britain on Monday warned France it will take action if Paris does not withdraw "unreasonable" threats to impose trade measures in an increasingly acrimonious row over post-Brexit fishing rights. President Emmanuel Macron said on Sunday that Britain must give ground in the dispute or France will trigger trade reprisals on Tuesday, saying: "The ball is in Britain's court." But Britain's Foreign Secretary Liz Truss told Sky News on Monday that "we will use the mechanisms of our trade agreement with the EU to take action" if Macron goes ahead with his plans. "The French have made completely unreasonable threats, including to the Channel Islands and to our fishing industry, and they need to withdraw those threats," she said. "If somebody behaves unfairly in a trade deal you're entitled to take action against them and seek some compensatory measures. "And that is what we will do if the French don't back down." France is enraged that Britain and the Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey have not issued some French boats with licences to fish in their waters since Brexit took full effect at the start of 2021. — APP

US, South Korea hold air drills

NEWS DESK

SEOUL: The United States and South Korea kicked off joint aerial exercises on Monday amid ongoing efforts to restart denuclearization talks with North Korea. The drills have been scaled down since 2017 to support peace efforts on the Korean Peninsula, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported. From tens of thousands of troops and hundreds of jets and warplanes, the five-day exercises have been cut down to "some 100 air assets each, including F-15K and KF-16 jets from South Korea and F-16s from the US," the report said. Officials also declined to share details of the drills, only saying that they are being carried out in a "balanced manner." "We cannot comment on the exercise as it is one that is not disclosed to the media," the agency quoted an air force official as saying. The drills come just a week after South Korea's President Moon Jae-in reaffirmed Seoul's desire to pursue peace talks with Pyongyang despite heightened tensions this year. Moon met Pope Francis on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rome last Friday, urging the pope to visit North Korea to boost the peace initiative. According to Moon, the pope said he would be willing to visit North Korea if he was invited by Pyongyang. On Monday, the South Korean government called on North Korea "to respond positively" to the proposal, reiterating that a visit by Pope Francis will bolster "hope for progress in efforts to promote regional peace," Yonhap reported. Already fraught relations between the neighbors have been further strained since the US and South Korea held joint military exercises this August, which sparked criticism and a series of missile tests from North Korea.

Ethiopia, Tigrayan rebels battle over key town

NAIROBI: Ethiopian forces and Tigrayan rebels fought a pitched battle for control of Kombolcha on Monday, terrified residents reported, after the rebels claimed to have taken over a second town in two days. Reports of rebels capturing Kombolcha came a day after they claimed control of Dessie and, if confirmed, would mark a major advance by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in the nearly year-long war. Much of northern Ethiopia is under a communications blackout, and access for journalists is restricted, making battlefield claims difficult to verify independently. — APP

Briefs

Uzbek NSA arrives on three-day visit

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: A five-member Uzbek delegation headed by Lt. Gen. Victor Makhmudov, Secretary of the Security Council/National Security Advisor (NSA) of the Republic of Uzbekistan arrived here Monday on a three-day visit. During the visit, Pakistan and Uzbekistan will sign a Protocol on Joint Security Commission (JSC) for enhanced bilateral cooperation in this sphere. The Uzbek delegation was received by NSA Dr Moeed Yusuf and senior officials of the National Security Division at the Islamabad International Airport. National Security Advisor Moeed Yusuf, who met Lt. Gen. Victor Makhmudov in Dushanbe, Tajikistan in September last on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit, had invited the Uzbek NSA to visit Pakistan for signing of the Protocol. Besides attending the inaugural session of the JSC, the Uzbek delegation will also call on Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

LHC acquits Czech model in drugs case

DNA

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday acquitted a Czech model sentenced in 2019 for attempting to smuggle heroin from Pakistan to Abu Dhabi. In March 2019, a sessions court had sentenced Tereza Hluskova to eight years and eight months in jail. In April the same year, she had challenged her conviction in the case. She has insisted someone had placed the drugs in her suitcase. The appeal against the sentence filed through a counsel stated that the trial court handed down the conviction beyond the merits of the case and without any concrete evidence against the appellant. It pleaded that the trial court solely relied upon the concocted story of the prosecution and ignored the facts of the case. The appellant asked the high court to set aside the conviction and acquit her of the charges. During hearing, Hluskova's lawyer Saiful Malook maintained that it could not be proven that the supposed narcotics were safely transported to the laboratory for testing.

Govt issues NAB third amendment ordinance

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Law and Justice on Monday issued National Accountability (Third Amendment) Ordinance, 2021 following President Arif Alvi's approval. The NAB chairman's tenure, as per the new ordinance, would be of four years. The criteria for the removal of a NAB chairman would be the same as the one for the removal of a Supreme Court judge, according to the new Ordinance. According to it, cases of fraud, deception and Modaraba cases have been given back to NAB. It shall come into force at once and the amendments shall be deemed to have taken effect on and from October 6, 2021. Therefore, NAB will hear all cases of fraud from before October 6, as per the amended Ordinance, while old cases of fake accounts can continue as before. It also read that its provisions would not be applicable to matters pertaining to federal, provincial, or local taxation, other levies or imports - including refunds or loss of cheque pertaining to taxation.

Armenia must be held accountable for war crimes

Azerbaijan ambassador says the Patriotic War under the leadership of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan, President Ilham Aliyev that ended with a victory of the brave Azerbaijani Army, opened a new era in the history of the Republic of Azerbaijan

STAFF REPORT/DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov has said Armenia must be held accountable for war crimes adding Armenia has to tell us and the world where are thousands of the missing persons. He said Pakistan's support during the 44 day Patriotic War meant a lot for us and people of Azerbaijan and the government will remember it forever. Ambassador Khazar Farhadov expressed these views while addressing a press conference. Prior to the press conference, the Ambassador briefed the media people about various stages of the Patriotic War through a photo exhibition. Ambassador Khazar further said We have about 4,000 citizens registered as missing during the First Karabakh War. Armenia must inform us about their fate. We have solid evidence that almost all of them were tortured to death by Armenian servicemen in violation of international humanitarian law and buried in mass graves. The Patriotic War under the leadership of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan, President Ilham Aliyev that ended with a victory of the brave Azerbaijani Army, opened a new era in the history of the Republic of Azerbaijan, established international justice and changed the realities in the region, he added. He said, after the liberation, Azerbaijan began to revive the liberated territories, which were completely destroyed by Armenia. Azerbaijan began to rebuild and restore its territories. In just 8 months, the Fizuli international airport was built in Azerbaijan, and work is underway



in all the liberated territories. 'And I would like also to emphasize in particular that we are grateful for the resolute position of brother Pakistan on the issues of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity before and during the Patriotic War. During the Patriotic War government, Parliament and people of Pakistan morally and politically supported us condemning Armenian aggression and supporting Azerbaijan's just position to restore its territorial integrity'. He added, this is a true demonstration of brotherhood. Azerbaijan supports the settlement of the Kashmir issue in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Giving a background, the ambassador said, as you know, Armenia for almost 30 years kept under occupation almost 20 percent of my country's territory. The occupation was accompanied with notorious war crimes and crimes against humanity. Armenia committed the Khojaly

genocide in February 1992, killing hundreds of civilians, including 106 women and 63 children. 1275 Azerbaijanis were taken hostage, 150 of them are still missing. Armenia's ethnic cleansing has resulted in more than a million Azerbaijanis becoming refugees and internally displaced persons. In 1993, the UNSC adopted four resolutions calling for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of armed forces Armenia from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. However, these and all other similar decisions adopted by relevant international organizations have been ignored by Armenia. During the occupation Armenia tried to maintain the status quo. Unfortunately, no international sanctions have been imposed on Armenia to ensure the implementation of UNSC resolutions. The overthrow of the war criminal regime in Armenia in 2018 was not accompanied by real changes.

The Armenian government has made a number of provocative statements and actions, such as "Karabakh is Armenia and period". The then Defense Minister of Armenia openly threatened Azerbaijan with a new war for the new territories. In addition, Armenia pursued a policy of illegal settlement of Armenians from third countries, in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, in gross violation of international law. In July 2020, Armenia committed a military provocation on the state border with Azerbaijan. As a result of an artillery strike in the Tovuz region of Azerbaijan, 13 servicemen and civilians were killed. In August last year, an Armenian sabotage group tried to penetrate through the former line of contact in order to commit terrorist acts against Azerbaijani military servicemen and civilians, but was successfully neutralized by us. At the General Debates of the 75th

Session of the UN General Assembly on September 24 last year, President Ilham Aliyev warned that hostile, Azerbaijan Phobic statements and provocations of Armenian leadership demonstrate that Armenia was preparing for a new aggression against Azerbaijan. Three days later, on September 27 last year, Armenia launched a large-scale attack on Azerbaijani military positions and civilians. In response, Azerbaijan launched a counterattack in its own territories against Armenia, using the right to self-defense enshrined in Article 51 of the UN Charter. For 44 days, the Armenian armed forces intensively fired on the regions and cities along and also far from the frontline. Armenia used ballistic missiles such as the Scud and Iskander-M, as well as banned white phosphorus and cluster munitions. As a result of these Armenian war crimes, more than 100 civilians, including 11 children, were killed and more

than 450 were injured. More than 12,000 civilian infrastructure, including individual houses, has been destroyed or severely damaged in Azerbaijan. Armenia has attracted mercenaries and foreign fighters from abroad and placed them against Azerbaijan. In total more than 300 cities and villages were liberated on the battlefield. Armenia had to sign an act of capitulation on 10 November 2020. Accordingly, Armenia was obliged to withdraw its troops from the remaining part of Azerbaijan's territories, namely Aghdam, Lachin and Kalbajar regions. Azerbaijan has implemented the above-mentioned UN Security Council resolutions. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was left in the past. There is no administrative territorial unit called Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan. Karabakh and East Zangazur economic zones were established by a decree of Presidenton July 7 this year.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yezhan Kistafin calls on the Special Assistant of Prime-Minister on Poverty Alleviation, Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar. - DNA

Pakistan, China discuss cooperation in maritime sector

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong on Monday in a meeting with Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi discussed bilateral cooperation in the maritime sector of both countries. During the meeting, they also discussed the Karachi Campus Hanso Coastal Development Zone Project in detail and the Chinese Ambassador and the Federal Minister agreed to expedite work on the project. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi said Karachi Campus Hanso Coastal Development Zone Project will be a game changer for the region. Federal Minister Ali Zaidi also discussed the importance of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in the region. He said CPEC would connect Central Asian countries with Pakistani ports and giving them access to major markets. He said Pakistan is on the path to become a maritime power and partnership with China would play an important role in achieving this goal. - DNA

Matters with IMF likely to settle this week: Tarin

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Finance Minister on Finance and Revenue, Shaukat Tarin on Monday said that matters with the IMF have almost been settled and a final agreement is likely to be reached by this week. There are some legal issues that would be resolved soon leading to a final agreement, the Advisor Finance said while talking to the media here after the launching

ceremony of Pakistan Single Window (PSW). Replying to a question, the Advisor said inflation is a global issue and the government is trying its best to tackle it and will announce the targeted subsidy in the coming days. Earlier, addressing the launching ceremony of Pakistan Single Window (PSW), the Advisor highlighted the importance of taking full advantage of new opportunities emerging out of global economic recovery being taking place after Covid-19. He said that one of the

Macron says Australian PM lied on submarine deal

FOREIGN DESK

SYDNEY: French President Emmanuel Macron said Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison lied to him over the cancellation of a submarine building contract in September, and indicated more was needed to be done to rebuild trust between the two allies. Macron and Morrison were in Rome for the G20 summit, the first time they had met since Aus-

tralia scrapped a multi-billion dollar submarine deal with France as part of a new security alliance with the United States and Britain announced in September. The new security alliance, dubbed AUKUS and which could give Australia access to nuclear-powered submarines, caught Paris off guard and saw the French ambassadors recalled from Washington and Canberra amid accusations France had been betrayed.

LPG price increased by Rs13 a kilo

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (OGRA) has Monday announced an Rs13 per kilogram increase in the LPG gas prices for both commercial and residential users starting from November 1. After the increase on Monday, the kilogram of LPG is now Rs217 as opposed to Rs204 it used to be until today. After the increase today, the price of the domestic LPG cylinder have surged Rs156 starting today, while the commercial cylinder prices have gone up by Rs599. The OGRA notification has shared the breakup of the new prices which means a domestic cylinder of 11.8 kg will now cost consumers Rs2,559 starting today. It was available for Rs2,404. Similarly the commercial cylinder of 46kilogram has been hiked by Rs599 to now sell at Rs9,847, OGRA notified.

Russia warns of strain on doctors as virus spreads

MOSCOW: Russian authorities said Monday that doctors were under "extraordinary" strain due to surging coronavirus cases in Europe's worst-hit country, with Moscow shuttered during a nationwide holiday to curb infections. The capital was quiet on the first morning of the working week, with businesses mostly closed and non-essential services in the capital halted from October 28 to November 7. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that doctors working in red zones were facing "extreme physical and emotional stress" with the recent rise in cases. "Of course the situation is not straightforward. Beds are filled to a large extent, and these days the situation is not becoming easier," Peskov said. "This is an excessive and extraordinary burden on our doctors, who are demonstrating heroism with what is happening," he added. - Agencies

Covid-19 deaths pass five million worldwide

In the US, more than 745,800 people have died, making it the country with the highest number of recorded deaths. It is followed by Brazil, with 607,824 recorded deaths, and India, with 458,437

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: More than five million people are known to have died of Covid-19 worldwide, 19 months since the pandemic began, according to Johns Hopkins University. Vaccines have slowed the death rate, but some health experts say the true toll could be far higher. The milestone comes amid warnings from health officials that cases and deaths in some places are rising for the first time in months. Nearly 250 million cases of the virus have been recorded worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates the pandemic's real global death toll could be two to three times higher than official records. In the US, more than 745,800 people have died, making it the country with the highest number of recorded deaths.

It is followed by Brazil, with 607,824 recorded deaths, and India, with 458,437. But health experts believe these numbers are under reported, partly because of deaths at home and those in rural communities. It has taken the world longer to reach the latest one million deaths than the previous two. It took over 110 days to go from four million deaths to five million. That is compared to just under 90 days to rise from three million to four million. While vaccines have helped reduce the fatality rate, the WHO warned last week that the pandemic was "far from over". Its director general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus pointed to a rise in cases in Europe, where countries with low vaccination rates are seeing soaring infections and deaths. Last week, Russia recorded its highest number of daily cases and deaths since the start of the pandemic. Russia accounts for 10% of the last million deaths recorded globally.

Pakistan's active cases fall below 23,000

DNA

ISLAMABAD: With 1,024 more people recovering from COVID-19, active cases in Pakistan dropped below 23,000 after more than seven-and-a-half months Monday. The number of active cases now stands at 22,545. Pakistan last reported an active case count this low on March 16 at 22,792 cases. The tally for recoveries, meanwhile, is now 1,222,559. According to stats shared by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC), the country logged 482 fresh coronavirus cases, the lowest level in a year, after 40,621 tests were taken over the last 24 hours and six fatalities were reported from the infection. The positivity rate stood below 2% for the 15th consecutive day at 1.18%, which is said to be the lowest positivity ratio recorded by Pakistan since it started measuring COVID figures last year. There have been 1,273,560 infections and 28,456 coronavirus-related deaths reported in the country since the pandemic started. Pakistan is reporting 648 new infections on average each day, 11% of the peak - the highest daily average reported on June 17. The country has administered at least 103,514,198 doses of COVID vaccines so far. Assuming every person needs 2 doses, that's enough to have vaccinated about 23.9% of the country's population.