



Islamabad POST

Friday, November 12, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

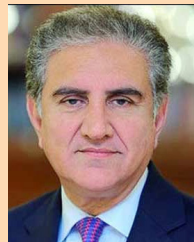
Price Rs. 20

China's Xi cements his status with the historic resolution

Detailed News On Page-08

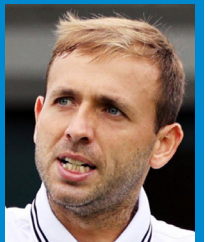
Kashmiris hate India now more than ever: FM

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Dan Evans exits Stockholm Open in QF

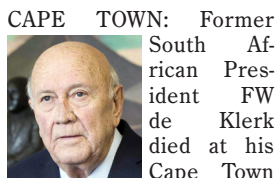
Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

President who freed Mandela dies

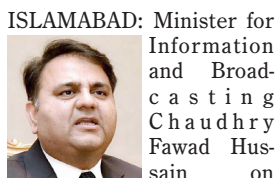
DNA



CAPE TOWN: Former South African President FW de Klerk died at his home at the age of 85, his organization announced on Thursday. "It is with the deepest sadness that the FW de Klerk Foundation must announce that former President FW de Klerk died peacefully at his home in Fresno earlier this morning following his struggle against mesothelioma cancer," the statement said. "Mr De Klerk was 85 years old."

Govt to give voting rights to expats

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Thursday said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government was determined to giving voting rights to overseas Pakistanis. In a meeting with PTI Denmark President Chaudhry Imran Mehboob, the minister said Pakistan's embassies abroad were striving to facilitate Pakistani expats who played crucial role in economic development. Both the dignitaries discussed different matters pertaining to current political situation in Pakistan, Overseas Pakistanis issues, fair and transparent system in the country.

Elon Musk sells \$1.1 bn in shares

WEB DESK



CALIFORNIA: Elon Musk on Wednesday sold about 900,000 shares of the electric carmaker's stock, netting over \$1.1 billion (960 million), to pay tax obligations for stock options. Earlier in the week, his trust sold nearly 3.6 million shares in Tesla, worth around \$4 billion. He conducted a poll on Twitter asking users whether he should sell 10% of his stocks, saying he would follow the results of the poll.

Pak stands with Afghans; assures PM

"We have assured [Muttqi] and his delegation we will provide all possible aid to Afghanistan", announces Khan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday said that Pakistan has always stood by the Afghan people in their time of need and urged the international community to fulfil its collective responsibility and do the same. The prime minister's remarks came amid a visit to Islamabad by acting Afghan foreign minister Amir Khan Muttqi, who was extended an invitation to attend the Troika Plus meeting. "We have assured [Muttqi] and his delegation we will provide all possible humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. We are sending essential food items, emergency medical supplies and winter shelters to provide immediate relief to Afghan people," he wrote. The premier followed by saying that free COVID-19 vaccines will be administered to all Afghans travelling across the border into Pakistan. "Again I urge the international community to fulfil its collective responsibility to avert a grave humanitarian crisis confronting the people of Afghanistan," PM Imran Khan said. Muttqi's visit is in continuation of Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi's visit to Kabul last month. The visit will be centered on bilateral relations between the two countries, with a focus on enhancing inter-alliance trade, facilitation of transit trade,

Continued on Page 06

Extended Troika urge Taliban for moderate policies

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has agreed to continue practical engagement with the Taliban government to encourage the implementation of moderate and prudent policies that can help achieve a stable and prosperous Afghanistan on a priority basis. The development came as Islamabad hosted a meeting of extended Troika on Thursday, comprising Pakistan, China, Russia and the United States. Addressing the opening session of the ninth meeting of Troika Plus, the foreign minister said engagement with Afghanistan is important as nobody wished to see a relapse into civil war and an economic collapse to spur instability. "Everyone wants terrorist elements operating inside Afghanistan to be tackled effectively and we all want to prevent a new refugee crisis," he said. The meeting, held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was attended by Special

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OIC moot to be held in Pakistan in March 2022

'India losing battle of hearts and minds' in occupied Kashmir, says FM Qureshi alongside OIC envoy

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Thursday said that Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers' meeting in March 2022 will be held in Pakistan. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad along with the Special Envoy of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for Jammu and Kashmir Yousef Aldobeay, the foreign minister while presenting various proposals regarding Occupied Kashmir said that the Kashmiris have never before hated India as much as they do today.

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OIC Special Envoy visits Muzaffarabad

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The OIC Special Envoy for Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Ambassador Yousef Aldobeay and Assistant Secretary-General Ambassador Tariq Ali Bakheet have paid a visit to Muzaffarabad during their two-day visit. The delegation visited the Thotha Refugees Camp where they were briefed on the elaborate measures taken for the socio-economic well being of the inhabitants who fled from Indian atrocities in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the delegates also visited the vocational training centre and interacted with the refugees. The delegation met the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) where they were apprised of the security monitoring mechanism along LoC and the prevalent situation. During the visit, the delegation also met the president and

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in a group photo with Special Representatives for Afghanistan from China, Russia and the US at "Troika Plus" meeting. – DNA

FM Qureshi meets Acting Afghan FM

Qureshi underlined Pakistan's commitment to peace in Afghanistan

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi received Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Amir Khan Muttqi along with a high-level delegation including Acting Ministers for Industry & Commerce as well as Finance and Deputy Minister of Aviation. The Foreign Minister was accompanied by Minister of Aviation Sarwar Khan, Advisers on Finance and Commerce, Shaukat Tarin and Razzak Dawood and other senior officials. Earlier in the day, working groups on Trade, Transit and Commerce, Finance and Aviation met under chairmanship of the respective Ministers from the two countries. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi underlined Pakistan's commitment to peace, stability and progress in Afghanistan. In this regard, the Foreign Minister highlighted Pakistan's continuing efforts for facilitating humanitarian assistance and economic support to Afghanistan given

Continued on Page 06

All over for Pakistan as Australia advances

Australia will face NZ in the Final of T20 WC

DNA

DUBAI: Matthew Wade played a vital role in Pakistan's defeat against Australia in the second semi-final of the T20 World Cup in Dubai on Thursday. Along with Stoinis, the pair managed to make a match winning crucial partnership to make Australia's way to the final. Australia will face New Zealand in the Final. Earlier, Pakistani spinner Shadab Khan continued to send Australian batsmen to pavilion one after other and Maxwell became the fourth batsman to fall prey to his delivery. Earlier, Shadab re-



moved in from David Warner and Steve Smith. Shadab Khan first removed Mitchell Starc who was fully charged and hitting the Pakistani bowlers in all directions. Before Shadab, Shaheen launched another back-breaking attack on the Australian

side, removing their captain in the first over. Earlier, Pakistan set a target of 177 runs against Australia in the second semi-final of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Dubai today (Thursday), with both eying the spot in the final match of the tournament.

Saad Rizvi removed from Fourth Schedule

ABID RAZA



RAWALPINDI: The Punjab government has removed the names of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's (TLP) Ameer Hafiz Saad Hussain Rizvi and 577 other workers from the Fourth Schedule. Punjab Home Department on Thursday issued a notification in this regard, according to which the blocked national ID cards of TLP workers have also

been restored. The TLP activists were also exempted from appearance at the polling stations. Earlier in the day, Interior Minister

Continued on Page 06

Shusha - the fairyland of Azerbaijan (Part-2)

Out of 15,000 sq m area, 10,000 has been liberated from the Armenian occupation while the rest of the 5,000 sq m is now manned by the Russian peacekeepers. As per the ceasefire agreement, the Russian peacekeepers shall remain in this area for five years

ANSAR M BHATTI

AS I mentioned earlier Azerbaijan govt is in the process of building new hotels in the area keeping in view the influx of visitors it will receive once the area is opened for tourism especially. We were housed in a hostel as the only two hotels, which were built recently, were full to the capacity because the Azeri President Ilham Aliyev was to reach the place on November 8 for Victory Day celebrations. His advance party and govt officials therefore had to be on the spot a day earlier. Just to share with the readers that the entire Karabakh region is still out of bounds for the general public mainly because of two reasons; first, the clearing of minefields is still in progress and second, the government is rebuilding infrastructure destroyed during the war. The Armenian govt kept the region under its control however it did nothing in terms of infrastructure development and provision of even basic facilities to people living in the area. The Azerbaijan government therefore had to start from scratch. It was quite an experience of living in a hostel, maybe after a span of 25 years



ever since I left the University. The hostel was basically designed for the military personnel deployed in the area for maintenance of law and order and then taking part in the rehabilitation process. Each room was partitioned in three bed rooms with a common washroom. In extremely chilly weather it was quite an experience to survive without warm water and central heating facilities, but the most frustrating thing was non-availability of the Internet facility in the hostel. So, to quench our Internet thirst, we have to rush to the nearby hotel, which was quite a daunting task given the fact that temperatures continued to drop with each passing minute. The very next day, on November 6, 2021, we were taken to the Jidir Plain, a place from where the Azerbaijani Special Forces attacked the Armenian troops. As we were told, the Armenian military was expecting the Azerbaijani forces to attack from the normal land route however the Azeri forces rather chose an arduous and quite dangerous course, which the Armenians never expected. It was a steep mountain, hundreds of meters tall and only astute mountaineers could have scaled it. But the Azeri forces did it, which unequivocally shows their professionalism and commitment to their cause. When Shusha fell, in fact the entire region fell to Azerbaijan because who controls Shusha, controls the region.



Construction work going on at a fast speed in Shusha

From Jidir Plain to Shusha fortress it took us just five minutes. After a short stroll in Shusha streets, we entered the Shusha Fort. The Fort is not there however the remnants certainly tell a story of its might and historical importance. Everybody who visits Shusha has a dream to be at the Fort Gate. We were lucky that our dream came true, albeit the majority of the Azerbaijani people and even the high ranking govt officials have not been able to visit the place so far. Out of 15,000 sq m area, 10,000 has been liberated from the Armenian occupation while the rest of the 5,000 sq m is now

manned by the Russian peacekeepers. As per the ceasefire agreement, the Russian peacekeepers shall remain in this area for five years. After the war the Azerbaijani leadership has time and again expressed its willingness to co-exist with Armenia peacefully provided Yerevan acts positively towards Azerbaijani peace overtures. Due to my flight the next day, I had to rush back to Baku and therefore could not visit Agdam and Ganga, another two cities brutally attacked by the Armenian forces. Ganga, especially is a mainland Azerbaijani city but even then Armenian forces attacked the it in order to provoke Baku to lose its

temper and conduct a reciprocal attack on Armenia. Hats off to the Azerbaijani leadership, which did not fall prey to the booby trap and kept its cool throughout the war. Here, the Azerbaijan Presidential office and the Embassy in Islamabad also need appreciation for arranging the trip for the Pakistani journalists and thus providing them with an opportunity of having first hand information about the conflict and region. Within a couple of years, the region is going to have a complete new look and it is expected that it will serve as the most-sought after tourist destination not only for the locals but for the international visitors as well.

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President Xi urges Asia-Pacific to stride toward shared future – Page 06

Karabakh now a construction site for modern projects – Page 07

Belarus migrants' crisis deepens as EU mulls sanctions – Page 08



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin calls on Senator Manzoor Ahmed, head of the Pakistan-Kazakhstan Friendship Group. – DNA

WHO, Thai embassy joined hands in fighting against dengue

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: In collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO), Royal Thai Embassy in Islamabad conducted an activity to prevent and raise awareness of the danger of dengue for Pakistanis and Thais.

WHO Representative to Pakistan and the Thai Ambassador to Pakistan led the field team of WHO to fog

the area.

Recently, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Punjab including Islamabad have been witnessing a spike in the number of dengue cases caused hospitalized and fatal incidents. Aedes aegypti mosquitoes spread dengue to people through bites. The most common symptom of dengue is fever, nausea, vomiting, rash, aches and pains (eye pain, typically behind the eyes,

muscle, joint, or bone pain). Severe dengue symptoms, for example vomiting blood or bleeding from nose and gum, is a medical emergency. It requires immediate medical care at a clinic or hospital.

WHO has distributed information materials about dengue which available for those who contact consular section of the Embassy as well through WHO website.



12 more tested Covid positive in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: As many as 12 people were tested COVID-19 positive in the district during the last 24 hours. According to the Health department spokesperson, 798 coronavirus tests were conducted in public and private sector labs during the same period. He said that total active cases in Faisalabad were recorded 170 while 25,708 patients had so far recovered from the disease. He said that 200 beds were allocated at the Allied Hospital, 52 at the DHQ Hospital and 150 at Government General Hospital Ghulam Muhammad Abad for COVID-19 patients. At present, 40 patients were under treatment at the Allied Hospital, 19 at DHQ Hospital and 6 at General Hospital. He further said that 70 confirmed patients were isolated at their homes in the district. – APP

Professional beggars huts demolished, 19 arrested

PESHAWAR: District Officer Social Welfare, Younas Afridi in a raid on Ring Road here on Thursday demolished temporary huts of professional beggars belonging to district Rajanpur of Punjab. The directives in this regard were issued by Commissioner Peshawar, Riaz Mehsud with the objective of purging provincial metropolises from professional beggars. During operation around 19 beggars were also arrested and FIRs were registered against them at Pahari Pura Police Station. Among the arrested, five were female who were shifted to Women Police Station. The beggars belonging to Rajan Pur and some areas from Sindh province had set up temporary huts near Ring Road. Commissioner Peshawar also issued directive for expulsion of arrested beggars from the province. He also appreciated efforts made by Younas Afridi in making the ongoing campaign successful. – APP

KP to operate underutilized health facilities under PPP

PESHAWAR: The provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has started homework to operate the underutilized primary and secondary healthcare facilities in some districts of the province under Public Private Partnership (PPP) in accordance with prevailing laws. The purpose of the initiative is the provision of better healthcare facilities to the people at grass-root level and improvement in overall service delivery in primary and secondary health facilities. This was told in a meeting held here the other day with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan in the chair, said an official handout issued here on Thursday. Provincial Health Minister Taimur Saleem Jhagra, Prin-

cipal Secretary to CM Amjad Ali Khan, Secretary Establishment Zakir Afridi, Secretary Law Abid Majeed, Secretary Health Tahir Orakzai and other relevant quarters of Health Department attended the meeting. The meeting reviewed reforms initiatives under taken in the health sector. The meeting took stock of the position impacts of reforms introduced, and deliberated upon matters related to further improve the healthcare service delivery system in the province. The meeting decided in principle to outsource the janitorial as well security services across all the secondary healthcare facilities and run the infections waste management system under PPP mode in the secondary healthcare facilities. – APP

CCPO appreciates policemen performance

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: A team of Dolphin Squad deputed at police station Kahna, on early morning Thursday, after taking action on a call at helpline 15, rounded up dacoits involved in looting the citizens during patrolling at Kahna area. The members of the dolphin squad chased the four dacoits on their two motorcycles and intercepted them near Dera Haji Abdul Rehman Kahna. The fleeing dacoits started firing at the dolphin squad personnel and during cross firing two dacoits identified afterwards as Mohsin and Talha were injured by the firing of their own companions. The injured dacoits were arrested and moved to the General Hospital for treatment. The police recovered motorcycle used in robbery attempts, two pistols and thousands of rupees from the arrested dacoits. An FIR had been registered in this regard at PS Kahna and special teams had been constituted to arrest the remaining two companions of the arrested dacoits.

28 criminals arrested, contraband seized

FAISALABAD: Police on Thursday arrested 28 criminals and recovered drugs and illegal weapons from their possession in the district during last 24 hours. According to police, raiding teams nabbed 9 drug pushers and recovered 0.3 Kg hashish, 0.1 Kg heroin and 96 litres liquor from their possession. The police also held 14 gamblers and recovered Rs. 4,870 from them. In a crackdown against illegal weapons, police arrested 5 persons and recovered 4 pistols one kalashnikov from them. Further investigation was underway, police said. – APP

Digital marketing crucial for women empowerment: Zainab

She said there are 4.4 billion SM users, , Instagram 1.7 billion active users, 95 million daily photos, 53 minutes average time, 71% millennials and 71% US businesses used this platform

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Digital Marketing is most innovative tool for women empowerment and FWCCI must exploit it for the mainstreaming of young talented and educated females, said Mrs. Saffora Zainab. She was delivering a special Session on digital marketing organized by Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. She said that marketing and promotion of business are entirely two different concepts and we must understand it to involve maximum women in this specialized sector. She said that digital marketing has gained importance and every body is taking interest in it. She said that after every 6 seconds, a new account has been created. She said there

are 4.4 billion SM users, , Instagram 1.7 billion active users, 95 million daily photos, 53 minutes average time, 71% millennials and 71% US businesses used this platform. Addressing the Session, Mrs. Nighat Shahid, President FWCCI said that she has

launched comprehensive program to sensitize women entrepreneurs to enter into digital marketing and become self-reliant instead of depending on their male members. She said that it is a new tool and young females must understand its benefits so that

they could independently launch their business of digital marketing. Mrs. Farhat Nisar, VP offered vote of thanks while Mrs. So-bia Aqeel, SVP, Mrs. Shama Ahmad, Hina Khan, Huma Khalid and others were present on the occasion.



Prayer ceremony for Ali Geelani and Dr. AQ Khan

DNA

HYDERABAD: A prayer ceremony was organized by Kashmir Youth Alliance to pay tribute to the Veteran Huriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Gilani Shaheed and Mohsin-e-Pakistan nuclear scientist Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan. More than 20 youths participated in the event held at the residence of Divisional President Kashmir Youth Alliance Hyderabad. The event was presided by the Kashmir Youth Alliance's Divisional President Muhammad Akhter, while the President of Union of Journalists Hyderabad Syed Sarwar Nadeem was the

chief guest. Addressing on the occasion, Syed Sarwar Nadeem said that, Syed Ali Gilani and Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan were patriots of Pakistan. He said, that the youth and the Pakistani nation salute these two great leaders. He added that history will always remember these legends.

Furthermore, on the occasion, Muhammad Akhter said, that Syed Ali Gilani is a name of ideology and resistance and he was a strong voice of Pakistan in the occupied valley of Jammu and Kashmir. He further said that the life of both is the guiding light for the youth of Kashmir and Pakistan. The Divisional General Sec-

retary of Kashmir Youth Alliance Muhammad Bilal was also present on the occasion. Participants included Pakistan Patriotic Youth President Wahab Riaz and other representatives. Qari Muhammad Farman, who was present on the occasion, said that Islam teaches to stand firm against oppression and barbarism. At the end of the ceremony, special prayers were offered for the prosperity and development of the country and for the independence of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The participants pledged to continue raising their voices for the oppressed Muslims of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.



Crackdown on unregistered, illegal printing presses on cards

PESHAWAR: The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has decided a crackdown on unregistered and illegal printing presses in the province. The decision was taken during a meeting of Press Registrar, IPR Department, Ansar Khali with the office bearers of the Frontier Printers & Publishers Associations here on Thursday. The crackdown would be carried out through district administration and the owners of unregistered and illegal printing presses could face penalties including the

closure of printing press, imprisonment and cash fines. Talking to the delegation, the Press Registrar directed for the registration of all printing presses in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and legal action against those failed in registration within the deadline given to them. On this occasion, the delegation of the Frontier Printers & Publishers Association called for the simplification of the process of declaration and proposed the provision of title to presses at district level. – APP

Over 4.27m people vaccinated in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: Over 4.27 million people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the district. District Health Officer Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Thursday 2,886,998 people were injected first dose while 1,323, 531 administered the second dose of vaccine. He said that 38,184 health workers were also given first dose while 23,640 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As of now 223,812 first doses and 149,208 second doses were in the stock in Faisalabad. He said that 37 vaccination centers and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad where registered people were being vaccinated. In order to facilitate the people these centers have been established in various areas of the city including Allied Hospital, District Head Quarters Hospital, Government General Hospital G.M Abad, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital Samanabad, Children Hospital, Sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Head Quarters Hospital Jarawal, Samundri, Tandlianwala, Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Chak Jhumra, Government General Hospital Chak 224-RB, he added. He further said that timing of these vaccination centers was 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. except Sports Complex Samanabad center which would remain open round the clock. – DNA

No progress without inclusive development

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: Addressing at a seminar organized by The University Azad Jammu and Kashmir, academics, economists, policymakers, and social scientists termed the report on inequality released by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as a roadmap for inclusive human development and equitable distribution of resources in Pakistan and its various geographical regions including Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan. Vice-Chancellor of Azad Jammu and Kashmir University Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi, Resident Representative of UNDP Pakistan Knut Ostby, AJK Secretary Information, Ms. Midhat Shehzad, Former Minister for Social Welfare Ms. Farzana Yaqub, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, Syed Ali Hussain Gillani, and others addressed the event. The event was attended by the Deans, Principal Officers, Heads of Departments, and a large number of students and teachers including the Registrar of the University Prof. Dr. Ayesha. Speaking on the occasion, the Vice-Chancellor of the UAJK, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi praised the Pakistan National



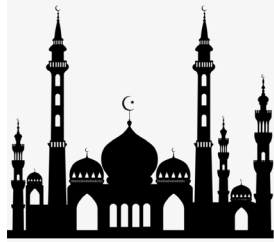
Human Development Report 2020 for identifying three Ps (Power, People, and Policy) as the sources of inequality. He however said that the effects of these are not the same across the region. He said that some of the human development indicators in AJK are much better than the indicators of provinces of Pakistan. Among these indicators, literacy rate, enrollment rate, life expectancy at birth, death per 1000 individuals, per capita income, and human development index are the indicators in which the perfor-

mance of AJK is better than the average performance of Pakistan. Emphasizing that education for all is the key to further reducing the inequality in society, the Vice-Chancellor said that the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir has adequately addressed the issue of gender disparity in education as at present there are 50.73% female and 49.27% male student enrolled in the university. In addition, he said last year we have successfully facilitated 2,500 students by providing them need-

based Ehesas Scholarships to make university education more affordable for them. Similarly, the proportion of student enrollment from rural areas is significantly higher in AJK, he added. Speaking on the occasion, Resident Representative of UNDP Pakistan, Mr. Knut Ostby said that the high literacy rate in Azad Kashmir and the ability and resilience of the people to deal with various natural calamities was commendable. He said that obstacles to human development can be removed not

by force but by adopting better policies. Azad Kashmir Information Secretary Midhat Shehzad in his address termed the UNDP report as a masterpiece and said that we have to address the problems of inequalities to achieve the goal of inclusive and sustainable development for all citizens of the country. Former Minister of Azad Kashmir Ms. Farzana Yaqub said that if we want to achieve the desired destination of development, we have to abandon the outdated and tried and tested tracks and adopt new paths that can lead us to reach our destination. Azad Kashmir is a small region in terms of area and population where 70% of women are educated but despite being educated they do not have employment opportunities, which is a great tragedy. Leading educationist and economist Dr. Muhammad Jameel in his address said that the long dream of development and prosperity in Pakistan cannot be realized as long as all people living in this country are provided equal opportunities for development. He said that we have made some progress in the field of education but due to the class system of education we have not been able to achieve the results that should have been achieved.

SERVICES



Namaz Timings	
Fajr.....	05:10 am
Zohr.....	11:52 am
Asr.....	03:29 pm
Maghrib.....	05:07 pm
Isha.....	06:33 pm



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



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Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125

Pakistan's environment is best for wind energy

Pakistan has vast potential in renewable energy generation but not utilizing the resources properly. Lis Rosenholm

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Denmark ambassador to Pakistan Ms. Lis Rosenholm has said that Pakistan's environment is best for wind energy, investing in wind and other climate friendly renewable energy resources Pakistan can reduce its expenditures on costly energy generation. He further added that Pakistan has vast potential in renewable energy generation but not utilizing the resources properly. The Danish ambassador was delivering a lecture on "Environmental Protection: Lessons from Denmark Experiences" organized by the International Relations Department of the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) on Thursday. Denmark in 1970, she said, has the highest import bill in terms of energy but today Denmark is self-sufficient in renewable energy generation to meet its demand. Ambassador said that Denmark is the pioneer to established environment ministry and since 1970 Denmark is working hard to eliminate CO2 from the environment. She said that all the stakeholders were taken into confidence before chalking out the environmental policy that's why 100 percent results were achieved in the implementation of the policy. Earlier, the ambassador met with Rector NUML Major General Muhammad Jaffar HI (M) (Retd) in his office and discussed the topics of mutual interest. Director General NUML Brig Syed Nadir Ali and Pro-Rector Academics Prof. Dr. Safer Awan also attended the meeting. Rector NUML presented a NUML memento to the honorable ambassador and thanked her for his visit and for sharing her expertise and knowledge with the students.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador-designate of Norway to Pakistan Albert Ilsaas paid a courtesy call on High Commissioner Farzana Zahir this morning at the High Commission. – DNA

EPI gets 23 vaccination vans from UNICEF

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on Thursday handed over 23 vans to the Federal Expanded Programme for Immunization (EPI) to be used for expanding essential immunization coverage in high-risk five mega cities and the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services, Dr. Faisal Sultan received the vans from UNICEF Representative in Pakistan, Ms. Aida Girma in presence of the World Health Organization (WHO) Representative, Dr. Palitha Mahipala. Addressing the ceremony, Dr. Faisal said that with funding of around 537,000 US dollars from Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, a total of 30 vehicles, 23 Suzuki vans and 7 Hilux vans, were to be handed over by UNICEF to EPI for expanding immunization services in high-risk districts, under-served areas and densely populated urban areas with low capacities. While 23 Suzuki vans were handed over today while remaining seven vehicles are in the process of procurement. "UNICEF has been supporting EPI in terms of procurement of vaccines, cold chain management and raising awareness about the importance of immunization so that communities could benefit from the high quality of services being provided at health facilities and at their doorstep during campaigns," said Aida Girma, UNICEF Representative. "The vaccination vans handed over today to EPI will help expand these services. We are encouraged by the dynamic leadership of the Ministry of National Health Services and EPI and are grateful to our donors such as Gavi for their financial support as we push forward to achieve the shared objective of keeping every child in Pakistan, alive, healthy, and thriving," UNICEF Representative added. Easily identifiable through EPI branding, each of these vans would carry a team of health professionals provided by the respective district health department, including a vaccinator, Lady Health Visitor, community midwife, and a social mobilizer along with a standard kit of medicines and equipment. Each team will be able to provide health and hygiene services including vaccination, vitamin A supplementation, de-worming, antenatal care, screening of nutritional status, provision of micronutrient supplements and behavioral change communication messages.



Int'l community should admire Pak's peaceful nuclear program

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: "PAEC is a leading organisation developing national and international collaborations to enhance the applications of nuclear technology for achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Pakistan," Dr Muhammad Naeem, Chairman, Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) said this in

General ISSI, stated that while the nuclear capability provided security from the Indian aggression, it is also serving the people of Pakistan in every sector including energy, environment, agriculture and medicine. Earlier in his introductory remarks, Malik Qasim Mustafa, Director ACDC-ISI, said that Pakistan is making use of peaceful nuclear technology in almost all sectors including ener-

hensive overview of "Nuclear Power Generation and Energy Security" in Pakistan, Mr Parvez Butt, former Chairman PAEC, said that nuclear power is a mature technology and sustainable energy option. It is an essential part of the solution to the energy crisis in Pakistan, as it contributes to i) stabilizing electricity prices; ii) enhancing energy security; iii) and a clean environment. In his remarks on "Appli-

technique innovation and the advanced training of scientists and experts. Mr Asghar Ali Khan, former Director, National Centre for Non-destructive Testing talked about "Application of Nuclear Technologies in Industry." He sketched out the various industrial applications of nuclear techniques like non-destructive testing (NDT), radio-gauges, radiotracers, radiation processing, materials analy-



his keynote address at the Webinar on "The Role of Pakistan's Peaceful Nuclear Programme in Socioeconomic Development." The Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted the webinar on November 11, 2021. While welcoming the guests, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director

gy, agriculture, industry, medical, environment and other related areas to bring the socioeconomic development of the country. There are around 84 research and education institutes, 88 medical radiation facilities, 214 industrial radiation facilities, 5170 diagnostic X-ray facilities and 347 other radiation facilities are operating in Pakistan. While providing a compre-

cation of Nuclear Technologies in Agriculture," Dr Tariq Mahmud Shah, Director, Nuclear Institute for Agriculture and Biology (NIAB), highlighted climate change, yield stagnation, declining soil fertility, blasts and rusts as emerging threats. To augment the application of nuclear technologies in the agriculture sector, Pakistan should concentrate on mutation

sis and characterisation. While expressing her views on "Use of Nuclear Technologies in the Health Sector," Dr Shazia Fatima, Head of Nuclear Medicine Department, NORI, said that for a common man the word 'nuclear' is a synonym of 'destruction'. There is a need to change the narrative and create awareness about the beneficial health applications of nuclear technology.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Bulgaria in a meeting with Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry. – DNA

Obesity rate doubled among children in Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) Major General (retd) Masood-ur-Rehman Kayani Thursday said obesity was

a major cause of heart, diabetes, cancer and other diseases, and one of the major causes of obesity was the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages. "Choosing healthy foods protects us from deadly diseases, sugar sweetened beverages are not necessities of life, their increasing use is making our children, adults and women sick, the government should take effective measures to reduce the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages," he said while addressing a meeting

of PANAH civil society. PANAH General Secretary Sana Ullah Ghuman hosted the event. Major General (retd) Muhammad Ashraf Khan, Dr. Abdul Qayyum, Squadron Leader Ghulam Abbas, Chairperson Afshan Tehseen Bajwa the National Commission on the Rights of the Child, Rukhsana Nazi, a large number of civil society participants attended the meeting. Sana Ullah Ghuman, General Secretary and Director Operations of PANAH, said that last 37 years PANAH

had been educating the people about deadly diseases including heart. "Our goal is to be a part of a prosperous Pakistan. Our daily routine has negated healthy diet, walking, exercise. Non-communicable diseases continue to increase gradually," he added. He said obesity was a major cause of heart, diabetes, cancer and other diseases, and one of the major causes of obesity was the consumption of Sugar Sweetened Beverages. The Sugar Sweetened Beverages industry claims to

pay Rs 72 billion in revenue. While Rs 428 billion is spent annually only on diseases related to obesity. "We are misled, therefore this practice should be increased to reduce the consumption of Sugar Sweetened Beverages, which cause diseases, so that we can be protected from diseases," he said. Chairperson National Commission on the Rights of the Child Afshan Tehseen Bajwa and Other civil society participants said that we all had to work for promoting healthy food. – DNA

Sinopharm, Sinovac approved for kids above 12

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) has said that Chinese vaccines Sinopharm and Sinovac have been approved by NCOC Health Expert Committee. According to a tweet on Thursday, the vaccines will be administered to children above 12 years of age from November 15 onwards. Now, these vaccines will also be available in addition to already approved Pfizer for children above 12 years, it added.

Rupee closes at Rs 174.18 against dollar

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The exchange rate of the Pakistan rupee weakened by Rs 1.26 against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Thursday and closed at Rs174.18 as compared to the previous day's closing of Rs172.92. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market were recorded at Rs174.5 and Rs 176.5 respectively. Similarly, the price of the euro was depreciated by 38 paisas and closed at Rs 199.68 against the last day's trading of Rs 200.06, the State Bank of Pakistan reported. The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 1.52, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.13 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 233.01 as compared to its last closing of Rs234.14. The exchange rates of Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal increased by 34 paisas each to close at Rs 47.42 and Rs 46.44 respectively.

IGP for crackdown against criminals

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil urRehman Thursday directed the heads of police stations to step up efforts against criminals' gangs. During his visit at three police stations Khanna, Koral and Karachi Company, he received details on registration of crimes. Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations) and other senior police officials accompanied the IGP. He checked the performance of front desks and inquired visitors about behavior of policemen with them. The IGP directed the deputed staff to adopt decent attitude with visitors and guide them properly in registration of their cases. "Registration of FIR is the right of people and delay in lodging complaints or misbehavior with citizens would not be tolerated at all," he remarked. He instructed the DIG and SSP (Operations) to immediately remove and proceed against all those SHO's against whom there were complainants. He also directed action against all officials who were unable to effective preventive measures against crime. – APP

Roti Rs10, Naan Rs13 notification

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ali has notified the rates of Roti and Naan and directed the authorities concerned to launch operation against the violators of the official rates. The administration has fixed Rs 10, price of 100 grams Pateri Roti and Rs 13, rate of 120 grams Khameeri Roti and Naan. According to a district administration spokesman, the Price control magistrate on the directives of DC had conducted raids to check prices of Roti and Naan in different areas and took action against the profiteers. FIRs were lodged against five nanbais in Naseerabad and New Town police stations for violating the official rates, she added. The administration also notified the rate of imported sugar, Rs 90 per kg, local sugar Rs 89.75 and Chakki Ata, wheat flour Rs 58 per kg. – APP

Briefs

HEC online degree equivalence facility

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) on Thursday launched online facility for equivalence of degrees awarded by Pakistani universities and degree awarding institutions to facilitate the graduates.

According to HEC, this is a completely paperless system, and the applicants will no longer be required to visit HEC offices or send their documents to HEC for equivalence of their qualifications. They can apply from their homes by creating online profile at 'eservices.hec.gov.pk' and upload HEC attested educational documents from Bachelor's onwards along with paid fee challan. The applications will be processed through online system, and the applicants will be issued system-generated equivalence letters through email. The new equivalence portal is a robust and hassle-free system, embedded with all the security features. Besides, applicants will be intimated about the status of their applications at every stage through system-generated emails. — APP

3097 dengue patients surfaced since January

RAWALPINDI: As many as 25 new dengue positive patients were admitted to two hospitals during the last 24 hours, while five patients were in critical condition at Holy Family Hospital (HFH).

This was stated by District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control, Dr Sajjad Mehmood, here on Thursday.

"This year around 3097 dengue cases were brought to three public sector hospitals of the city, who were provided required treatment and 3051 patients had been discharged after recovery". During the last 24 hours, he informed that the HFH had registered 20 cases, while five patients were registered with Benazir Bhutto Hospital(BBH).

"Presently, 37 dengue patients are under treatment in HFH out of which 24 are positive, six positive out of 11 in BBH and 16 confirmed cases out of the total 22 admitted in DHQ hospital," Dr Sajjad said. He added that there were 274 beds available at the allied hospitals to deal with the dengue patients, including 175 beds at HFH, 69 in DHQ hospital and 30 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, while 70 were occupied yet. Dr Sajjad said dengue fever cases had dropped drastically with weather conditions during the last week. However, around 20 to 30 cases were being reported yet, earlier, the number of daily patients was 70 to 80 daily. — APP

Mercantile exports up by 24.7%

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The country's mercantile exports witnessed an increase of 24.7 percent during the first four months of current financial year 2021-22, as compared to corresponding period of last year. According to an official Twitter handle of the Commerce Ministry, the country's total exports stood at \$9.44 billion during July-October (2021-22) as compared to the exports of \$7.57 billion during July-October (2020-21), showing an increase of around \$2 billion. The product contributes in positive growth includes readymade garments, home textiles, cotton fabric, rice, cotton yarn, jerseys & cardigans and synthetic fabrics. The services exports also witnessed an increase of 23.2 percent to \$1.572 billion from \$1.276 billion during the first quarter of financial year 2021-22. Similarly, during July-September (2021-22) the IT exports grew by 42 percent to \$635 million from \$445 million last year whereas business services exports also rose by 29 percent to \$394 million from \$304 million last year, in addition the travel services exports increased by 72 percent to \$141 million from \$82 million last year.

Innovation needed to mitigate climate change challenges

QAU in collaboration with COMSTECH working on developing consortium of universities to share knowledge and expertise: VC QAU



MUHAMMAD JABRAAN

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH celebrated "World Science Day" on Wednesday. Prof. Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman FRS, Chairman, Prime Minister Task Force for Science and Technology graced the occasion as chief guest. He said that it is alarming that we are unable to see the light at the end of tunnel in case of implementing guidelines addressing climate change. He said at the moment we are not succeeding. The past actions of nations show the clear intent that how much they are serious towards climate change mitigation. Prof. Rahman talked about number of tech-

nologies available to use to address climate change effects. He suggested that to use new technologies, OIC states need to invest in S&T, innovation and entrepreneurship. He stressed the need of awareness of issues at hand and the technologies available to deal with them. Mr. Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, climate advisor, planning commission of Pakistan, informed that the temperature increase by 1.5 degrees is considered bad but by 2 degrees it would be disastrous. He said we are way behind Paris agreement. Mr. Sheikh said that it is good to share that the global discourse on climate change is now driven by science. Mr. Sheikh also mentioned that OIC states will be affect-

ed by climate change events as well. He suggested to prepare in advance and plan to mitigate climate change challenges. Dr. Muhammad Ali Shah, Vice-Chancellor, QAU said that we in collaboration with COMSTECH working on developing consortium of universities to share knowledge and expertise and climate change could be a part of it. Dr. Shah suggested that information technology and sustainable development must be included in curriculum of all fields of studies so that we can equip young generation with high impact modern knowledge to compete in the world. Director General IOFS, Mr. Yerlan Baidaul, shared the vision, mission and activities of IOFS. He said climate change have deep

impact on all spheres of life and we have to collectively prepare for it. Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of science and science communication to the masses for active engagement with new technologies and innovations available. He stressed the need of science and technology linkages with the society for development. Prof. Choudhary said that S&T has played key role in global transformation and help the humanity to act beyond the limitations. The event was graced with the presence of Ambassadors of OIC states, Vice Chancellors of several universities and large number of students and researchers.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman STZA Amer Hashmi holds a meeting with the ambassador of Sweden to Pakistan Henrik Persson at his residence, followed by delegation-level talks. The Ambassador was briefed about the initiative of establishing Special Technology Zones (STZs). — DNA

Govt. to ensure legislation for national interest

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Babar Awan on Thursday said the government is committed to ensure legislation for national interest and welfare of the people in joint session of parliament which has been postponed for few days. The Adviser in a presser said the incumbent federal government has reforms agenda for the welfare of people and it is ready to engage the opposition for negotiations on legislative proposals to be tabled in joint session of Parliament. He said the government would make all possible efforts to develop consensus with the opposition on pro-public agenda and voting in Parliament would decide in case of any difference on it. He said that joint session has been postponed for time being and the opposition would be engaged to assist in legislation for national interests. He said that Speaker's office and Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs were contacted for joint session and it was agreed to talk with opposition on legislation related to electoral reforms and welfare of public. Dr. Babar Awan said that a joint parliamentary committee has been already constituted to consider the electoral reforms bill including the Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and the Elections (Second Amendment) Bill, 2021.

ment would decide in case of any difference on it.

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Kazakh envoy for bolstering bilateral trade with Pak

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan said that his country was eager to bolster bilateral trade with Pakistan as increasing trade cooperation between the two countries would be helpful for the entire Central Asian Region. He said this while addressing the business community during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), said a press release issued here. He said that the current level of economic cooperation between Kazakhstan and Pakistan was much below their potential and called for enhancing B2B contacts between the private sectors of both countries to explore new avenues of two-way trade promotion.

Kazakh envoy said that promoting integration and connectivity between Pakistan and Central Asia would help unleash economic opportunities in the region. He emphasized for establishing a Pak-Kazakh business council to further improve business contacts between the two countries. He said that the President of Kazakhstan has accepted the invitation of Prime Minister Imran Khan and would be visiting Pakistan in the next few months that would contribute towards further strengthening trade and economic ties between the two countries. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, ICCI said that Pakistan was keen to further expand bilateral trade with Kazakhstan as both countries could do trade in many



areas. He said that with the completion of the CPEC project, Pakistan was destined to become a regional hub for transit trade and investment and emphasized that it was the right time for the Kazakh investors to explore JVs and investment opportunities in our country. He highlighted the importance of setting up a Pak-Kazakh Joint Chamber of Commerce & Industry to promote business linkages between the two countries, which was highly appreciated by the Ambassador.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh, Senior Vice President ICCI said the business community of Pakistan wanted to tap all potential areas of business cooperation with Kazakhstan. He highlighted that Pakistan's pivotal position provided the shortest access between the land-locked Central Asian States and the Arabian Sea and promoting trade relations with Pakistan would be highly beneficial for Kazakhstan. Muhammad Faheem Khan, Vice President ICCI said that many Pakistani products including marble & granite, pharmaceuticals, surgical instruments, IT, fruits and vegetables, rice, textiles, sports goods, leather products could find good market in Kazakhstan.

Test for Taliban as Afghanistan close to crisis

The situation in Afghanistan has several dimensions, nothing is more urgent at this time than to extend humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan: DG ISSI

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI) in collaboration with the Middle East Monitor (MEMO), UK held a webinar on "Conversations on Afghanistan: Middle East's Perspectives" on November 10, 2021. The distinguished speakers included: Ambassador Ali Awadh Asseri, Former Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, Dr. Daud Abdullah, Director Middle East Monitor (MEMO), Mr. Hashmat Moslih, independent political analyst with special focus on Afghanistan and Mr. Ahmad Shah Durrani, author of An Outside the Box Look at Afghanistan: New Ideas for Lasting Peace and Stability. During her introductory remarks, Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA stated that the real test for the Taliban has only just begun - which is not confined to the capture of power, but is more about legitimacy, recognition, and performance. With every passing day, Afghanistan is inching closer to a humanitarian crisis with its economy moving in a downward spiral. Provision of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan by certain regional countries is reassuring however,



it is not enough to sustain the Afghan population. The latest developments in Afghanistan have been capturing the close attention of the international community, and the Middle East at large, especially the Gulf States. Important players in the region, such as Qatar, UAE and Saudi Arabia, none of which have recognized the new regime, view the situation in Afghanistan with uncertainty, primarily with concerns revolving around whether the Taliban will be able to deliver on their pledges of reform pertaining to governance, human/women rights, and whether the group will be able to curb the possible regrouping and consolidation of terrorist groups. During his welcome remarks, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad

Chaudhry, Director General ISSI, said that while the situation in Afghanistan has several dimensions, nothing is more urgent at this time than to extend humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. He said that members of the international community, especially Pakistan and other neighbours of Afghanistan, have a very special responsibility to help the people of Afghanistan. He further said that the second issue of concern is how to persuade the Taliban to honour the commitments they had previously made. Unless they make good on their assurances, Afghanistan will become even more vulnerable to terrorist outfits, he said. Ambassador Ali Awadh Asseri was of the view that Afghanistan is an important Muslim country and it

has suffered tremendously during the past two decades. Afghanistan should not be left alone and countries such as Pakistan should muster a plan to avoid a situation in which Afghanistan is completely destabilized. Moreover, he said that Afghanistan should not be allowed to become a safe haven for terrorist elements and that a united and stable Afghanistan is the need of the hour. He also said that at the moment, Saudi Arabia is reluctant to take any step without having prior assurance from the Taliban. Pakistan should take a lead in dealing with the state of affairs in Afghanistan as compared to any other country since no one knows Afghanistan better than Pakistan. Despite the situation in Afghanistan, focus should be on collaboration rather than

competition. He also stated that since Pakistan has the potential to play such an instrumental role, it should convene a conference on Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia would happily take part. Dr. Daud Abdullah while shedding light on the situation, was of the view that the time has come to shift focus on the Afghan people and on preserving the integrity of the Afghan people. In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood stated that one thing that stands out in Afghanistan is the humanitarian crisis which calls for immediate assistance. A warning has been given by many organizations including the UN. While talking about the Middle East, the focus is on the Gulf, Iran, Turkey so far as Afghanistan is concerned. The US is changing its policies in the Middle East and has taken steps to convey that it is shifting its focus towards the Asian Pacific. New developments and alliances are emerging due to changing US policies and the Gulf is maintaining the role of mediator. He further said that the US is not going to completely evacuate from Middle East due to the threat of resurgence of terrorism, it shall instead have to maintain an over-the-horizon counter terrorism policy.

AIU extends admission deadline

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) has extended admission deadline for the programs offered in the second phase of autumn 2021 semester till December 6, 2021.

According to AIU, these programs include BA General (Associate Degree in Arts), B Com (Associate Degree in Commerce) BBA, 2-Year Associate Degree in Education, BS in ten disciplines, 1-Year PGDs as well as 1/1.5/2.5 and 4-Year B Ed programs. Extension in deadline has been granted upon receiving many applications from those students who could not deposit fee during the stipulated time because of rush at designated bank branches.

Fresh candidates can apply for admission with late fee charges whereas continuing students have been facilitated to enroll themselves without paying late fee charges. Moreover, admissions in MA/MSc programs are also in progress till December 6.

It is pertinent to mention that fresh and continuing students can apply for admission via online mode only. Those students who do not have internet facilities are required to visit their respective regional centers and seek help from facilitation desks as well as use computer laboratories free of cost.

Tributes paid to Allama Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a seminar paid rich tributes to poet-philosopher, Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal, saying that his ideology was the driving force to awaken Muslims of sub-continent to create their homeland. This ideology had also an impact on Kashmiris who have been struggling for right to self-determination, the speakers said while addressing a workshop on 'The Ideology of Sir Iqbal and Kashmir Dispute' organized by Institute of Multi-track Dialogue, Development and Diplomatic Studies (IIDDSS) in collaboration with Government Degree College Muzaffarabad to mark Iqbal Day. Speaking on the occasion, Former Chief Justice, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Justice Syed Manzoor Hussain Geelani while paying tribute to the great poet stressed the need for unity to take the freedom struggle of Kashmir to its logical end. He highlighted the importance of legally understanding the arguments of the India to prepare counter arguments to be presented at different forums. He said, India currently had shrunk all political space for peaceful resistance while imposing 200 new laws to give free hand to its occupation forces to suppress freedom struggle. — APP

ITP action against under age drivers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) took prompt action against underage motorcyclists and drivers during ongoing month and imposed fines on them. Following directions of Inspector General of Police Islamabad Qazi Jamil ul Rehman, ITP's traffic education and enforcement campaign is underway against underage and those involved in rash driving and violations of traffic rules. Under supervision of Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Muhammad Sarfraz Virk, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSPs) in all traffic zones are ensuring strict action against those violating traffic rules. Special squads have been constituted by him for the purpose which are performing duties at important avenues and boulevards of the city. Along with, police teams from Education Wing remain present on important roads and gave safety tips to road users. Following the efforts of these squads, police said that Several underage motorcyclists driving bikes were fined and while bikes were also impounded at various police stations.

A strong opposition

MORE often than not, National Assembly sessions become more of a political battlefield than a platform for debate and discussion. We have seen several sessions where the opposition walks out without any attempt to engage in good faith, or where the treasury benches do not let the opposition benches speak, or where both the government and opposition members do not bother to attend the assembly sessions, leading to dismissal of important sessions. This is why several necessary bills take so long to be tabled and the legislative process is delayed. Only when there is an urgent deadline does the National Assembly in the last few days push through a bill, without leaving sufficient time for discussion and debate over the proposed law.

The last few days have become a rare example of what productive National Assembly sessions look like. On Monday, the National Assembly passed seven bills. While one of those bills was a proposed amendment that the government had been considering for a long time, that of the extension of the NAB chairman, some of the other bills passed along were those which had been widely advocated for by the civil society—including one bill related to the protection of journalists, another law on strengthening protection against harassment of women at workplaces, legislation on the National Commission on the Rights of Child, and amendments to the juvenile justice system and criminal laws. Tuesday's session was also strong, from the opposition side. The opposition first defeated the government with a vote on a private member's bill aimed at preventing politicians from changing their parties. Then the opposition again defeated the treasury members on a similar motion on a bill seeking to enhance punishment for those who passed obnoxious remarks against women. This is what a good parliament is supposed to look like—an active government, with a strong opposition, which when united, can defeat majority proposals in order to strengthen. It is hoped that the parliament, especially the opposition members, keep this energy in the coming times and not let the government get away with a unilateral approach.



What can the UN do for Afghanistan now?

Sultan Barakat

The UN can also play a crucial role in convening regional states to resolve urgent issues obstructing more effective humanitarian response. As a landlocked country, Afghanistan must rely on neighbourly cooperation for aid supplies. Pakistan has long been a natural choice for relief organisations to procure aid items

AS Afghanistan continues to slip into a devastating economic and humanitarian crisis, there is one global actor that can help the country pull through: the United Nations. While its member states continue to debate whether to recognise the Taliban's government, the UN can still play a significant role in supporting the Afghan people. In fact, as an international institution, it often takes on the responsibilities that no single nation wants to bear. Despite the fact that it was excluded from the US-Taliban talks and intra-Afghan peace process, the UN is now seen as the primary avenue for humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan. If individual states overpower and undermine the UN by preventing the institution from engaging with the Taliban, glaring weaknesses in the UN system will inevitably come to the surface. As the world waits for the Taliban to prove that it has changed, the UN also needs to change its approach and would do well to consider the following messages. First, it is important to recognise that there remains as much need for a political settlement in Afghanistan today as there was before the Taliban took over Kabul. Rather than write off the Afghan peace process as dead in the water, it is more constructive to view it as a multi-year, adaptive and ongoing process of bringing all sides together to build bridges and reach a common

understanding of the future of Afghanistan. Given this imperative to reach a durable peace in Afghanistan, the UN must ensure that humanitarian and development responses support rather than detract from the peace process. In so doing, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus offers a powerful framework for advancing more integrated approaches that break down the traditional siloes of the international aid system in responding to the Afghan crisis. Second, the UN can lead the way in promoting a developmental approach to humanitarian aid. The issue of food security is critical as Afghanistan is already experiencing severe food shortages and could face widespread famine. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a severe drought this summer affected millions of farmers in Afghanistan. To avert a further deterioration in the country's food security crisis, there is a need for urgent action. Yet humanitarian business-as-usual models of importing prepackaged food are a lost opportunity to support agricultural livelihoods and early economic recovery. Alongside aid distribution points, there is a need for aid collection points across the country to gather food where it is available. In the coming months, the UN can support small-holder farming through public food procurement, replenish food pipelines, and facilitate food transportation, thus contributing to agricultural resilience and transformation in Afghanistan. Third, meeting humanitarian needs at scale will require bold and innovative forms of financing to address the multi-dimensional crisis and challenging operating environment in Afghanistan without establishing dependency. In October, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) announced the creation of a People's Economy Fund that will provide access to cash to vulnerable Afghans and micro-businesses which can bridge livelihood support and macroeconomic stabilisation. While this is a welcome move, there is a need for resource mobilisation at a much greater scale. The UN can also play a crucial role in convening regional states to resolve urgent issues obstructing more effective humanitarian response. As a landlocked country, Afghanistan must rely on neighbourly cooperation for aid supplies. Pakistan has long been a natural choice for relief organisations to procure aid items. While the route is vital, it is risky to be so heavily dependent on one border. The UN can help diversify aid channels, including through Uzbekistan and Iran. Fourth, there is an urgent need to protect 20 years of investment in state and societal capacities in Afghanistan. This means that the country needs assistance beyond life-saving aid. In doing

so, it is imperative that foreign aid should avoid bypassing existing structures, in particular in the education and health sectors, which are critical to socioeconomic stability and employ a large number of women. In mid-October, Deputy US Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo reiterated that he envisaged no circumstances under which the Taliban could access its frozen assets. Unstable cash flows and low reserves, coupled with a restricted ability to receive aid and financing, will create an opportunity for "terrorist" groups to manipulate aggrieved or impoverished people. The UN can play a critical role in acting as a good-faith monitor in a phased approach to unfreezing the Afghan assets in order to help pay badly needed salaries in health and education and address the deteriorating socioeconomic situation of the majority of Afghans. Fifth, given the lack of trust between the Taliban and the international community, the UN is best suited to mediate a step-by-step roadmap towards strengthening humanitarian and development cooperation. The UN has led by example with UNICEF coordinating access to education with the Taliban and has plans to directly finance Afghan teachers. Both UNICEF and the World Health Organization have also initiated polio immunisation campaigns with the Taliban's support: in October, the Taliban allowed a national polio vaccination campaign led by the UN to proceed, and said it is committed to allowing women to participate as front-line workers. In a promising step towards more full-blown development cooperation, deputy prime minister Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar recently met with Achim Steiner, the director of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in Doha where they discussed Afghanistan's current economic crisis. In short, as UN agencies are already coordinating humanitarian projects with the Taliban, they are well-positioned to draft a mutual agreement over the steps needed to establish a functional partnership between the Afghan government and the international community. Considering the vital role that Qatar has played as a go-between for the Taliban and the international community, it is only logical that it too would have a key role to play in facilitating this process. In so doing, there is a need for a clear framework with measurable expectations and milestones that will trigger reciprocal actions. On the Taliban side, this could include providing safe access, ensuring aid is not siphoned off, guaranteeing the rights of women, and the formation of a genuinely inclusive government representing all Afghans.

Courtesy Al Jazeera

Israel fails to suppress human rights defenders

Ray Hanania

Israel's defenders assert that it is singled out for criticism and that many Palestinian organizations engage in human rights abuses. The difference is, of course, that Israel is a sovereign government, and state sovereignty mandates an adherence to human rights...

IN 1975, the UN adopted a resolution that accurately described Zionism, a political movement, as "a form of racism." A total of 72 nations supported Resolution 3379, while 35 nations opposed it. Another 32 nations abstained, likely fearing repercussions from the US, which sends billions of dollars of foreign aid to Israel. The decision to designate Zionism as a form of racism came one year after the Palestine Liberation Organization was granted observer status, which ultimately opened the door to negotiations with Israel in the 1980s and the Oslo Accords in

the 1990s. These eventually collapsed as a result of opposition from political extremists in Israel's government. One of Israel's many demands was the revocation of the 1975 anti-Zionist declaration. In 1991, it was revoked by the UN in consideration of new efforts to achieve peace. Similarly, the PLO agreed to amend its charter to allow for the recognition of Israel. Although the peace accords were killed off — along with their co-author, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin — the transitions that took place created new perceptions of Israel's human rights abuses. During that period, many human rights organizations were formed, including B'Tselem, the Israeli Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories. B'Tselem and other organizations went on to shine a bright spotlight on Israel's human rights abuses with the use of facts, video evidence and eyewitness testimony. Israel's defenders assert that it is singled out for criticism and that many Palestinian organizations engage in human rights abuses. The difference is, of course, that Israel is a sovereign government, and state sovereignty mandates an adherence to human rights and the rule of law — things Israel has consistently ignored. Last month, Israel declared B'Tselem and five other human rights groups to be "terrorist organizations." However, B'Tselem continues to enjoy widespread support among the international human rights and civil rights communities. It responded to the Israeli designation by insisting there was no evidence that would justify such a move. If it wasn't for these six organizations, the world would not know about many of Israel's atrocities against unarmed civilians. Last week, for example, B'Tselem revealed that Israeli sol-

diers had in August shot dead a 15-year-old boy in the Balata Refugee Camp. The boy, Imad Al-Hashash, was shot in the head simply for filming the soldiers from the roof of his home. The Israeli military issued a statement claiming the boy was shot as a result of a "violent" conflict that erupted as the soldiers were leaving the refugee camp. But B'Tselem proved that to be another Israeli lie. Whenever Israel wants to brush aside a horrendous atrocity, it fabricates reports of violence that it claims were started by Palestinian "terrorists." Normally in such situations, one would expect the media to investigate and report the truth of these violent confrontations. But, in Israel, journalists are censored and forbidden from providing the details of military missions. Most have been conditioned to remove such details from their reporting. So the burden of exposing the truth instead falls on the shoulders of courageous organizations like B'Tselem, which investigated the Balata incident and declared that there had been no violent incident whatsoever — an Israeli soldier simply saw the boy filming and decided to shoot him in the head. This doesn't mean there will be any consequences for that action. However, the Al-Hashash murder adds weight to the growing evidence of Israeli human rights violations, which might help the rest of the world better understand why these six human rights organizations were designated as terrorist groups. As a result of its declaration, Israel can arrest these organizations' leaders, employees and volunteers, and confiscate their equipment, including evidence of Israeli atrocities. But they continue to work to expose Israel's lies.

— Courtesy Arab News

Trade policy framework

AFTER a delay of two years, the Strategic Trade Policy Framework of 2020 to 2025 has been approved by the cabinet. The framework intends to increase the capacity of enterprises to produce, distribute and sell their products much more efficiently. There is much to be desired from the government considering that we are already two years behind on the progress that could have been achieved. Without an explicit export target, the framework seems to lack a clear direction and an overarching goal. Regardless of this, we now have the next three years to look forward to and the government must direct its resources and attention towards ensuring that our economic standing improves and regional connectivity increases. If we consider our performance from 2009 to 2018, the three policy frameworks that were introduced failed to meet objectives or enhance exports. This points towards the fact that the aims were either too ambitious or that the sectors of the economy were not supported in the ways that were promised. Learning from this experience, the government has set out to emphasise the importance of product diversification as well as the reduction of costs through tariff rationalisation and preferential trade agreements. Logistical aspects are being factored in, along with strategies to enhance ties with Central Asian republics, Turkey, Iran, Europe and Russia. This all seems to be growth in the right direction, provided that the government is able to empower industries enough. It is worth noting that the provision of clear and distinct goals is vital for progress to materialise. Without a realistic export target, the drive towards improvising the export paradigm remains minimal and too much leeway is given to industries with regards to defending poor performance. This must be rectified and already, the cabinet has asked the finance division to submit a target to the Economic Coordination Committee for approval. With the framework already being finalised, we cannot afford to wait years for this approval so the relevant divisions must also act urgently so that a complete agenda can be put forth.

Whither Muslim solidarity and moderation?

James M Dorsey

Saudi Arabia's proposition of a more tolerant 'moderate' Islam is further called into question by its failure to legalize non-Muslim worship and the opening of non-Muslim houses of worship in the kingdom as well as its equation of atheism with terrorism. The Houthi-controlled Yemen Press Agency reported that a Yemeni journalist had been sentenced in late October to 15 years in prison for promoting atheism

FORMER Saudi intelligence chief Prince Turki AlFaisal Al Saud must have gotten his tenses mixed up when he asserted in a recently published memoir that no one should underestimate the political importance of Muslims' commitment to helping other Muslims. Prince Turki's memoir is focused on Afghanistan, a major preoccupation during his tenure as head of the General Intelligence Department (GID), the kingdom's foreign intelligence service from 1977 to August 2001, one month before the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington. "No reader of this book should underestimate the moral and emotional commitment of Muslims to help other Muslims; this is a very powerful element in modern politics," Prince Turki wrote. Prince Turki, a long-standing proponent of reform within the kingdom's ruling family, was no doubt correct in writing about significant Saudi and Muslim support in the 1980s for Pakistan and the Afghan mujahedeen in their jihad against Soviet forces that had invaded the Central Asian state. The jihad gave birth to the Muslim world's equivalent of the Communists' International Brigades in the Spanish civil war but with far more far-reaching and long-lasting consequences. It seems difficult to maintain that Muslims still sustain their commitment to assist their brethren in need four decades later as Muslims experience one of the worst, if not the worst post-World War Two period of Islamophobia. Anti-Muslim sentiment ranges from the mainstreaming of bias and prejudice to what critics call cultural genocide. Yet, much of the Muslim world, either intimidated by China's coercive economic and diplomatic tactics or intent on garnering brownie points on a perceived common cause, has shied away from criticizing the People's Republic's brutal crackdown on Turkic Muslims in the north-western province of Xinjiang. Some countries, including Saudi Arabia, have gone as far as justifying what amounts to a frontal assault on a Muslim and Uyghur religious and ethnic identity. To be fair, Saudi Arabia has demanded movement on the Palestinian issue before it follows the United Arab Emirates and three other Arab countries in establishing diplomatic relations with Israel. Palestinians question whether the kingdom will maintain its position once King Salman surrenders the reigns or passes and is most likely succeeded by his son, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Moral and emotional Muslim commitments may not be uppermost in Prince Mohammed's calculations. The crown prince is expected to attribute greater importance to the potential boost that recognition of Israel would give to Saudi Arabia and his troubled personal relations with the United States than to the Palestinian issue. In

Prince Mohammed's mind relations with Israel may be one way of compensating for a less committed US defence posture in the Middle East. Relations with the United States have been strained by the Saudi conduct of its 6.5-year-old war in Yemen, the 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul and a crackdown on dissent at home. As a result, the Biden administration has, with few exceptions, boycotted Prince Mohammed in its dealings with the kingdom. Saudi Arabia's tarnished human rights record has not just complicated the kingdom's relationship with the United States and Europe but also impacted its effort to put its lingering ultra-conservative religious past behind it and project itself as a beacon of a moderate, pluralistic interpretation of Islam. In doing so, Saudi Arabia is competing with the UAE, Qatar, Turkey, Iran, and Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama to define the faith in the 21st century in what amounts to a battle for the soul of Islam as well as a competition for leadership of the Muslim world, a long-standing Saudi foreign policy goal. The Saudi-funded King Abdullah International Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) struggled since its opening in 2012 in Vienna with the association to a kingdom that denied women their rights and violated human rights. The era of Prince Mohammed, despite witnessing significant enhancements of women's rights, social liberalisation, and a degree of religious outreach, did little to improve the centre's image. The killing of Mr. Khashoggi and the brutal crackdown on dissent forced the centre earlier this year to move its operations from Vienna to Geneva. "The irony is...that, as the Gulf governments promote their 'tolerance'—which today is a popular commodity in the Gulf—they uniformly do so despite extreme intolerance of political and social pluralism and freedom of opinion and expression," noted Khalid al-Jaber, a former Qatari newspaper editor who heads a Washington research group. "It is not surprising that almost all dissidents against the Gulf's monarchies, regardless of their political stripes, have been imprisoned or sent into exile." Mr. Jaber charged that inter-faith dialogue when sponsored by autocrats "becomes a chapter in the public relations ploy to whitewash foreign and domestic wrongdoing." Saudi Arabia's proposition of a more tolerant 'moderate' Islam is further called into question by its failure to legalize non-Muslim worship and the opening of non-Muslim houses of worship in the kingdom as well as its equation of atheism with terrorism. The Houthi-controlled Yemen Press Agency reported that a Yemeni journalist had been sentenced in late October to 15 years in prison for promoting atheism. The dissident Washington-based Gulf Institute said that Ali Abu Lahoom had also been sentenced on charges of spreading heretical ideas. It said his case was processed through the judiciary at unusual speed since Mr. Abu Lahoom's arrest in August. In a twist of irony, Saudi and UAE exploitation of Islamistophobic sentiment to counter political Islam and the Muslim Brotherhood, deemed the greatest challenge to the religious legitimisation of the two Gulf states' autocratic rulers, has been most successful in Austria, despite the expulsion of the King Abdullah Center, as well as France. Saudi Arabia and the UAE showed little concern for what impact their support for campaigns against political Islam laced with Islamophobia would have on the status of the Muslim minority in the two European countries. Anwar Gargash, the UAE minister of state for foreign affairs at the time, last December defended French President Emmanuel Macron's new security law introduced in parliament that critics charged undermined democratic freedoms by implicitly targeting Muslims, imposed a wider ban on homeschooling and controls on religious, sporting and cultural associations, and expanded degrees of surveillance and limits on freedom of expression. Mr. Macron "does not want to see Muslims ghettoized in the West and he is right. They should be better integrated into society. The French state has the right to explore ways to achieve that," Mr. Gargash said. Dr. James M. Dorsey is an award-winning journalist and scholar and a Senior Fellow at the National University of Singapore's Middle East Institute.

Briefs

Pak stands with Afghans; assures PM

FROM PAGE 01
cross-border movement, land and aviation links, people-to-people contacts, and regional connectivity, a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. The statement further stated that Pakistan, given the prevalent situation, has been urging the international community to urgently provide humanitarian assistance and economic support on an immediate basis to alleviate the sufferings of the Afghan people.

OIC moot to be held in Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 01
Replying to a question, the foreign minister said he was seeing a change in the people of Indian-occupied Kashmir. The Indian government, he said, had created an impression that the situation was normal again in the valley. "But the way they snatched [late Hurriyat leader] Syed Ali Shah Geelani's body dispelled that impression," he said, adding that had the Indian authorities not imposed restrictions, "a sea of people" would have been witnessed at Gilani's funeral. "It would have reflected the sentiments of the people, contrary to the Indian government's narrative." And so, Qureshi added, the Indian government lacked the courage to let it happen. "They were worried." Giving the example of the Indian authorities slapping sedition charges on Kashmiri students after they celebrated Pakistan's win in the T20 World Cup match against India, Qureshi said the incident showed that the "paths of the people and government of occupied Kashmir were different".

OIC Special Envoy...

FROM PAGE 01
prime minister of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) region besides holding meetings with representatives of various political parties and members of civil society. The delegation thanked the Pakistani government for affording them an opportunity to visit the ceasefire line and AJK and get an eyewitness account of the situation along the LoC and the impact of Indian atrocities on Kashmiris.

FM Qureshi meets...

FROM PAGE 01
the twin challenges being faced by the Afghan people. Foreign Minister Qureshi reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to strengthen bilateral relations with Afghanistan in all areas. He added that the meeting had provided opportunity to build upon the earlier exchanges held during his visit to Kabul on 21 October 2021. The Foreign Minister emphasized that peace in Afghanistan would help strengthen regional stability, spur economic activity, and connectivity. During the meeting, outcomes of the meetings of working groups on strengthening bilateral and transit trade regime and facilitating movement of people by land and air were shared. Pakistan offered technical assistance in a range of areas and shared a number of proposals. It was agreed to continue discussions with a view to strengthen existing ties and identify new areas of cooperation. Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi thanked Pakistan for its continued support to a peaceful and stable Afghanistan and particularly for hosting millions of refugees for the last four decades.

Saad Rizvi removed...

FROM PAGE 01
The special anti-terrorism court on Thursday approved the bail applications of the two. Judge Ijaz Ahmad Bhattar while ordering the release directed both the TLP workers to submit Rs100,000 surety bonds each. A case was registered against the accused – Zafar Haider and Muhazzab Ali – at the Shahdara Town Police Station.

President Xi urges Asia-Pacific to stride toward shared future

"We need to scale up cooperation between member economies of the Asia-Pacific on scientific and technological innovation, and foster an open, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for the development of science and technology"

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday urged the Asia-Pacific region to face up to the responsibility of the times, be in the driver's seat, and strive hard to meet the goal of building an Asia-Pacific community with a shared future. Xi made the remarks while delivering a keynote speech at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation CEO Summit via video. At present, COVID-19 is still ravaging the world, and the journey to global economic recovery remains a difficult and tortuous one, Xi said. He urged the region to make all-out efforts to fight COVID-19. "At this trying time, it is all the more important that we should stay confident, keep a steady hand on the tiller, and forge ahead with determination," Xi said. Xi called for openness and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. "We should

all be broad-minded, follow the underlying trend of the times and proactively expand opening-up." The Asia-Pacific region should "advance trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, keep industrial and supply chains stable and functioning, and promote the orderly flow of resources and inputs to boost economic recovery and achieve interconnected development," he said. While urging the region to be forward-looking and move ahead, Xi said that the Asia-Pacific region cannot and should not relapse into the confrontation and division of the Cold War era. In terms of green transition, he urged the region to follow the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and deliver on what was agreed upon in the Paris Agreement on climate change and at the 15th Meeting of the Conference of



the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. "Working together, all of us can embark on a path of green, low-carbon and sustainable development," Xi said. Talking about innovation, Xi called for efforts to speed up scientific and technological innovation and institutional innovation, promote the commercialization of scientific and technological advances, and foster

new drivers of growth. "We need to scale up cooperation between member economies of the Asia-Pacific on scientific and technological innovation, and foster an open, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for the development of science and technology," Xi said. China has attained the goal of fully building a moderately prosperous society within the set time frame, secured a historic success in eradicating absolute poverty, and embarked on a new journey toward fully building itself into a modern socialist country. "This will create greater opportunities for our region," Xi said. He pledged that China will remain firm in advancing reform and opening-up so as to add impetus to economic development in the Asia-Pacific. China is committed to building a high-standard market system and will work to make new

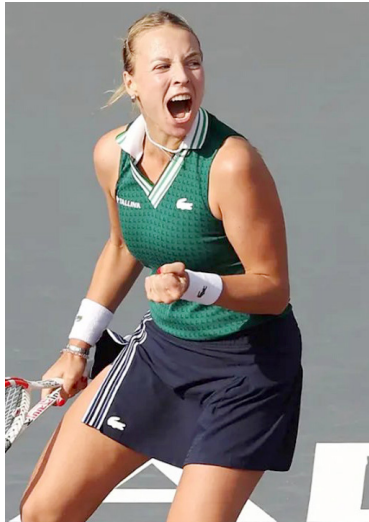
progress in reforming important areas and key links. The country will pursue high-standard institutional opening-up, and continue to improve its business environment, Xi said. The country will work to cement the foundation for long-term development of the Chinese economy and better support businesses from both the Asia-Pacific and the wider world in investing and operating in China, Xi said. He stressed that China will advance green transition on all fronts and make its due contribution to boosting ecological conservation in the Asia-Pacific and beyond. "China will strike a balance between low-carbon transition and ensuring the living needs of its people, and between development and carbon reduction, and will achieve carbon peak and carbon neutrality within the time frame we set," Xi said. – Agencies

Pliskova, Kontaveit open with wins at WTA Finals

SPORTS DESK

GUADALAJARA: Karolina Pliskova overcame a slow start before beating Garbine Muguruza 4-6, 6-2, 7-6 (6) on Wednesday in her opening match at the WTA Finals. In a contest between two former No. 1-ranked players, the third-seeded Pliskova struggled early adjusting to the nearly 5,000-foot altitude of Guadalajara, Mexico's second largest city. "The first set was not the best from me. The serve was amazing in the second set, many free points on the first serve," Pliskova said. "Then it was a fighting third set. I thought I just had too many chances, didn't make it really, but happy it went my way in the end."

Pliskova is playing the WTA Finals for the fifth time, having reached the semifinals in 2018 and '19. The 2020 tournament was canceled. She didn't win any titles in 2021 but kept a high ranking by reaching the finals at Wimbledon and Montreal, and the semifinals at Cincinnati. Pliskova now has a 9-2 record against former Wimbledon and French Open champion Muguruza, who won the Chicago and Dubai titles this year and is making her fourth appearance at the season-ending event. "That was a very tough match for both of us. It was a one-point difference – I saved many match points and is a tough loss I fought as hard as I could," Muguruza said. "I'm happy with my fighting spirit even though I lost." Muguruza dropped serve before winning four straight games to take a 4-2 lead and eventually clinched the first set in 38 minutes. Pliskova settled down in the second



and got service breaks in the second and eighth games to level the match. The third set lasted more than an hour, with Muguruza saving three match points to force a tiebreaker, and another in the tiebreaker before Pliskova sealed the win. Earlier, Anett Kontaveit extended her hot streak to 11 consecutive victories with a 6-3, 6-4 win over second-seeded Barbora Krejickova. Kontaveit has won 27 of her last 29 matches, which include her title run at Ostrava where she beat Paula Badosa and Maria Sakkari, both of whom are competing here. "I've been in sort of top 30 for a lot of years," Kontaveit said. "During the summer I was on a bit of a losing streak, but then I started working with Dmitry (Tursunov) and was really hoping to get a few wins. I managed to win Cleveland, then it just sort of started



rolling from there". Tursunov a former world No. 20, started working with Kontaveit at the Cincinnati Masters, where the 25-year-old Estonian lost in the first round. Since then, Kontaveit has soared from No. 30 into the top 10. After top-ranked Ash Barty of Australia opted not to defend the title because of travel restrictions in her country, Kontaveit edged out Ons Jabeur for the last spot in the season-ending championship by beating Simona Halep in the final of the Transylvania Open. "I've been believing in myself a little bit more, and the game definitely has clicked from just getting more wins and playing a lot of tennis and really feeling comfortable," Kontaveit said. Krejickova, the French Open champion, started the year ranked 65th but captured three titles to qualify for the WTA Finals.

Dan Evans loses Stockholm Open quarter-final

STOCKHOLM: Britain's Dan Evans let slip a one-set lead as Frances Tiafoe completed a comprehensive turnaround to reach the Stockholm Open semi-finals. Fourth seed Evans had looked to be heading into his third semi-final of the year but lost 1-6 6-1 6-1. American eighth seed Tiafoe could face Andy Murray for a place in the final with the Briton taking on Tommy Paul later on Thursday. It is the end of the tour season for Evans, who won a first title this year. The 31-year-old had arrived in the Swedish capital on the back of successive first-round exits at his previous two events and having been overtaken by Indian Wells champion Cameron Norrie as British number one.

But he ends the ATP Tour season with the boost of having reached a fourth quarter-final before he prepares to represent Great Britain at the Davis Cup Finals later this month. It was also announced on Thursday that Evans will be facing Murray on the opening day of the Battle of the Brits - Scotland versus England - on 21 December in Aberdeen. The provisional schedule for the two-day event organised by Murray's brother Jamie will also feature former British number one Kyle Edmund playing his first matches for more than a year following knee surgery. – Agencies

Unfortunate end for Halep in Austria

LINZ: Simona Halep had reached the semi-finals of the Linz Open and was looking to claim a first title in 2021 at the WTA 250 event. The two-time Slam champion came through a battling encounter with Italian Jasmine Paolini in the quarter-finals to come through 4-6, 7-5, 6-0. Halep was scheduled to face compatriot Jaqueline Cristian for a place in the

final, but has been forced to withdraw ahead of the match due to injury. Apparently, her battle with Paolini was too tough, as she sustained left knee injury during that showdown according to the tournament's official Twitter. "We wish you a very speedy recovery!" they said in the tweet. "Linz loves you! Please come back soon!" – APP

Yorkshire racism scandal has fractured our game: Joe Root



LONDON: England Test captain Joe Root says the racism scandal at his county side Yorkshire has "fractured our game and torn lives apart". A report found former Yorkshire player Azeem Rafiq was a victim of "racial harassment and bullying" but the club said they would not discipline anyone. "I just want the sport to be a place where everyone is enjoying it for the beautiful game it is and feels equal and safe," said Root. "We need to educate, unify and reset." Root has spent his entire county career at Yorkshire, making his second-team debut in 2007 before progressing to the first team in 2009. "I want to see change and actions that will see Yorkshire County Cricket Club rise from this with a culture that harnesses a diverse environment with trust across all communities that support cricket in the county," he said. "I will reach out to YCCC new chair Lord Patel to offer support, however I'm able." When asked if he had seen any racism at Yorkshire, Root said: "Not that I can recall... but it's clear things have happened at the club." Rafiq, who was born in Pakistan and moved to England aged 10, played the majority of his career at Yorkshire, between 2008 and 2018. He captained England teams at youth level and also captained Yorkshire in 2012. However, in September 2020, following an initial interview with Wisden, Rafiq media "institutional racism" encountered while at the club left him close to taking his own life. – APP

US alleges 'unusual' Russian troop movements near Ukrainian border

WASHINGTON: The United States has called on Russia to explain what it alleges are "unusual" troop movements near the border with Ukraine. Pentagon spokesman John Kirby warned Moscow not to spark fresh conflict and reiterated the US' "unwavering support" for Kyiv. "What we continue to see is unusual military activity inside Russia, but near Ukraine's borders, and we remain concerned about that," Kirby said at a briefing on Wednesday. "It's not exactly clear what the Russian intentions are, we obviously would like to better understand that," he told reporters. "We don't want to see any action further destabilise what is already a very tense part of the world, and we urge Russia to be clear about their intentions and to abide by their Minsk agreements." The US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has warned Russia not to make the "grave mistake" of repeating its build-up of soldiers in 2014. Earlier this year, a massive buildup of Russian troops in Russia's west also raised concern, fueling fears of an escalation of large-scale hostilities. "We don't have clarity on Moscow's intentions, but we do know its strategy," Blinken said in Washington at a joint press conference with his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba. The Ukrainian foreign minister welcomed the US support as the pair signed a new "Strategic Partnership" agreement. "The United States supports Ukraine in countering Russian aggression and defending our sovereignty and territorial integrity," Kuleba said at a press conference. "The best way to deter an aggressive Russia is to let the Kremlin know that Ukraine is strong and has strong allies who will not leave it alone with the aggressor." had "strong allies who will not leave it alone in the face of Moscow's ever-increasing aggressiveness". The Donbas region in eastern Ukraine has been embroiled in a war since 2014 between Kyiv forces and pro-Russian separatists, which has left more than 13,000 people dead. – Agencies

Former Croatian minister arrested

ZAGREB: A former Croatian government minister has been arrested on suspicion of misusing European Union funds. The European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) announced on Wednesday that a total of four people were accused of fraud. The suspects face allegations relating to the "public procedure for the purchase of IT systems" and have been detained by police. The alleged offences were committed within the Croatian Ministry for Regional Development and EU funds. Croatia's Prime Minister Andrej Plenković later confirmed that former government minister Gabrijela Žalac was one of the suspects. Žalac – a member of the ruling HDZ party – served under Plenković as minister of development from 2016 to 2019 before a government reshuffle. The head of Croatia's Central Finance and Contracting Agency (SAFU) has also reportedly been detained. The EPPO said in a statement that it had carried out "emergency activities to gather evidence" together with the Croatian anti-corruption police. The Luxembourg-based body began its work in June to combat fraudulent use of the EU's budget. PM Plenković said he was surprised about Žalac's arrest but stressed that "judicial institutions are independent and do their job". The fight against corruption was also one of the conditions for Croatia's accession to the bloc in 2013. – Agencies

Italy eye return to World Cup as Swiss visit

"It's an important match, very important in fact, and it's true that if we win it will open the door to the World Cup, but it's just a game of football." In the run up to the match Mancini lost starting centre-forward Ciro Immobile to a calf injury, as well as Roma midfielders Lorenzo Pellegrini and Nicolò Zaniolo

WEB DESK

MILAN: Italy head into Friday's crunch visit of Switzerland with their World Cup hopes still in the balance, as the newly-crowned European champions aim to definitively banish the ghosts of their disastrous 2018 qualifying campaign. Still on a high from triumph at Euro 2020, Italy lead Group C on goal difference from the Swiss, with the pair battling for a single guaranteed place in next year's tournament in Qatar. Roberto Mancini took control of the Azzurri in the toxic aftermath of their failure to make the last World Cup in Russia, the first time

they had missed out on a place in six decades, and is well aware of the significance of making it this time round. "It's important that we play well because after the Euro it's the biggest match of the year. We know we have to win," said Mancini. However Mancini tried to maintain a semblance of calm for a fixture that would put Italy back on football's biggest stage after eight years. Playoff defeat to Sweden in late 2017 left the country feeling like it was in a footballing black hole, lagging well behind the rest of Europe and no longer a conveyor belt of world class talent. Since then the former Inter Milan and Manchester City coach has

brought the feelgood factor back to the national team by getting a stylish tune from both a new crop of players and some hardy veterans. "I don't think we have everything to lose," Mancini said of the pressure to win. "It's an important match, very important in fact, and it's true that if we win it will open the door to the World Cup, but it's just a game of football." In the run up to the match Mancini lost starting centre-forward Ciro Immobile to a calf injury, as well as Roma midfielders Lorenzo Pellegrini and Nicolò Zaniolo. However the most keenly felt absence will be that of captain Giorgio Chiellini, who failed to recover from a thigh injury in time

and left the national team camp on Wednesday. The one good news for Italy is that midfield dynamo Nicola Barella should be fit to play in front of over 50,000 fans at the Stadio Olimpico on Friday. Barella left the San Siro field in the second half of the weekend's Milan derby with a muscle problem, but on Wednesday trained with the squad. The Swiss are also missing several key players, with Granit Xhaka and Benfica's Haris Seferovic among the big names out. Coach Murat Yakin is especially irked by the absence of Borussia Mönchengladbach forward Breele Embolo, who picked up a thigh injury in Friday's 1-1 draw with Mainz and leaves the Swiss

short up front. "I couldn't believe it, I told myself it couldn't be true, not before such an important match," Yakin told La Regione, an Italian-language Swiss newspaper. "His injury was the result of his application on the pitch. He is often played out of position but he adapts and always gives his all." Embolo, 24, has only scored once in the Bundesliga this season but hit a brace in Gladbach's 5-0 cup hammering of Bayern Munich a fortnight ago. He also starred in Switzerland's most recent qualifiers last month, setting up both goals in a 2-0 win over Northern Ireland and netting twice as the Swiss rolled over Lithuania 4-0.

Extended Troika urge Taliban...

FROM PAGE 01

Representatives of China, Pakistan, Russia and the United States, and the visiting delegation of the interim government of Afghanistan led by Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi. The foreign minister said enabling Afghanistan to access its frozen funds would dovetail into the efforts to regenerate economic activities and move the Afghan economy towards stability and sustainability. *Later in the day, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a detailed statement on the outcome of the meeting:*

1. Expressed deep concern regarding the severe humanitarian and economic situation in Afghanistan and reiterated unwavering support for the people of Afghanistan.
2. Recalled the relevant Afghan – related UNSC Resolutions, including respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan that is free of terrorism and drug related crime, and that contributes to regional stability and connectivity.
3. Welcomed the Taliban's continued commitment to allow for the safe passage of all who wish to travel to and from Afghanistan and encouraged rapid progress, with the onset of winter, on arrangements to establish airports countrywide that can accept commercial air traffic, which are essential to enable the uninterrupted flow of humanitarian assistance.
4. Called on the Taliban to work with fellow Afghans to take steps to form an inclusive and representative government that respects the rights of all Afghans and provides for the equal rights of women and girls to participate in all aspects of Afghan society.
5. Agreed to continue practical engagement with the Taliban to encourage the implementation of moderate and prudent policies that can help achieve a stable and prosperous Afghanistan as soon as possible.
6. Emphasised that access to education for women and girls at all levels is an international obligation and encouraged the Taliban to accelerate efforts to provide for full and equal access to education countrywide.
7. Welcomed the international community's urgent provision of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and expressed grave concern at the potential for an economic collapse and significantly worsening humanitarian crisis and a new refugee wave.
8. Called on the Taliban to ensure unhindered humanitarian access, including by women aid workers, for the delivery of humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan to respond to the developing crisis.
9. Welcomed the greater role of United Nations as a coordinator in such fields as contributing to stability and delivering emergency assistance.
10. Urged the United Nations and its specialised agencies to develop programs to implement the international community's commitments to support the people of Afghanistan.
11. Condemned in the strongest terms the recent terrorist attacks in Afghanistan and called on the Taliban to cut ties with all international terrorist groups, dismantle and eliminate them in a decisive manner, and to deny space to any terrorist organisation operating inside the country.
12. Reaffirmed their expectation that the Taliban will fulfill their commitment to prevent use of Afghan territory by terrorists against its neighbors, other countries in the region and the rest of the world.
13. Called on the Taliban to take a friendly approach towards neighboring countries and to uphold Afghanistan's international legal obligations, including universally accepted principles of international law and fundamental human rights and to protect the safety and legitimate rights of foreign nationals and institutions in Afghanistan.
14. Acknowledged international humanitarian actors' concerns regarding the country's serious liquidity challenges and committed to continue focusing on measures to ease access to legitimate banking services.
15. Called on the international community to take concrete actions to provide Afghanistan with help against COVID-19.

Briefs

Czech
billionaire
PM submits
resignation

AGENCIES

PRAGUE: Czech Prime

Minister Andrej Babis and his government have resigned in a formal step required by the Constitution following last month's parliamentary election.

Babis said Thursday he sent the resignation letter to President Milos Zeman. The head of state is expected to ask Babis to stay in office until a new government is appointed.

Babis' government had to resign after the first session of the new lower house of Parliament was over, which happened on Wednesday. A three-party, liberal-conservative coalition known as Together won the Oct 8-9 election with a 27.8% share of the vote.

Together teamed up with a center-left liberal coalition made up of the Pirate Party and a group of mayors and independent candidates, which came in third place with 15.6% of votes.

The new partnership will hold 108 seats in the 200-seat lower house of Parliament, relegating Babis, a populist billionaire, and his centrist ANO (YES) movement to the opposition.

SpaceX
launches
fresh crew
to ISS

CHICAGO: A crew of three Americans and one German blasted off Wednesday night from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida on the latest mission in billionaire Elon Musk's private-company race to space. NASA's mission control erupted in cheers as what appeared to be an orange fireball raced up in the Florida sky.

The launch marked the fifth crewed space mission by Musk's SpaceX company in the last 18 months and the third mission done specifically for NASA, which is why the mission is dubbed "Crew-3". "Godspeed and enjoy the ride," NASA told the crew as they waited for blast-off inside their capsule.

"We're honored" to make the trip, came the reply from the crew. The capsule, part of SpaceX's "Crew Dragon" fleet of capsules, is called Endurance, and when it docks at the International Space Station on Thursday night, the crew will begin a six-month mission at the ISS. The crew will conduct a number of experiments while on board the ISS, among them a unique one by the German astronaut, Matthias Maurer. He will do exercises like strength training and running while wearing a specialized suit that applies electrical impulses to his muscles. — APP

Turkic states
to donate
Covid vaccines
to Africa

WEB DESK

ISTANBUL: Turkey and Azerbaijan, two member states of the Turkic Council, and observer Hungary announced Thursday that they will donate COVID-19 vaccines to the African countries in need.

Addressing a news conference in Istanbul ahead of the 8th summit of the Turkic Council foreign ministers, Hungary's Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Peter Szijarto said the fourth wave of the coronavirus pandemic showed that more vaccines are needed.

"We have seen very clearly that vaccines save lives," he said, adding that Hungary carried out a "successful" vaccination campaign, and has been among the first countries to end the lockdowns in Europe.

"There are enough vaccines in our country at the moment. Therefore, we are in a position to help other countries in need," he stated. Stressing lack of vaccines in some African countries, Szijarto said: "Therefore we, as Hungary, together with the member countries of the Council, are ready to help."

Karabakh now a construction site for modern projects

Some 2.2 billion manats (\$1.29 billion) were allocated from the 2021 state budget for the reconstruction of the liberated areas

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan draws attention with its projects in Karabakh as the region was liberated in November last year after nearly 30 years of occupation.

The areas liberated from the occupation resemble a large construction site where feverish work has been carried out over the past year. Tanks, which had been moving on the old roads of the region a year ago, have now been replaced by construction equipment and trucks. Some 2.2 billion manats (\$1.29 billion) were allocated from the 2021 state budget for the reconstruction of the liberated areas.

Fuzuli International Airport was the first major project completed by Azerbaijan that started construction work in the region immediately after the end of the 2nd Karabakh War on Nov. 10, 2020.

Its foundation was laid on Jan. 14, 2021. The airport, described as "Karabakh's gateway to the world," was inaugurated on Oct. 26.

Meanwhile, the construction work continues also at Zangilan and Lachin airports.

Reconstruction of regions liberated from occupation

The liberated cities need to be rebuilt as all settlements were completely destroyed during the occupation years.

The Azerbaijani government, as a first step, is planning to rebuild the city of Agdam.

Agdam is expected to be a modern city where more than 50,000 people will live in nearly three years. Meanwhile, a total of 200 houses are being built in the Agali village of Zangilan that has been restructured under the concept of "smart village."

The reconstruction work in the village, rebuilt with alternative

energy sources, ecological heating and smart lighting systems, is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The first residents are expected to be settled in the village by the beginning of 2022.

Other activities in region

Meanwhile, an agricultural park project was launched by Turkish and Azerbaijani investors near the smart Agali village.

Agricultural activities will be carried out with modern technologies on the Dost Agropark Smart Agriculture Campus, the foundation of which was laid by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Azerbaijani counterpart Ilham Aliyev.

A total of 20,000 hectares of land were cleared of mines, while 50,000 mines and unexploded ordnance planted by the Armenian army were neutralized in the liberated areas. The Azerbaijani government started work to deliver electricity to the liberated areas

while the war was still going on. Substations were built in Jabrayil, Fuzuli, Zangilan, Gubadli, and Kalbajar districts.

Meanwhile, Azerbaijan is building new highways in the liberated areas. The total length of the highways, completed and under construction in the region, is 723 kilometers (449 miles).

Authorities aim to complete the construction works of the main highways in the region by 2025.

Conflict between Azerbaijan, Armenia

Relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia have been tense since 1991, when the Armenian military occupied Nagorno-Karabakh, also known as Upper Karabakh, a territory internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, and seven adjacent regions.

New clashes erupted on Sept. 27 last year, with the Armenian army attacking civilians and Azerbaijani

forces and violating several humanitarian cease-fire agreements. During the 44-day military conflict, Azerbaijan liberated several cities and some 300 settlements and villages that were occupied by Armenia for almost 30 years.

Prior to this, about 20% of Azerbaijan's territory was under illegal occupation.

The two countries signed a Russian-brokered agreement on Nov. 10 to end the fighting and work toward a comprehensive resolution. The cease-fire was seen as a victory for Azerbaijan and a defeat for Armenia, whose forces withdrew in line with the agreement.

On Jan. 11 this year, the leaders of Russia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia signed a pact to develop economic ties and infrastructure to benefit the entire region. The deal also included the establishment of a trilateral working group on Karabakh.

Azerbaijan
seizes huge
heroin
shipment

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan has thwarted an attempt to smuggle over 622 kg of heroin across the country's customs border, State Customs Committee Chairman Col-Gen Safar Mehdiyev has tweeted.

"As part of measures to combat illicit drug trafficking, customs officers conducted another successful operation. Attempts to smuggle more than 622 kilograms of heroin across the country's customs border were prevented," wrote on his official Twitter page.

According to operational information, a truck, sent by an Iranian citizen, transporting raisins to Moldova through the Azerbaijani territory, was detained at the Astara customs checkpoint. Upon inspection, heroin weighing 301 kilograms 475 grams was found in one part of the fuel tank [which was divided into two parts].

Another truck, transporting pistachios and dates from Azerbaijan to Moldova, was detained at the Samur customs checkpoint. Upon inspection, the vehicle's fuel tank was divided by a metal plate into two parts, one part was filled with diesel fuel and the other part was filled with heroin weighing 320 kilograms 600 grams.

In early September, Azerbaijan thwarted an attempt to smuggle 11.7 kg of drugs from neighboring Iran. In early October, the State Border Service foiled another attempt to smuggle drugs from Iran into Azerbaijan. After liberating its lands from Armenia's occupation in the 44-day war with Armenia in 2020, Azerbaijan restored control over the 132-km section of the Azerbaijan-Iran border.

Russian
airstrikes kill
5 civilians in
Syria

FOREIGN DESK

IDLIB: Five civilians, including three children, were killed in Russian airstrikes Thursday in Syria's opposition-held northwestern Idlib province.

According to a Syrian opposition aircraft observatory, a Russian Su-34-type warplane carried out three airstrikes on a chicken farm near the Idlib city center.

Five civilians, three of them children, were killed and five others were injured, according to sources with the Syrian Civil Defense (White Helmets).

Russian warplanes also carried out airstrikes in the area where refugee camps are concentrated in the town of Ma'arrat Misrin, also in the northern Idlib province, according to the observatory.

In May 2017, Turkey, Russia, and Iran announced that they had reached an agreement to establish a de-escalation zone in Idlib, as part of the Astana meetings related to the Syrian crisis.

However, it was only after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin agreed on March 5, 2020, to a new truce in Idlib to end hostilities and attacks on civilians that effective de-escalation took place, with the exception of sporadic shelling by the regime and other forces.

Sierra Leone
blast kills 131

NEWS DESK

ABUJA: The death toll from a fuel tanker explosion last week in Sierra Leone's capital has risen to 131, authorities confirmed Wednesday, saying scores are in critical condition.

Fuel spilled before igniting and the subsequent fire engulfed bystanders and vehicles at a busy junction in Freetown late Friday.

Officials of Sierra Leone's National Disaster Management Agency said the treatment of 63 wounded people continues, including 19 in serious condition.

The World Health Organization (WHO) had sent 6.6 tons of emergency medical supplies to the country. Following the deadly incident, President Julius Maada Bio announced three days of mourning starting Monday followed by two days of prayers.



KUWAIT CITY: Chief of naval Staff Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi visits Pakistan embassy and held interaction with Embassy officials and Pakistan community members. — DNA

Amb. Hassan
presents credentials
to E. Timor President

DNA

JAKARTA: In a virtual ceremony held, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, H.E. Mr. Francisco Guterres Lu Olo received credentials of Ambassador Muhammad Hassan as Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

The credential ceremony took place at the Presidential Palace in Dili. The event was also attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, and other high officials in Timor-Leste.

The Ambassador conveyed the greetings of President Dr. Arif Alvi to President Guterres and his best wishes of good health and happiness for the people of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. For



his part, the President of Timor-Leste entrusted the Ambassador to convey his greetings to President Alvi, wishing him good health and happiness and further progress, development and prosperity for the people of Pakistan. He also wished the Ambassador success in his mission, stressing to provide all the support to enhance bilateral relations between the two countries. Pakistan and Timor Leste established diplomatic relations soon after the independence of Timor Leste in 2002. Both countries enjoy cordial relationship the independence of the latest.

SBP head meets Governors
of SAMA, Bank Indonesia

JEDDAH: Governor Sate Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Dr. Reza Baqir on Thursday, met the Governors of Saudi Central Bank (SCB) and Bank Indonesia (BI) on the side lines of the 15th Islamic Finance Services Board (IFSB) Summit 2021, hosted by the Saudi Central Bank, in Jeddah.

In separate meetings with the two Governors, various topics of mutual interest related to Islamic Banking, digitalization, open banking, and financial inclusion were discussed, said a news release.

The Governors shared the vision that digital transformation could play a pivotal role in the expansion of Islamic finance and help in improving financial inclusion.

In his meeting with the Saudi Central Bank Governor, Dr. Reza Baqir thanked the



Saudi authorities for the financial support they had recently announced for Pakistan in the form of a deposit at the SBP and oil financing. Dr. Reza Baqir briefed the Governors of the Saudi Central Bank and Bank Indonesia about the recent initiatives of SBP in the areas of Islamic banking, digitalization, financial inclusion and low-cost housing finance. While talking about digitalization of the financial sector he said digitalization is a



mean to achieve the broader objective of making financial sector more productive, efficient, and inclusive. Governor SBP especially highlighted that digitization offers the highest potential to accelerate the pace of financial inclusion. Technology driven solutions are the key to open doors of financial sector for the unserved and underserved segments of the society, particularly the women. The Governors also shared



their experiences during COVID-19 pandemic. Governor SBP apprised them about the various measures taken by the government of Pakistan to successfully contain the spread of coronavirus in the country. He also shared the measures taken by SBP to inject liquidity in the economy and banking sector during COVID-19 pandemic that helped save jobs as the country went into a locked down situation. — APP

NY Consulate, USPICC agree to boost trade

President USPICC Sajjad Hussain Qamar said that the United States and Pakistan have a strong economic and commercial relationship, and the US is one of the Pakistan's largest trading partners and a leading source of foreign direct investment

DNA

NEW YORK: The New York Consulate of Pakistani embassy in the US and the US-Pakistan International Chamber of Commerce (USPICC) have agreed to work together for the promotion of bilateral trade and investment between the two countries.

The decision was taken in a meeting between President USPICC Sajjad Hussain Qamar and Consul General New York Ms. Ayesha Ali. Secretary-General USPICC Pakistan Chapter Malik Sohail Hussain and Talat Gondal, Trade and Investment Counsellor were also present in the meeting.

They agreed to facilitate the export of Pakistani products and fruits to the US and join hands to facilitate US based businesses and businessmen to invest in Pakistan, which is offering one of the most attractive investment climate in the region. They also agreed to encourage their businessmen from both countries to network, exchange delegations, participate in trade fairs, exhibitions and endeavour for the establishment of joint ventures in different sectors.

During the meeting, both sides expressed confidence that their efforts will further strengthen economic and trade relations for the mutual benefit of the two countries. Consul General New York Ms. Ayesha Ali informed



about the initiatives of the Pakistani embassy in the US for the promotion of bilateral trade and welfare of Pakistanis living there.

She said that we should strive to achieve common goals aimed at serving our country in the best possible way.

President USPICC Sajjad Hussain Qamar said that the United States and Pakistan have a strong economic and commercial relationship, and the US is one of the Pakistan's largest trading partners and a leading source of foreign direct investment. Pakistan Board of Investment (BOI) should hold roadshows in the US to promote oppor-

tunities in the energy, real estate, education, IT, and other sectors of Pakistan, and USPICC is willing to facilitate BOI for such roadshows in NYC and Washington DC, he added.

Sajjad Hussain Qamar said that Pakistan and the United States signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) in 2003 and began negotiating a Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) in 2004 which should be worked on to get it finalized. Sajjad Hussain Qamar noted that USPICC is ready to play its role to facilitate Pakistan Embassy, Pakistan Ministry of Commerce and other Pakistan government bodies in bringing var-

ious stake holders from the US to create an environment so a bilateral trade treaty can become a reality.

Sajjad Qamar noted that USPICC is looking to take a delegation of businessmen from US to Pakistan during spring of 2022, Ms. Ayesha Ali offered to facilitate USPICC delegation to make it a success.

Malik Sohail Hussain said that the spirit of friendship and cooperation should be enhanced, and the identified areas should be promoted.

He further informed Ms. Ayesha Ali about his trip to Washington DC where he met with elected Congressmen, local government executives and elected officials, university and community college officials, community and business leaders. All such meetings were organized by USPICC and specifically by the tireless efforts of M. Siddique Sheikh, Founder and Chairman of BOD of USPICC. Mr. Hussain noted that Mr. Sheikh has cultivated strong relationships over the course of 50 years, and Pakistan Govt and businesses based in Pakistan should take advantage of the USPICC's platform to enhance bilateral trade and investment relations between two countries. Mr. Hussain noted that USPICC will organize a business delegation of leading Pakistani businessmen to come to the USA to explore opportunities.

Briefs

Abandoning
Afghanistan
will be a
mistake

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Security Advisor (NSA) Dr Moed Yusuf on Thursday told the four-member US delegation headed by Minority Staff Director, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chris Socha who called on the NSA here that abandoning Afghanistan by the international community would be a mistake. During the meeting, both the sides discussed situation of Afghanistan along with the ways to enhance cooperation in light of the regional and international developments and challenges, said a news release. Speaking on the occasion, National Security Advisor Dr Moed Yusuf said the world needed to constructively engage the Afghan Taliban in order to prevent governance collapse and avert another refugee crisis. He said Pakistan was coordinating with the world to have a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. The two sides also exchanged views on the importance of developing the strategic relationship between Pakistan and US, and the determination to strengthen ties in all sectors and vital areas of cooperation.

Afghanistan
to import
100 MW of
electricity
from Iran

KABUL: Afghanistan will import up to 100 megawatts of electricity from neighboring Iran, Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), the country's national power company announced on Thursday. "Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat signed an agreement with Iran to import 100 megawatts of electricity to Afghanistan," the company said in a statement. The imported electricity would tackle part of the electricity shortage problem in western Herat, Farah and Nimroz provinces, according to the statement. The mountainous country needs 850 megawatts of electricity per year, with 620 megawatts imported from neighboring countries and 230 megawatts supplied from domestic sources, according to the Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) officials. — APP

Gold price
jumps by
Rs3,300 per
tola

KARACHI: Gold price in Pakistan jumped by Rs3,300 per tola in Pakistan in line with international markets due to rupee depreciation and record high inflation in US. Gold prices in the local bullion market soared by Rs3,300 per tola and Rs2,829 per 10 grams to today to reach Rs129,100 per tola and Rs110,682 per 10 grams. A day earlier, the precious commodity closed at Rs125,800 per tola and Rs107,853 per 10 grams. Shedding light on the outlook of the yellow metal, the dealer said that going forward, the price will further increase. With a fresh increase of Rs3,300 per tola, the yellow metal has recorded an increase of Rs11,700 per tola during the last seven sessions, according to All Sindh Saraf and Jewellers Association (ASSJA). The fresh increase comes on the back of concerns regarding uncertain economic conditions which have sparked a flight from risky commodities towards safer ones. Investors are taking aggressive positions on gold due to inflation concerns. — APP

Belarus migrants' crisis
deepens as EU mulls sanctions

Poland and other EU member states accuse Belarus of encouraging migrants and refugees to try to cross the shared border in revenge for Western sanctions

FOREIGN DESK

WARSAW: The months-long migrant crisis that has played out along Poland's border with Belarus is rapidly deepening as more people make desperate attempts to cross the frontier. Warsaw and its allies are ramping up efforts to prevent people from entering the European Union member state as a war of words with Minsk intensifies. Thousands of migrants and refugees were stranded along the frontier in freezing conditions on Thursday, with concerns growing over their wellbeing following a spate of deaths and reports of food and water shortages. Poland and other EU member states accuse Belarus of encouraging migrants and refugees to try to cross the shared border in revenge for Western sanctions imposed on Minsk after the disputed August 2020 election that handed longtime President Alexander Lukashenko a sixth term. Minsk denies those charges — but has previously implied its complicity — and has turned to ally and creditor Russia for support in recent days. The head of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) has heavily criticised Europe's

Lukashenko ponders cutting
gas supplies over sanctions

MINSK: Alexander Lukashenko has said Belarus "must respond" if the European Union imposes new sanctions against his regime over the influx of migrants on the country's western border. Thousands of migrants remain stuck out in the open in harsh conditions on the Belarusian-Polish frontier amid the stand-off between Minsk and the EU. The Belarusian leader raised the possibility of interrupting the Yamal-Europe pipeline, which crosses Belarus from Russia in supplying gas to EU countries, Germany and Poland in particular. "We heat Europe and they are threatening to close the border. And what would happen if we cut off the natural gas which goes there? I would therefore advise Polish, Lithuanian and other haredbrained leaders to think before speaking," Lukashenko said. His tone was harsher than that of Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei, who shortly earlier called for dialogue with the EU, claiming Minsk was in favour of settling the matter "as soon as possible". — DNA



"inability" to handle the unfolding crisis. "A few thousand people at Europe's Polish border, many of whom have fled some of the worst crises in the world, is a drop in the ocean compared to the number of people displaced to countries that are much poorer elsewhere," Jan Egeland, NRC's secretary general, said in a statement on Thursday.

"European values are dangerously under threat when people are allowed to die from hypothermia at its external border," he added. Egeland also denounced Minsk for "using migrants and refugees to achieve political ends".

"Vulnerable people are not chess pawns to be used in a geopolitical struggle," he said.

"But this does not in any way free Europe from its responsibility to ensure that people turning up on its borders are allowed to seek asylum and are treated humanely." The EU is considering imposing sanctions on Belarus' main airport in a bid to make it more difficult for airlines to bring in migrants and refugees, two diplomats familiar with the matter have told Reuters. The 27-member bloc was already finalising a new, fifth round of sanctions on top Belarus officials and state-owned airline Belavia that could be approved next week, one diplomat told the news agency on Thursday. But Brussels was also weighing a further, sixth package of measures, which could include orders to stop EU firms supplying Minsk National airport, two other diplomats said. German Finance Minister Olaf Scholz has accused Lukashenko of using migrants and refugees as part of a deliberate bid to put pressure on the EU. "Lukashenko is making an inhumane power play with people," said Scholz, who is set to become the country's next chancellor. He added that Germany must lend its support to EU member states affected by the crisis and ensure that the migrants and refugees trapped between the Polish-Belarusian border receive humanitarian aid.

KSA to grant
citizenship
to skilled
professionals

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia has approved granting citizenship to foreign nationals with specialized skills in a number of professions on Thursday. The royal decree allows certain high-skilled professionals working in specialized areas within the legal, medical, scientific, cultural, sport and technical fields to obtain Saudi citizenship, Arab News reported. The move is in line with Vision 2030, which aims to create an environment that is attractive to top level professionals. — APP

Ariana
Airlines
begins flights
to Islamabad

WEB DESK

KABUL: Ariana Afghan Airlines is beginning regular twice-weekly services from Kabul to Islamabad, the state-owned operator said on Thursday, joining Kam Air which has begun flying five times a week between the two cities. Ariana, which began regular services to Dubai this week, will operate flights between Kabul and Islamabad on Thursdays and Mondays, charging \$400 from Kabul and \$100 from Islamabad. Earlier this week, privately-owned Kam Air started services five times a week to Islamabad as international air traffic gradually reopens following the Taliban's seizure of power in Kabul in August. The announcement from Ariana came as the Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi was visiting Islamabad for talks. Some charter services have been flying to Kabul since the Taliban takeover but normally scheduled commercial flights had been suspended. With an economy in deep crisis and continuing concerns about Afghanistan's future under the Taliban, there has been huge demand from people wishing to leave Afghanistan, made worse by repeated problems at land border crossings into Pakistan. Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) suspended its charter service to Kabul from Islamabad last month, citing interference from Taliban authorities, who had warned the airline it should cut its ticket prices.

Syria inks
solar plant
deal with
UAE firms

DAMASCUS: Syria has signed a deal with United Arab Emirates firms for the construction of a solar power plant near Damascus, state media said Thursday, in a sign of growing economic ties. The accord comes two days after UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan met President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus in the first such visit since the start of Syria's war. The visit was widely seen as a sign of regional efforts to end Assad's diplomatic isolation as Syria grapples with a spiralling economic crisis caused by years of conflict and compounded by Western sanctions. "The ministry of electricity and a consortium of Emirati firms have signed a cooperation agreement to establish a solar power plant with a 300-megawatt capacity," in the suburbs of Damascus, the official SANA news agency said. The Syrian government initially approved the project last month, with Economy Minister Samer al-Khalil calling it a positive sign for future investments in Syria. The United Arab Emirates foreign minister on Tuesday met Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus Tuesday in a sign of improving ties between Assad and a US-allied Gulf state, triggering US denunciations of efforts to rehabilitate a "brutal dictator." Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan is the most senior Emirati dignitary to visit Syria in the decade since the eruption of a civil war in which several Arab states backed mainly Sunni Muslim insurgents against Assad. — Agencies

PTI allies expressed
reservations on
EVMs: Sh Rasheed

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed on Thursday said that the allies of the federal government have reservations on the electronic voting machines (EVMs). Speaking to media in Rawalpindi, Sheikh Rasheed said that the joint sitting of the Parliament has been postponed by the government. The minister said he was in favor of negotiations with TLP from day one. He said that he is not aware of the contents of the recent agreement between TLP and the government and will know its details when the government decides to make it public. Expressing his

views on the ongoing ICC T20 Men's World Cup 2021, Rasheed said that his final was on day when India was defeated by Pakistan. I pray for Pakistan's victory against Australia, he said. Providing details of development work in Rawalpindi, Rashid said that in a short span of time three women's colleges were established in the city. Special attention was paid to girls' education in Rawalpindi and we planned for 20 years and constructed three universities and seven colleges. The backdoor lobbying of the government led by Prime Minister Imran Khan has reportedly failed to garner the support of parliamentarians over the EVM bill that PTI was set to table, said sources.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Advisor on Finance Shaukat Tarin, Razak Dawood, Ghulam Sarwar Khan and Ambassador Sadiq Khan in a group photo with Afghan delegation headed by Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi. — DNA

China's Xi cements
his status with
historic resolution

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: The Chinese Communist Party has passed a "historical resolution", cementing Xi Jinping's status in political history. The document, a summary of the party's 100-year history, addresses its key achievements and future directions. It is only the third of its kind since the founding of the party - the first was passed by Mao Zedong in 1945 and the second by Deng Xiaoping in 1981. It was passed on Thursday at the sixth plenary session, one of China's most important political meetings. As only the third Chinese leader to have issued such a resolution, the move aims to establish Mr Xi as an equal to party founder Mao and his successor Deng. Some observers see the resolution as Mr Xi's latest attempt to turn back decades of decentralisation by Chinese leaders that began under Deng and continued through other leaders like Jiang Zemin - a sign that China might be moving back to a so-called cult of personality. The four-day closed door session gathered more than 370 full and alternate members of the party's 19th Central Committee - the country's top leadership.



It was the last major meeting of party leaders ahead of the national congress next year, where Xi is expected to seek a historic third term as president. In 2018, China scrapped the two-term limit on the presidency, effectively allowing him to remain in power for life. Essentially, it cements Mr Xi's hold on power, experts told the BBC. "He is trying to cast himself as the hero in the epic of China's national journey," said Adam Ni, editor of China Neican, a newsletter on Chinese current affairs. "By pushing through a historical resolution that puts himself at the centre of the grand narrative of the Party and modern China, Mr Xi is demonstrating his power. But the document is also a tool to help him retain this power," he said. Dr Chong Ja Ian from the National University of Singapore said the latest move set Mr Xi apart from other previous Chinese leaders.

SC issues
written
verdict in APS
suo motu case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court of Pakistan Thursday issued a written order of Wednesday's hearing in the suo motu case pertaining to the 2014 Army Public School (APS) massacre in Peshawar.

The order has been written by Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Gulzar Ahmed. The decision of October 20 has also been made a part of the order. The written order stated that Prime Minister Imran Khan informed the court that he had read the October 20 judgement and assured the apex court that the state would fulfill its responsibility. The Attorney General said that the state would deal with all those responsible for the tragedy and the prime minister has assured the parents of providing them justice. The order further stated that the parents couldn't bear the deaths of their children and hold those responsible mentioned in the October 20 order. "The government should prepare a report in four weeks along with the parents and submit the report in the court with PM's signatures," the order said.

Delhi's summit fails
to equate terrorism
with Afghanistan

Pakistan had already issued a dossier last year specifically pointing out the operation of 66 Indian-funded terrorist training camps

ISLAMABAD: The Regional Summit on Afghanistan in New Delhi failed to achieve the Indian objective of indirectly raising the bogey of terrorism in Afghanistan as a separate statement issued by Russia did not highlight the areas pointed by the host country. Two statements, with varying content, were released by Russia and India at the conclusion of the New Delhi Regional Summit on Afghanistan on Wednesday showing differences in their stance on certain issues. The summit was attended by National Security Advisers and Secretaries of the National Security Councils of India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The meeting had no representation from either Afghanistan, China or Pakistan. New Delhi focused on the "threats arising from terrorism, radicalisation and drug trafficking" in Afghanistan, according to the "Delhi Declaration." Ironically, Pakistan had already

issued a dossier last year specifically pointing out the operation of 66 Indian-funded terrorist training camps, in collaboration with Afghan NDS, to carry out subversive activities in Pakistan. Of the 12 points discussed at the meeting, four were related to extremism, terrorism, radicalisation and drug trafficking in Afghanistan, while "humanitarian concerns" were the last in order of priority in a statement released at the end of the meeting by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. However, interestingly, and in a rare move, Russia also issued its own statement, which showed divergent views on at least five areas. On the issue of terrorism, the Delhi Declaration stressed the need "to ensure that Afghanistan would never become a safe haven for global terrorism". However, the statement from Russia skipped that line. Similarly, the Delhi Declaration called for ensuring that the fundamental rights

of women, children and minority communities were not violated. The statement from Russia while mentioning the importance of ensuring the rights of women, children and national minorities, again skipped the words "fundamental" rights and "not violated". The Delhi Declaration stressed "collective cooperation against the menace of radicalization, extremism, separatism and drug trafficking in the region," but the Russian statement made no such mention of "collective cooperation" on these issues. In another instance, the Delhi Declaration recalled "relevant UN Resolutions on Afghanistan" and said the UN has a central role to play in Afghanistan and that its continued presence in the country must be "preserved". The Russian statement said they noted that the UN plays a central role in Afghanistan and the permanent UN presence in the country must be "maintained". — APP

EU organises Business Forum in Karachi

“We hope that the programme will enable exporters to reap full benefit from the EU-granted GSP+ concessions by developing contacts in the EU market” says Ambassador Kaminara

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan is launching the third phase of its first-ever initiative of the EU-Pakistan Business Forum on 17 November 2021 in Karachi to widen bilateral trade opportunities for both the EU and Pakistani businesses. After the two programmes, held at Islamabad and Lahore on

8 September and 13 October respectively, the forthcoming programme in Karachi will be attended by the representatives of local SMEs from key sectors including: the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs), the chemicals and pharmaceuticals, the value added textiles and leather and gems, stones, onyx and jewellery designing. During the Karachi session of the Business Forum, the participants will be informed about



making the Pakistani SMEs a part of the country's export supply chains using the GSP+ scheme granted to Pakistan by the European Union. The programme will also help identify new sectors for expanding the export base and bring diversification in exports. GSP+ provides two thirds of tariff lines duty free access to the EU market with the rest on preferential duties. The EU Ambassador to Pakistan Androulla Kaminara said, "We

are coming to Karachi on 17 November, with the third episode of the EU-Pakistan Business Forum, with the confidence that it will widen trade opportunities - especially for the small and medium enterprises. We hope that the programme will enable exporters to reap full benefit from the EU-granted GSP+ concessions by developing contacts in the EU market and pave the way for the SMEs to become engines for development."