



# Islamabad POST

Saturday, November 13, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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**Qatar will handle US interests in the Afghanistan: Blinken**

Detailed News On Page-06

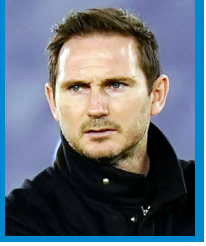
**75% Afghan girls are back to schools**

Detailed News On Page-08



**Frank Lampard pulls out of Norwich talks**

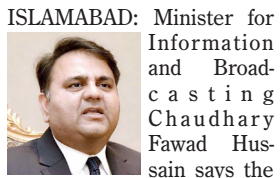
Detailed News On Page-06



## Briefs

**PTI Govt working to control inflation**

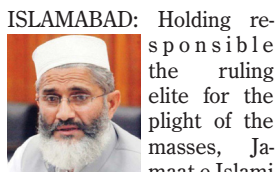
DNA



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Hussain says the PTI Government is taking all possible steps to control inflation. He was briefing the media after PTT's Core Committee meeting held in Islamabad today [Friday] with Prime Minister Imran Khan in the chair. The Minister said inflation is a global phenomenon due to Covid-19 pandemic. He said the meeting discussed the inflation issue in detail and decided to increase funding under different initiatives including health, Ehsaas and Kamyab Pakistan to facilitate the people. He said the government is also committed to electoral reforms in the country to ensure free, fair and transparent elections and the Speaker of the National Assembly is in contact with the opposition to develop consensus in this regard.

**PTI govt 'agent of status quo'**

STAFF REPORT



ISLAMABAD: Holding responsible the ruling elite for the plight of the masses, Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Sirajul Haq has called for launching a peaceful mass movement to get rid of the feudal lords and corrupt capitalists to put the country on track. "Pakistani labor class work day and night in foreign countries and send money to Pakistan while the rulers stash their billions in foreign accounts," he said while addressing a press conference on Friday. Sirajul Haq declared it as an irony when the PML-N and the PPP talked about the rights of masses. "There is no difference in policies of the PTI, the PML-N and the PPP. They all do politics of self-interests." He said the prime minister's slogans and claims to launch a war on corruption proved white lie.

## Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. - Editor

## Inside...

- Italian envoy for enhancing trade ties with Pakistan - Page 02
- 500 Global, Chairman STZA discuss technology potential - Page 03
- PRCS donates 200,000 COVID vaccines to GoP - Page 04
- Biden should reject US return to Iran nuclear deal - Page 05
- Blinken says Qatar to handle US interests in Afghanistan - Page 06
- EU sees 'progress' on migrant crisis after Belarus flight ban - Page 07
- Hope TTP ceasefire deal turns into lasting peace: Afghan FM - Page 08

## PM calls for unfreezing Afghan assets

PM Khan meets Troika Plus states' representatives; says peace and stability in Afghanistan important for region

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has once again stressed the need for providing financial aid to Afghanistan in a meeting with members of Troika Plus, hoping that the international community would understand the gravity of the situation in the neighbouring country. Speaking during the meeting which was attended by members of Troika Plus belonging from China, Russia, United States and Pakistan, the prime minister said that they had always stressed a political settlement of the Afghanistan issue. "The international community should now help Afghanistan to deal with the humanitarian and economic woes of the country," he said while lauding the members for making the Troika Plus meeting a success. Imran Khan said peace and stability in Afghanistan are important for the prosperity of the region. "There is no military solution in Afghanistan and Pakistan has always supported a comprehensive political settlement," he said. The prime minister further said that there is an immediate need of unfreezing the assets of Afghanistan and other measures to help the country.

**PM Khan hints at allowing Indian wheat via Pakistan**

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan conveyed that in the current context Pakistan would favourably consider the request by Afghan brothers for transportation of wheat offered by India through Pakistan on exceptional basis for humanitarian purposes and as per modalities to be worked out. Amir Khan Muttaqi, Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, called on Prime Minister Imran Khan. He was accompanied by Acting Ministers for Finance as well as Industry & Commerce and other senior members of the Afghan delegation. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's support to Afghanistan and the Afghan people in overcoming the dire challenges being faced by their country. The Prime Minister stressed the vital importance of a peaceful, stable, sovereign, prosperous and connected Afghanistan for Pakistan and the region.

Continued on Page 06

## Global convergence needed on Afghanistan

During meetings with representatives of China, US, Russia; Army Chief stressed need to avert humanitarian crisis from Afghanistan



**RAWALPINDI: United States (US) Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West Friday called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa here at General Headquarters (GHQ). - DNA**

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: United States (US) Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West Friday called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa here at General Headquarters (GHQ). Speaking on the occasion, the Army Chief reiterated the need for global convergence on Afghanistan for avoiding looming human-

itarian crisis and coordinated efforts for economic uplift of the Afghan people. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, current security situation in Afghanistan and bilateral cooperation in various fields were discussed, said an ISPR media release. The COAS said that Pakistan desired to maintain the tradition of bilateral engagement and wish for long term and multi-domain enduring relationship with United States.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in Afghan situation, special efforts for border management, role in regional stability and pledged to play his part for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels. Separately, Zamir Kabulov, Special Representative of President of the Russian Federation on Afghanistan, called on

Continued on Page 06

## Switzerland lauds Pakistan's help in Afghan evacuations

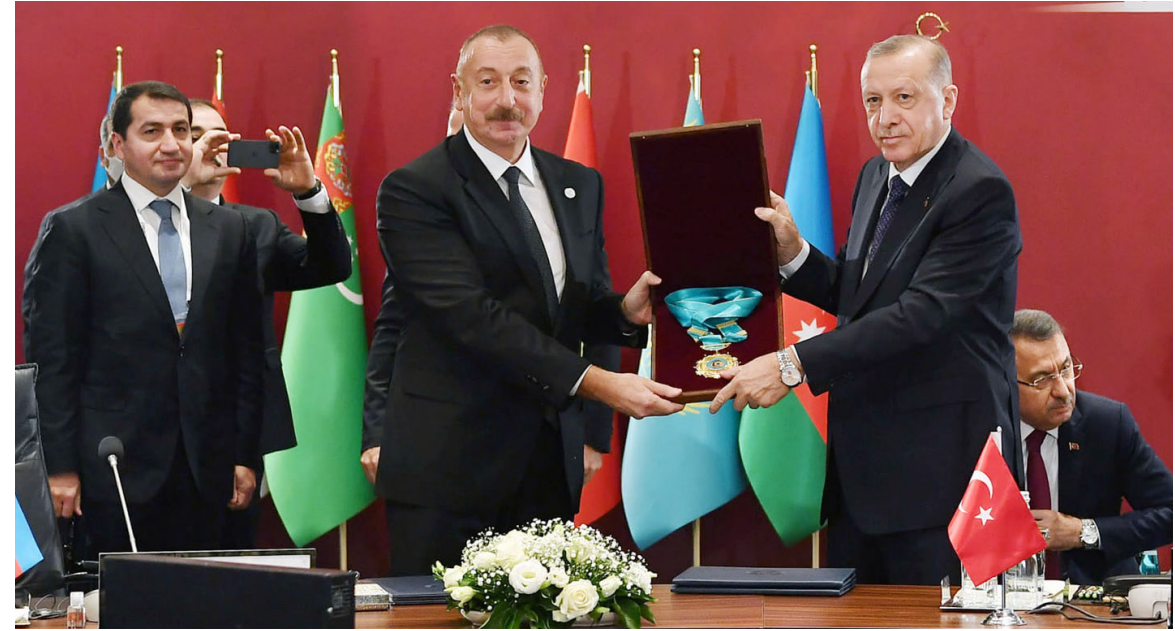
The two sides exchanged views on bilateral relations, including political, economic, trade and investment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 11th round of Bilateral Political Consultations between Pakistan and Switzerland was held in Islamabad on Friday. Dr Muhammad Tariq, Additional Secretary (Europe), led the Pakistan side, while the Swiss side was headed by Ambassador Raphael Nageli, Assistant Secretary of State for Asia and Pacific, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). The two sides exchanged views on bilateral relations, including political, econom-



**ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Sohail Mehmood presents a souvenir to Ambassador Raphael Nageli. - DNA**



**ISTANBUL: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan presents Turkey's highest award to President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev. - DNA**

**President Ilham gets highest Turkish award**

New building of the Secretariat of the Cooperation Council of the Turkic-Speaking States was also inaugurated

DNA

ISTANBUL: The 8th Summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States has kicked off in Istanbul (Turkey). Azertag reported. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev attends the event. Prior to the event, the heads of state and government posed together for a group photo. The Turkish president then presented the "Supreme Order of Turkic World" to Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev. Earlier, a ceremony to inaugurate a new building of

**3 dead in Nangarhar mosque blast**

NANGARHAR: At least three people were killed and 15 wounded on Friday by a blast at a mosque in Afghanistan's restive Nangarhar province, a hotbed of activity for the militant Islamic State (IS) group, officials said. The blast - for which no group has yet claimed responsibility - underscores one of the many challenges facing the new Taliban regime in Afghanistan, with the United Nations warning the country is also on the brink of the world's worst humanitarian crisis. It happened during Friday prayers in Spin Ghar district of the eastern province, near the border with Pakistan. "I can confirm a blast during Friday prayers inside a mosque in Spin Ghar district. There are casualties and fatalities," a Taliban official told AFP. - Agencies

## Govt to face a united opposition, warns Fazl

- Bilawal says govt suffering defeat after defeat due to unity in opposition ranks



SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rahman has said that the Opposition will unitedly go into the joint session of the parliament to take on the government. He was addressing a joint news conference along with Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari who called on him at his residence in Islamabad on Friday afternoon. Maulana Fazl said the whole nation was facing a tough situation. "It's need of the hour and demand of the public to oust this fake

government," he added. Maulana Fazl said if the government went ahead with its plan to do legislation in the joint session of the parliament through its fake 'numbers' then it would be a dictatorial step. He said the opposition will play its due role by upholding the parliamentary traditions and will foil government's 'dirty tactics'. Responding to a question, he said Bilawal Butto had come to visit him because "we have a link spanning over three generations". Bilawal Bhutto said the government is suffering defeat after defeat due to the unity in the opposition ranks.

Continued on Page 06

**Govt to convene joint session on Nov 16**

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to convene a joint session of the Parliament on November 16. The government took the decision after getting assurances from the allied parties that they would extend support to the government in the joint session. According to sources, allies will back the government during the joint session. On Wednesday last, the PTL-led government had postponed the joint session of the parliament after not getting the support of its allies for the passage of the proposed bills. The allied parties of the government especially the PML-Q and the MQM-P declined to extend their support in the joint session.

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Continued on Page 06



# Italian envoy for enhancing trade ties with Pakistan

Amb. Andreas said that he was taking fundamental steps to strengthen bilateral relations and promote economic relations between the two countries on a long term basis

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Cooperation between Italy and Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) is imperative for the branding of quality textile products of Faisalabad and developing Faisalabad as the hub of the fashion design industry of the world, said Mr. Andreas Ferrarese ambassador of Italy.

He was talking to Atif Munnir Sheikh, President FCCI. They discussed various measures to enhance bilateral trade between the two

countries with a special focus on Faisalabad related industry. Ambassador Andreas Ferrarese said that he was taking fundamental steps to strengthen bilateral relations and promote economic relations between the two countries on a long term basis. President FCCI was of the opinion that both countries have potential to enhance their bilateral trade up to five billion dollars but to achieve these objectives, direct relations between their private sectors is imperative. He said that most of

the textile units are already using Italian machinery and now time has come for Italian investors to manufacture the latest version of their textile machinery in Faisalabad. He said that we have a state of the art industrial estate which will also provide a ten year tax holiday to the foreign investors. He said that Italian experts could also help us with the branding of our quality textile products. He said that the fashion designing industry is yet another field where we

could enter into the potential global markets with the help of Italian experts. He thanked Italian ambassador for the establishment of textile technology centre in the National Textile University and said that some Italian investors have already launched joint ventures with local investors in Faisalabad however there is still room to attract FDI from Italy. He also invited the Italian ambassador to visit FCCI and discuss various measures to promote bilateral relations between the two countries.



FAISALABAD: Andreas Ferrarese, ambassador of Italy exchanging views with Atif Munnir Sheikh, President FCCI. – DNA

## Govt to drop 40 charges against Saad Rizvi, others

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The interior ministry has Friday decided to withdraw over 40 cases against Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) leader Saad Rizvi and others in going forward with the said agreement the government had with the previously proscribed party whose ban was revoked just the past week.

The cases against the now de-proscribed hardliner religious party whose sentences are three-year or than that will be repealed by the government, the sources inside ministry told. But the concession is not limited to those 40 cases only, which only marks the first phase of the yield to the agreement the government hammered out with TLP. The sources have added that in the second phase, cases with sentences up to five years will also be revoked and that the government of Punjab has already begun taking steps to that effect.

Just yesterday, the government implemented yet another point of an agreement reached with Tehreek-e-Labbak Pakistan (TLP) as it removed the name of the organisation's chief Saad Rizvi from the Fourth Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

## Tomato made Rs23 pricier this week

KARACHI: The weekly inflation has noted 1.81 per cent increase across the country with 30 essential food items recording an increase to a point that just a kilogram of tomatoes was made Rs23 pricier, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported Friday. The PBS report noted a record 17.37 pc yearly inflation in the country based on data it collected from 50 markets across 17 Pakistani cities.

The Sensitive Price Index – a weekly inflationary indicator that measures the change in the cost of a fixed basket of goods – for the current week ended on 11th November recorded an increase of 1.81 pc, said the PBS weekly report. – DNA

## 'Govt serious in introducing mechanized mining'

DNA

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has said that the government is serious in introducing mechanized mining and for this purpose formal legislation has also been made.

He was talking to a delegation of Mohmand Marble/Mines Association here in Chief Minister's House, the other day said an official handout issued here on Friday. Besides, Advisor to KP CM on Minerals, Arif Ahmadzai, and other concerned authorities were also present on the occasion.

The delegation briefed the chief minister regarding



problems faced by the marble industry of district Mohmand, particularly the closure of Ziarat marble mine, provision of soft loans, importance of mechanized mining and collective promotion of industries in the newly merged districts. The chief minister termed mechanized mining as

the need of the hour that will not only help prevent accidents rather will also increase the receipt of the government.

The delegation while highlighting their problems before the chief minister talked about hardships in the export of goods from marble factories and that it requires concrete roads to bear the load of heavy vehicles.

They said that since the accident, Ziarat mine is still closed, which has inflicted heavy losses on industrialists. They further informed that a meeting has been held with the authorities of the Industries Department for provision of soft loans and called for further progress on the issue.

## ECP allots symbols to NA-133 candidates sans PTI

DNA

LAHORE: The Election Commission of Pakistan has allotted election symbols to candidates vying for the NA-133 seat with an exception of ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), whose candidates

were disqualified from participating in the polls. According to details, the election symbols were allotted to 11 candidates vying for the polls including Arrow being allotted to PPP candidate Aslam Gill, and lion to Shaista Pervaiz Malik of PML-N.

The PTI election symbol of 'bat' was not allotted to any candidate after the party's candidate Jamshed Iqbal Cheema's nomination papers were rejected and his plea for participating in the by-poll is pending with the Lahore High Court.

The nomination papers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) candidates, Jamshed Iqbal Cheema and Musarat Iqbal Cheema, in NA-133 Lahore, were rejected by the Election Commission

during a scrutiny process. The PML-N had raised objections on the nomination papers of the PTI leaders, highlighting that their proposers and seconders were not from the constituency. The returning officer reviewed the arguments from both sides and later decided to reject the nomination papers.

The Lahore High Court (LHC) chief justice had set up an election appellate tribunal to hear and decide election disputes with regard to the upcoming by-election in NA-133. According to the notification, the tribunal will be headed by Justice Shahid Jameel.

It said the tribunal will begin hearing on the petitions against rejection or acceptance of nomination papers of the candidates from November 1 (today) November 3.

The decisions will be made on the pleas until November 9. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announced to hold the by-election in the NA-133 constituency on December 05.

## Plan needed to avert human crisis in Afghanistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Security Adviser Dr Moeed Yusuf here on Friday said that Afghan women and children

were in dire need of assistance and the world community must come up with a plan to avert any humanitarian crisis in the land locked country. He stated this while talking to a five-member US delegation led by Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West. During the meeting, both the sides discussed the prevailing situation in Afghanistan, said a news release.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Moeed Yusuf suggested that world needed to devise a system through which aid could reach Afghans before spike in winter season. "Taliban need to be included in constructive dialogue because the political vacuum and instability will prove to be beneficial for terrorist organizations," Dr Moeed Yusuf said.

## DC visits registration branch of revenue dept

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad paid a surprise visit to the Revenue Office to review the departmental performance and listened to the problems of some people present there. Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Fazel e Rabi Cheema and other officers were also present on the occasion. While inspecting the registration branch and other departments, Deputy Commissioner ordered a departmental inquiry against the absent revenue staff and said that other staff including patwaris should not be absent from their offices without any reason so that the citizens who come for office work do not face any difficulty. He directed to show good faith and honesty in the conduct of official affairs and said that all records should be kept accurate and departmental proceedings should be kept transparent.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's adviser Tahir Ashrafi takes a selfie with the visiting Afghan Foreign Minister. – DNA

## Dengue claims three more lives in Punjab

DNA

LAHORE: Dengue fever claimed three more lives in Punjab including two in metropolis Lahore and one in Gujranwala while infecting hundreds more across the country.

Punjab Health Department said that 371 new cases registered in Punjab including most number of cases 283 in Lahore. Two people lost their lives in Lahore and one other person lost his life's battle against the deadly dengue in Gujranwala in last 24 hours.

Punjab's dengue-affected patients tally reached to 20558, said Punjab Health Secretary Imran Sikandar Baloch. There are 1357 patients being admitted in Lahore's hospitals and 1993 across province. In Islamabad, 48 people infected with dengue fever including 28 from rural areas and 17 from urban areas taking the tally to 4292 in Islamabad Capital Territory. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 167 new people infected with dengue fever virus and the total number of dengue patients reached 8977 in north-western province KP.

## Vaccination against Measles, Rubella starts

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: A 10-days vaccination campaign against Measles and Rubella diseases started here on Friday under which 23,36,000 children aged nine to 15 months would be vaccinated. Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Capt (Retd), Khalid Mahmood inaugurated the campaign that would continue till November 27 in the provincial capital. As many as 1,509 teams have been constituted for the vaccination drive. The DC urged parents to bring their children to nearby hospitals and basic health units if vaccination team would not visit them.

## UAF students apprise farmers of modern trends

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: As many as 20,000 students of the University of Agriculture Faisalabad will leave for nine-day farmers' fields visit in five divisions of the province from November 12 (today) in order to disseminate new wheat technologies for increasing three maunds per acre production. The students will move with Agriculture Extension Department officials and staff during the Punjab Government wheat campaign.

UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan while presiding over a meeting on wheat campaign said that the students will move with Agriculture Extension Department officials and staff during the Punjab Govern-

ment wheat campaign. He said that the students will go to five divisions including Gujranwala, Lahore, Sargodha, Faisalabad and Sahiwal to equip the farming community with the latest agricultural trends, practices and researches. He said that in 2008-2009, Pakistan imported three million tonnes of wheat. After that, the UAF students went to villages to villages under wheat campaign and informed the farmers about the latest methods, resulted in wheat production upto five million metric tonnes in 2010.

He said that Pakistan's average yield per acre is 31 million while progressive farmers were getting up to 60 million. He said under the auspices of Punjab government, the winner of wheat

competition got a yield of up to 92 million per acre. He said that under the nine-day wheat campaign, three days road show, four days training of farmers, smart farmer gathering and grand rally would be organized. He said that proper use of fertilizer would help increase productivity and improve the economic condition of farmers.

He stressed upon the need to shun the broadcasting method of sowing. The campaign is the joint efforts of DG Extension Punjab Anjum Ali and Director Extension Faisalabad Abdul Hameed with UAF. Dr Amanullah Malik Dean, Faculty of Agriculture; and Prof Dr Jalal Arif, Principal Officer, Public Relations and Publications are the focal persons of the program.

## Awareness needed to shun breast cancer taboos

Expressing concern over the 40,000 deaths due to breast cancer every year, she told that it was the time for the women to realise the gravity of the situation and be concerned about their health

KARACHI: First Lady Begum Samina Arif Alvi, wife of President Dr Arif Alvi, on Friday emphasized that with a fifty percent female population, there was a need to shun the taboos affiliated with breast cancer to encourage women to seek timely medical consultation. Addressing the "Breast Cancer Awareness, Differently Aabled Persons and Women Empowerment Seminar" organized here by University of Karachi; she added that one in every eight women in the country is at the risk of breast cancer, besides one woman falling victim to the disease every 13 minutes.

Expressing concern over the 40,000 deaths due to breast cancer every year, she told that it was the time for the women to realise the gravity of the situation and be concerned about their health. She said the survival rate of breast cancer patients across the globe was about 95-98 percent compared with 45 percent in Pakistan due to late diagnosis.

First Lady, who is leading the nationwide breast cancer awareness campaign, urged the women in the country to get to know the symptoms of breast cancer and practice every month the five-minute routine of self-examination.

Early diagnosis is the best cure against breast cancer instead of the expensive and painful treatment at later stages of the dis-

ease, Samina Alvi said, informing that in Pakistan with 100,000 new cancer patients every year, breast cancer was most prevalent as compared to its other forms. She informed that a healthy lifestyle, balanced diet, and physical exercise could im-

prove the health of women and could also contribute to minimizing the chances of a fatal disease. She stressed upon men to extend support to women in their families suffering from breast cancer or in need of medical advice.

A healthy and empowered woman could bring about a positive change in society, she reiterated. She asked that the women and Differently Aabled Person should get benefits from the business loans offered by the government and the State Bank of Pakistan. Begum Samina Arif Alvi thanked the media for supporting the cause as the breast cancer issue was being given the space in broadcast and publications besides running of the public service messages. She apprised that provincial governments were also being approached for the cause.

She mentioned that the work of compiling the data of infected patients of breast cancer would also commence. She mentioned the immense support rendered by civil and military departments, welfare organizations, media and educational institutions in this regard. She said though October was marked across the country as breast cancer awareness month but the message needed to be spread persistently throughout the year. She called upon the students of University to spread the awareness message to other women around them.

On the occasion, Vice Chancellor University of Karachi, Professor Dr. Khalid M. Ibraqi also spoke and urged the students to spread the awareness message among other students. – APP





## SERVICES



## Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	05:11 am
Zohr.....	11:52 am
Asr.....	03:29 pm
Maghrib.....	05:07 pm
Isha.....	06:32 pm



## Hotels &amp; Restaurants

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



## Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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## Emergency

Rescue (Police).....	15	
Bomb Disposal.....	15	
Fire Services Rawalpindi/	Islamabad.....	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.....	1122	
& Rescue Services.....	4451122	
Motorway Police.....	9266044	
Motorway Police.....	9270601-20	
Women Police Stations	Islamabad.....	9222596
Rawalpindi.....	9270601-20	



## Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....	115
PIA Flight Info.....	114
PIA Cargo.....	9280979
Railway Inquiry.....	117
Railway Exchange.....	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.....	5555864
CAA.....	9281092



## Hospitals

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



## Departments

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



## Complaints

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

## Islamabad Metropolitan

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

## Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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## 500 Global, Chairman STZA discuss technology potential

Chairman STZA invites Ms. Powell for a visit to Pakistan to meet startups, incubators, local venture capitalists, and other stakeholders in the public and private sector

## NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation from global venture capital firm 500 Global visited the Special Technology Zones Authority (STZA) in Islamabad to meet with Chairman STZA Mr. Amer Hashmi and his team. The delegation from 500 Global included Chief Operating Officer and Managing Partner Courtney Powell, Board Member Max Scheder-Bieschin, and Alysia Lopez, Executive Assistant to 500 Global's CEO Christine Tsai and Ms. Powell. Ms. Powell had previously met with the STZA delegation, led by Chairman Hashmi, last month in Dubai, to discuss investment opportunities and the burgeoning tech startup ecosystem in Pakistan. Chairman STZA invited Ms. Powell for a visit to Pakistan to meet startups, incubators, local venture capitalists, and other stakeholders in the public and private sector that are working towards technology-driven growth in the country. In the meeting held at STZA's Office, Chairman STZA and Ms. Powell discussed her experience visiting the tech startup community in the country,



the support and mentorship that 500 Global can provide to startup founders to scale their ventures, and the firm's plans to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan. Both parties agreed to work together to identify and explore mutual areas of interest to foster innovation and promote a technology-driven knowledge ecosystem. The STZA team briefed 500 Global about the Special Technology Zones (STZs) creat-

ed by the Government of Pakistan to attract foreign direct investment, allow technology transfer, boost technology exports, prioritize research & development, and foster job creation for Pakistani youth. The STZA aims to build knowledge ecosystems that will harness Pakistan's technology potential and set the country on the trajectory of an entrepreneurial, innovative, and tech-driven future for shared prosperity and inclusive growth. "We welcome 500 Global to Pakistan and look forward to working closely with them to support the startup and technology sector in Pakistan," said Chairman STZA, who also reinforced the government's commitment to facilitating global venture investment in the STZs. Ms. Powell noting the government's commitment to facilitate the growth of the country's high-potential technology sector, said "We met fantastic founders in Pakistan during our visit and truly appreciate the incentives that the government has offered in its Special Technology Zones". The visit has also helped us understand how we can equip founders to establish themselves on a global level."

## Healthcare services to be ensured for people

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination Dr. Faisal Sultan on Friday said that the government was committed to provide best medical services at public hospitals for citizens across the country.

Talking to the media after inaugurating upgradation of Medical and Surgical ICU at Federal Government Polyclinic (FGPC) hospital, he said improving the health sector is among the top priorities of Prime Minister Imran Khan. He said that the construction of a hospital will be started soon at G-11 Islamabad and funds have been allocated for this purpose.

Dr. Faisal said that innovative steps were being taken to further improve the facilities and the public-private partnership was essential in that regard. He said that the present government had paid special focus on the health sector by starting several mega projects. He said that effective measures were being adopted to achieve targets of universal health coverage (UHC). He said that the government was working for the expansion of universal health coverage (UHC) by investing in health systems, especially in Primary Health Care (PHC), and was committed to implement its agenda to achieve the target of UHC. - APP

## Islamabad police bust notorious dacoits' gang

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad capital police (ICT) busted an eight member notorious gang known as the "Ghani gang" that was involved in house robberies in different areas of the Capital.

Addressing a press conference on Friday, Deputy Inspector General of Police (Operations) Alzaal Ahmed Kausar along with SSP (Operations) Syed Ali Akbar Shah and SP (Investigation) Liaqat Hyat Niazi, said that CIA police busted a notorious gang involved in several robbery and burglary incidents in Islamabad.

He said that ring leader of this gang identified as Abdul Ghani alias Abdul Wahid Usman had named it as "Ghani Gang" and it was wanted to police for last 15 years. The modes operands of the gang was to enter houses through adjacent nullahs and make the inmates hostage at gun point and later decamp in Afghanistan.

They used to keep cutters, weapons, iron rods with them and barged in multiple houses in areas of Golra, Shalimar, Khanna, Shehzad town, Bani Gala and Aabpara police stations. They confessed to commit dacoity at the house of a federal secretary and Orchard Scheme at Murree road while police recovered diamonds worth Rs. 7.5 million, 60 tola gold ornaments, mobile phones, cash, weapons and ammunition from their possession. - APP

## Sleep disorders linked to Covid: Study

ISLAMABAD: A new research has shown a 31 per cent increased risk for hospitalisation and mortality in patients with sleep-disordered breathing and sleep-related hypoxia. The findings of the study were published in the journal 'JAMA Network Open'. The research team, led by Reena Mehra, MD, analysed retrospective data from 5,400 Cleveland Clinic patients. Medical Daily reported. The findings showed that while patients with sleep-disordered breathing and sleep-related hypoxia do not have an increased risk of developing COVID-19, they have a worse clinical prognosis from the disease.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues and the disease remains highly variable from patient to patient, it is critical to improving our ability to predict who will have a more severe illness so that we can appropriately allocate resources," said Dr Mehra, director of Sleep Disorder Research at Cleveland Clinic, American academic medical center based in Cleveland, Ohio. - APP

## FPCCI working to resolve importers' issues: Qurban Ali

## NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: MR. QURBAN ALI head FPCCI Capital office held meeting with Gilgit Baltistan (GB) Prominent Business Men, Haji Muhammad Hassan & Haji Fida Muhammad. Problems faced by the business community of GB were also discussed in the said meeting.

Electricity and Petroleum Price hike is the major reason of inflation in the market, and it is the need of time that government has to take serious steps for cut in price of Petrol and electricity so it can positively affect trade and industry sector in the country. And the FPCCI platform is available to resolve all kind of issues/problems faced by the business community of Gilgit Baltistan, also will try to resolve all technical problems of importers of Gilgit Baltistan, Qurban Ali added here.

President FPCCI Mian Naseer Hyatt Maggo, Senior Vice President Mr. Shahzeb Akram, our leaders in Business community and FPCCI Capital office Islamabad is always available to serve the Business Community of the country, and ready to fight for their legal rights, and

the platform of FPCCI is always available to resolve the issues of Business Community of Pakistan. FPCCI leadership is working day and night for progressive change in the trade and industry sector of the country. And soon FPCCI will take on board Minister for Finance, Advisor for Trade to have detail meeting to resolve the problems of Business men of the country, Qurban Ali added here. Government has to provide special relief to the businessmen of the country, and have to create business friendly environment for the investors and traders all over the country, so the investors and traders can do their businesses in easy going way, and with their help jobs can be created. And also it can help to enhance the foreign currency reserves. On the other hand government has to take seriously these advices ass addition in the Next financial year budget. FPCCI is the forum of and forum for the business community of Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Denmark Lise Rosenholm interacts with the students of NUML. - DNA

## Domestic sector to get gas 3 times a day



ISLAMABAD: The government is going to provide gas to the residential sector only three times a day with the 'bare minimum supply of liquefied natural gas (LNG)' during December through March of upcoming winter to minimise gas shortages in the country. This is part of the Gas Load Management Plan for winter 2021-22 presented to the Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) at a meeting presided over by Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar. "Gas to residential sector shall be provided three times a day for cooking only," the meeting was informed by the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division), adding that "RLNG diversion [to domestic consumers] to be made bare minimum keeping in view the operational stability of the system". It reported lower LNG availability in the coming months, particularly January, February and March. However, the Petroleum Division showed relatively smaller deficits against the demand based on clear intention that the bare minimum LNG would be allowed to flow to the residential sector. With these principles in mind, total shortfalls in December would be around 22mmcf (million cubic feet per day), increasing to 137mmcf in January and then going down to 75mmcf in February and March. The meeting was informed that gas supply to dedicated consumers - power and fertiliser sectors - on independent system outside the national pipeline network was expected to remain stable without any unforeseen eventuality. In this category, the supply and demand would remain unchanged and range between 1,061 and 1,200 million cubic feet. In the pipeline network, power plants on the SNGPL system will be provided RLNG as per the actual consumption of winter of last year with five per cent more supplies and any deficit will be recouped through furnace oil. Fertiliser plants on both SSGCL and SNGPL systems are expected to operate uninterrupted and any local gas or imported RLNG diverted from captive power plants of the exports sector after switching to power grid will be supplied to the export industry. - DNA

## PUC urges leadership to avert Afghan crisis

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ulema Council (PUC) on Friday urged the leaders of Islamic world to immediately start a consultative process to address the looming humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, said Special Representative to the Prime Minister for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi. Talking to media, Ashrafi, who was also PUC Chairman said the letter has been written to over 70 leaders, religious scholars and others, asking them to initiate a dialogue process with the incumbent government in Afghanistan with objectives to resolve all the prevailing problems and issues. With the onset of winter, the crisis from food to medicine and the rising activities of international terrorists organizations in Afghanistan, it is becoming clear and evident that if the Islamic world and world leadership do not resolve the issue through dialogue and cooperation with Afghanistan (Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan), the possible threats of extremism and terrorism could increase once more not only for the countries of the region but also for the world, said the letter. - DNA

## RCCI 'Pindi Food Festival' begins at Ayub Park

RAWALPINDI: A three-day "Pindi Food Festival" being organized by the RCCI begins at Ayub Park from November 12 to 14. Chairman Kashmir Committee Shariyar Afridi inaugurated the food festival at Ayub Park. RCCI President Chaudhry Nadeem Rauf, Group Leader Sohail Altaf, Senior Vice President Asim Malik, Vice President Talat Awan, executive members and a large number of stall owners were present on the occasion. Chairman Kashmir Committee Shariyar Afridi visited various stalls and appreciated the local food and products.



He said that the efforts of Rawalpindi Chamber for the promotion of business activities and promotion of local festivity were commendable. I assure the full support and cooperation of the Rawalpindi Chamber regarding the establishment of Industrial Zones along Ring Road. I will convey the suggestions of the Chamber regarding the Industrial Zones and Expo Center to the Prime Minister. I am happy that women entrepreneurs have also set up stalls.

The RCCI's efforts to empower women are commendable, he added. Chamber President Nadeem Rauf said that after the lifting of business restrictions due to Covid, Rawalpindi Chamber has organized a food festival to promote business activities. He said that the hotels and the restaurant industry had been badly affected due to the coronavirus pandemic while trade activities were restored after restrictions which was a good sign for businesses. RCCI

would make all-out efforts to make it a business cum family event, adding it was an opportunity for the traders to get exposure and display their products and services for potential customers. Earlier, Member National Assembly Sheikh Rashid Shafiq also attended the food festival and visited the stalls. A musical evening has also been arranged for the entertainment of families on the occasion of the ongoing three-day food festival at Ayub Park. - DNA

## Group constituted to combat cyber frauds

Sania Nishtar constitutes a joint group with PTA, FIA and other stake holders to tackle cyber frauds in Ehsaas welfare program

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar, SAPM convened a meeting on cyber security and measures to combat fraud and disinformation through cell phone SMS, websites and apps. The meeting brought together senior officials and representatives from Law Division, security agencies, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and cellular mobile operators on the table. Chairman PTA, Maj Gen (Rtd) Amir Azeem Bajwa along with senior officials of Ehsaas including Secretary Ismat Tahira and DG Technology Mir Anwar were also present in the meeting. Bringing rich perspectives to the table, participants discussed the issues of fake websites, fake SMS, fake Whatsapp messages, fake apps, collecting information

and defrauding innocent people using the name of Ehsaas. "To ensure zero tolerance towards digital and cyber frauds, Ehsaas

will work together with all stakeholders", vowed Dr. Sania. She constituted a joint working group with senior officials and



representatives from Ehsaas Technology team, PTA and Security Agencies. "The working group will meet on the weekly cadence to map the snags in the technological ecosystem and will devise an oversight mechanism and legal amendments in the existing laws with zero tolerance for any fraudulent activity through fake SMS, Whatsapp messages, fake apps and websites", said Dr. Sania. "I will attend weekly meetings personally", she added. Miscreants create fake websites and mobile applications to defraud poor people and prospective Ehsaas beneficiaries. "Scammers who sends fake messages and calls to deceive poor potential /existing beneficiaries will be dealt with strictly", said Sania. To tackle the menace, PTA, security agencies, Law Division, Telcos and other stakeholders assured full cooperation and support to Ehsaas.



## Briefs

## PDM seeks corruption cases closure

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farukh Habib on Friday said that

the politically unemployed leadership of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) has only one point agenda of seeking closure of their corruption cases.

Talking to a private TV channel, he said PDM leadership had virtually become irrelevant in country's politics as they had neither any ideology nor any agenda for the welfare of the masses.

Commenting on Fazl-Bilawal meeting, he said PDM Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had recently been talking about stabbing each other in the back. Both the leaders were holding such meetings in past also and issuing only shallow statements.

The government wanted to summon joint sitting of the parliament for making important legislation to make the electoral process transparent. It wanted to introduce comprehensive electoral reforms and promulgate important welfare oriented laws in the country.

Unfortunately, he said opposition was creating obstacles in transparent and flawless elections as they were "rigged parties," making noise of rigging and did not cooperate with the government in making the electoral process transparent.

## Auto sector witnessing growth

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Industries and Production Aliya Hamza Friday informed the National Assembly that the auto sector is witnessing unprecedented growth.

Responding to question during questions hours, she said 21 new entrants have entered the country's auto market. She said the cement export has increased 64 per cent over the last three years.

She said that the price of cement has been increased by 19.62% during the tenure of the incumbent government due to a significant increase in the prices of coal in the international market.

To another question, she said, that the Utility Stores Corporation of Pakistan has been provided subsidy since January 8 2020 for protecting vulnerable families from rising sugar prices. She said that about 1200 Utility Stores outlets operating across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

## PSX loses 599 points; closes at 45,749

ISLAMABAD: The KSE 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Friday, losing 599.03 points, with a negative change of 1.29 per cent, closing at 45,749.15 points against 46,348.18 points on the last working day.

A total of 192,466,529 shares were traded during the day compared to the trade of 269,512,154 shares the previous day whereas the price of shares stood at Rs7.664 billion against Rs9.488 billion the previous day.

As many as 345 companies' transacted shares in the stock market, 92 of them recorded gain and 236 sustained losses whereas the share price of 17 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Unity Foods Ltd with a volume of 14,885,418 shares and price per share of Rs29, Ghani Glo Hoi with a volume of 14,548,500 and price per share of Rs33.09 and Byco Petroleum with volume of 14,298,000 and price per share of Rs7. Unilever Goods XD witnessed a maximum increase of Rs1080 per share, closing at Rs19479 whereas the runner up was Sapphire Tex, the share prices of which climbed up by Rs70 to Rs1300. — APP

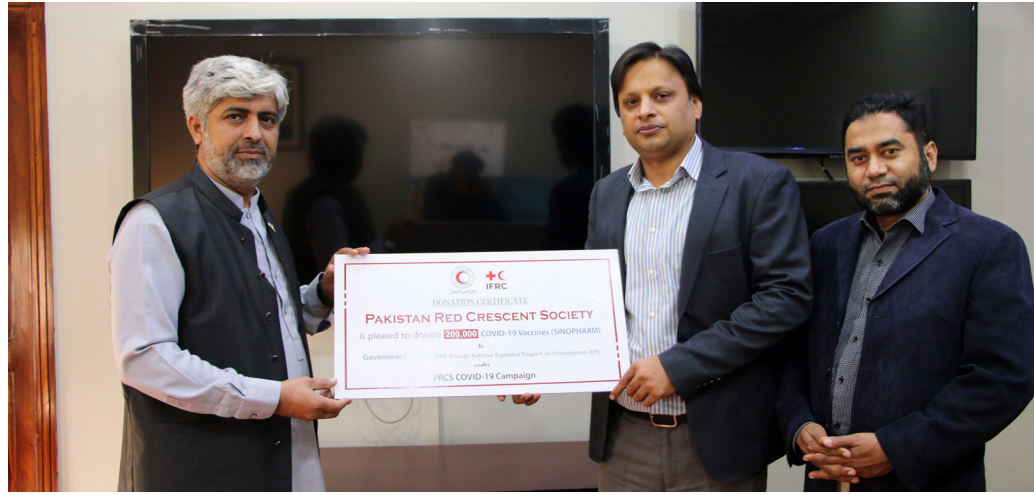
## PRCS donates 200,000 COVID vaccines to GoP

The contribution will supplement the government's continuous efforts to augment the healthcare system; says Abrar ul Haq

MUHAMMAD JABRAAN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) under its COVID-19 campaign, has donated 200,000 Sinopharm vaccines to Government of Pakistan through National Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI). PRCS Secretary General handed over the consignment of vaccines to EPI National Program Manager Dr. Akram Shah during a simple ceremony held at EPI Office here on Friday. The ceremony was attended by PRCS and EPI's officers.

PRCS received this vaccine consignment from Red Cross Society of China last week to utilize this valuable donation for the benefit of the people of Pakistan, in line with the long-standing values and principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. PRCS has been engaged in countrywide awareness campaign to reduce virus transmission by promoting adherence to public safety



health measures among communities, also supporting the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. In his statement to media, Chairman PRCS Abrar ul Haq said PRCS contribution will supplement the government's continuous efforts to augment the healthcare system and provide the best possible care to the people.

He said PRCS teams have been working overtime to handsomely contribute towards the national institutionalized efforts to overcome the spread of the COVID-19 in the country through a robust synergized response. "The reality is that fighting such a deadly pandemic is a collective responsibility where people must do their part

by responsibly getting vaccinated and in order to completely come out of the pandemic, every person needs to get vaccinated with the utmost priority", he added. He said Red Cross Society of China has always been on the forefront in case of any disaster or calamity in Pakistan. We believe that the cooperation and collaboration

between PRCS and RCSC will further augment in the days to come. He thanked the continued support of RCSC to PRCS in the ongoing efforts to control the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. He also hailed the cooperation of Movement Partners; particularly, ICRC, IFRC, and partner National Societies for providing funding support during Covid-19 operations. Abrar ul Haq said PRCS undertook several initiatives during the time of pandemic that included setting up of Muhafiz Force to help people during the lockdown situations, establishment of state-of-the-art Red Crescent Corona Care Hospital that was later designated as Mass Vaccination Center, vaccination static units and door to door vaccination campaign across Pakistan, distribution of food and non-food items among vulnerable communities, installation of hand sanitizers and hand washing stations in public places and provided PPEs to health care workers in hospitals.

## Dr Faisal launches anti-measles drive Campaign targets children aged between 9 months and 15 years

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, Dr. Faisal Sultan on Friday launched a nationwide campaign to immunize more than 90 million children against the deadly Measles and Rubella diseases across the country. More than 386,000 health professionals, including 76,000 vaccinators and over 143,000 social mobilizers were mobilized for the two-week campaign supported by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, UNICEF, WHO and partners.

The campaign targets children aged between nine months and 15 years and those aged up to five will also receive the oral polio vaccine. "Measles and Rubella are contagious diseases and can have severe complications for children even death. An effective vaccine against Measles and Rubella is available to prevent children from the two diseases," Dr Faisal said addressing the occasion.

He said, "I urge both the front line workers to work with dedication and the caregivers to express their support by vaccinating their children against the diseases. "Measles and rubella are a couple of devastating diseases that cause severe sickness

and can take lives," said Dr. Muhammad Akram Shah, National Programme Manager, Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI).

In recent years cases have surged dramatically in Pakistan. "Measles cases rose alarmingly affecting thousands of children and claiming many young lives. We need to vaccinate every child", said Dr. Shah. He said that the campaign will be conducted in public and private health facilities, outreach centres as well as educational facilities, for 12 days from November 15 to November 27. Nearly half of the children who are to be immunized are enrolled in schools.

The MR vaccine will be available in the routine immunization schedule for children at nine months and 15 months of age. "The Measles and Rubella campaign will move us not only one step closer to maintaining measles elimination and accelerating rubella control, but also one step closer to reducing the overall child mortality across Pakistan. Every child has the right to access life-saving healthcare," said Dr. Palitha Mahipala, WHO Representative in Pakistan.

He said, "WHO is partnering with the Government of Pakistan and supports to ensure that all children get vaccinated against Measles and Rubella. — APP

## Kazakhstan values its relations with Pakistan: Ambassador



ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, Chairman senate exchanging views with Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan at Parliament House. — DNA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin met Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani at Parliament House. During the meeting, both dignitaries discussed the exchange of delegations at parliamentary and trade level between Kazakhstan and Pakistan.

Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani said that excellent economic relations between Pakistan and Kazakhstan will help further promote bilateral cooperation and economic and trade relations will also lead to significant progress in the development of the region.

Chairman Senate praised the steps taken to make economic and trade relations effective. The Chairman of the Senate said that direct air connectivity between Pakistan and Kazakhstan would be further enhanced and help promote public relations. Sanjrani further said that "Fraternal and friendly relations between the two countries are an important part of our foreign policy," the Chairman of the Senate said. The Upper House has Kazakhstan, Pakistan Friendship Group, which can further coordinate parliamentary relations between the two countries.

Ambassador of Kazakhstan praised Pakistan's culture and hospitality and said Kazakhstan values its relations with Pakistan. Kazakhstan's ambassador told the Chairman Senate that delegations were gaining momentum at the trade level to strengthen trade and economic ties. The Kazakhstan Business Forum is going to meet in which a delegation from Pakistan's business community will participate. He said steps are also being taken to promote cooperation in science and technology, education and other fields.

Chairman Senate praised the steps taken to make economic and trade relations effective. The Chairman of the Senate said that direct air connectivity between Pakistan and Kazakhstan would be further enhanced and help promote public relations. Pakistan and Kazakhstan also have excellent relations at the level of international forums. Chairman Senate said Pakistan and Kazakhstan have often taken a similar stand on international and regional issues. He said that the promotion of parliamentary relations would bring stability through cooperation in economic and economic sectors. Pakistan is working to further strengthen the promotion of connectivity with central goods countries.

## ECP starts registration of voters

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: The Election Commissioner of Pakistan (ECP) here on Friday started the registration of the voters in Rawalpindi district. According to a spokesman, the voter registration process would continue for a month.

The ECP teams would visit door-to-door to verify the voters. In case of non-registration of vote or transfer of vote, duly filled Form No. 13 will have to be submitted to the authority concerned. The Government employees would use Form No. 14 for registration of vote, he added.

## ECP constitutes appellate tribunals

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has constituted 64 appellate tribunals in 18 districts ahead of the first phase of local government (LG) polls in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province. The election commission made progress on the organisation of LG polls in KP province by forming 64 appellate tribunals in 18 districts. Polling in the first phase of KP's LG polls is scheduled for December 19. On November 4, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday announced that local gov-

ernment elections in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will be held as per schedule.

Director Provincial Election Commission Khushhal Zada, while commenting on the court's decision to hold party-based elections, had said that the provincial election commissioner has no intention to challenge the Peshawar High Court (PHC) order. According to a schedule, local governments' polls in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would be conducted in two phases across the province. According to ECP, the first phase elections would be held in 17 districts on Dec 19, 2021, while in the second phase, polls would be conducted in 18 districts on January 16, 2022.

Former Presidents ICCI Khalid Javed, Tariq Sadiq, Mian Shaikat Masud, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Sheikh Amir Waheed and other members of ICCI stressed that RDA should take up the matter with the government for the establishment of industrial zones along the ring road as availability of these zones along RRR was so important and would make the twin cities hub of business and economic activities.

## ICCI demands establishment of industrial zones

Demand of business community for industrial zones along the ring road is genuine; hopes that the government would give due consideration to this proposal: Chariman RDA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has called upon the Rawalpindi Development Authority to ensure the establishment of industrial zones along the Rawalpindi Ring Road as these zones were very important to boost industrialization, promote investment, improve government's tax revenue and create jobs for people in the region. He made this demand during the visit of Tariq Mahmood Murtaza, Chairman, Rawalpindi Develop-

ment Authority to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Tariq Sadiq President Islamabad Industrial Association, Khalid Javed, Mian Shaikat Masud, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Sheikh Amir Waheed, Omais Khattak, Hafiz Bilal Munir, Rana Qaiser Shehzad, Akhtar Hussain, Sardar Tahir Mahmood, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Khalid Chaudhry, Zahid Rafique and others were present in the meeting. Speaking at the occasion, Tariq Mahmood Murtaza, Chairman,

Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) briefed the business community about the status of Rawalpindi Ring Road project. He said that the demand of the business community for industrial zones along the ring road was very genuine and hoped that the government would give due consideration to this proposal. He said that the Prime Minister was scheduled to inaugurate the 38.3 Km revised ring road on 25th of December this year and RDA would try to complete it within 18 months. He said that this important project would address the traffic congestion issues of

the twin cities as all heavy traffic would be shifted to this road. He said that RDA would also construct Kuchehri Chowk, Defence Chowk and Nala Lai projects in Rawalpindi for the facilitation of citizens. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President ICCI said that Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry was working with the government for the establishment of a new industrial estate in this region and emphasized that RDA should cooperate by identifying a suitable land for this key project along or in the vicinity of the ring road. Muhammad Faheem Khan, Vice

President ICCI said that RDA should construct fruits & vegetables market, truck stand and warehouse along the ring road as these were very important to promote the business activities. Former Presidents ICCI Khalid Javed, Tariq Sadiq, Mian Shaikat Masud, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Sheikh Amir Waheed and other members of ICCI stressed that RDA should take up the matter with the government for the establishment of industrial zones along the ring road as availability of these zones along RRR was so important and would make the twin cities hub of business and economic activities.

## AIU announces results of matric &amp; inter

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) has announced final results of programs offered in spring 2021 semester including matriculation and intermediate.

Provisional result cards are being dispatched to the students through registered postal service.

According to the digitalization of AIU's key academic operations, the procedure of accessing online results has been modified. Students can now access their results on the learning management system by clicking the link enrollment.aiu.edu.pk. After logging into the account, the students are required to click examination and grade title. Results can be accessed after clicking 'view grade' and option of 'my grade'. — APP

## CSSHO, PNCA seminar on heritage

ISLAMABAD: Civil Society Sindh Hala Old (CSSHO) in collaboration with Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) on Friday organized introductory seminar about cultural heritage here at PNCA.

Federal Secretary National Heritage & Culture Division Syed Asif Hyder Shah was the chief guest on the occasion.

In his remarks, he highly praised the charity services of CSSHO for the poor people. The seminar was aimed to create awareness steps for cultural heritage, education, health and social work to help poor and needy. Speakers said that Civil Society Sindh Hala Old is working with mission to facilitate poor marginalized communities to have access to resources on equal and equitable basis.

They further said that CSSHO is a Non-Governmental, Non-profit and politically impartial association, aiming to bring social justice to society with vision to create peaceful, prosperous and welfare society where all citizens enjoy equal rights and privileges. The speakers highlighted CSSHO charity, activities and services in Sindhi language. A number of people from different walks of life also attended the seminar. — APP

## Pakistan has highest diabetes prevalence

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahead of World Diabetes Day, the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) has released new figures showing that the prevalence of diabetes in Pakistan has increased significantly as 33 million adults in Pakistan are now living with diabetes — a 70% increase since 2019.

According to IDF, in 2021, diabetes will be responsible for 400,000 deaths in the country—the highest number in the Middle-East and North Africa Region. These findings from the 10th Edition of the IDF Diabetes Atlas, which will be published on December 6th, report that one in four adults (26.7%) in Pakistan are living with diabetes — the highest national prevalence in the world.

Pakistan now has the third highest number of people living with diabetes in the world, after China (141 million) and India (74 million). An additional 11 million adults in Pakistan have Impaired Glucose Tolerance (IGT), which places them at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes. More than a quarter (26.9%) of adults living with diabetes in Pakistan are undiagnosed. When diabetes is undetected or inadequately treated, people with diabetes are at risk of serious and life-threatening complications, such as heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and lower-limb amputation. These result in reduced quality of life and higher healthcare costs.

IDF says that 537 million adults are now living with diabetes worldwide — a rise of 16% (74 million) since the previous IDF estimates in 2019. "The rapidly rising level of diabetes in Pakistan presents a significant challenge to the health and wellbeing of individuals and families in the country," says Professor Abdul Basit, Director, Baqai Institute of Diabetology and Endocrinology, Baqai Medical University.



## Unrest in IIOJK

THE situation is tragic indeed as twelve people have lost their lives since last month. New Delhi, it seems, is incapable of realising how it is only adding to the unrest in IIOJK by sending in more troops. More violence and repression will only add to the long list of grievances and add fuel to an organic resistance. It is evident that India's attempts at mainstreaming and "normalising" IIOJK have failed miserably, despite the false narrative it is trying to push in both the domestic and international arena. The former chief minister of the region, Mehbooba Mufti has rightly slammed the government for the deteriorating situation by pointing out that not a week goes by where innocent civilians don't lose their lives. Despite the draconian measures being instituted in the name of security, people are being killed and have no sense of dignity or normalcy. There are also reports that Indian occupation forces are setting up a so-called new investigation agency in IIOJK which is understandably raising legitimate fears that this will most likely be another repressive tool to further terrorise Kashmiris. The agency will supposedly investigate terrorism-related cases. New Delhi, it appears, wants to take on the role of judge, jury, and executioner. India's oppression of innocent Kashmiris cannot be allowed to continue unabated and it is high time that the Modi government is confronted for its atrocities in IIOJK by states other than Pakistan.

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## 911 Helpline

GOVERNMENT helpline numbers can be a useful way to speed up state response to emergencies and disasters, and prove an accessible outlet for help. The introduction of emergency response helplines has been a good utility in Pakistan as well, aiding Covid-19 patients, victims of crime, victims of domestic violence, mental health patients and so on. Pakistan now aims to go beyond the various different helplines introduced and converge them all into one national response center. The government is set to launch an all-in-one emergency helpline 911 to swiftly respond to calls for help across the country. The 911 number is modelled after the hugely successful 911 helpline in the United States. This was a plan which had been set in gear since August, with the National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) and the Digital Pakistan initiative of the IT ministry working on an effective digital platform for emergency response. Now, three months later, the helpline has finally been made functional. According to Deputy Commissioner (DC) Hamza Shafiq, the caller will only have to dial 911 and it will be routed to the concerned emergency response department. This is clearly a more convenient way of doing things. Almost every citizen previously must have had a moment of confusion while dialling an emergency response number considering the various departments with their specific numbers—the emergency rescue service is 1122, fire service is 16, police helpline is 15 while Covid-19 helpline is 1166. Unarguably, remembering one helpline number, that too 911, is much easier and effective, especially in emergencies where time is of the essence. However, as mentioned, this does require a lot of good digital skills and organisation. The NTC and the IT ministry appear to have put in effort but it is hoped that the final central system, responsible for routing and directing the calls, is organised and effective. If consolidation leads to slower response time and loss of information, the benefits of this initiative are lost.

## Biden should reject US return to Iran nuclear deal

Dalia Al-Aqidi

The Vienna talks are set to resume on Nov. 29 after a five-month break, during which new Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi took office. How strongly he desires a deal remains to be seen, but Tehran will continue pursuing its nuclear efforts in the meantime. Kelsey Davenport, the director for nonproliferation policy at the Arms Control Association, emphasized that Washington should not reward Iran for continuing to violate...

IRAN has been dominating the news over the past month. It all started with the recent conflict between Lebanon and the Gulf states over controversial televised comments made by Lebanese Information Minister George Kordahi. Even though Kordahi's remarks were made a month before he became a member of a Christian party allied to Hezbollah, the Gulf countries are fed up dealing with a nation con-

trolled by an Iranian proxy.

In Iraq, Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi on Sunday survived an assassination attempt made using Iranian-made drones while he was at his residence in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone. The attack followed direct threats made by pro-Iran Shiite militia leader Qais Al-Khazali of the Asa'ib Ahl Al-Haq group, which is designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the US. Meanwhile, debates on whether the Biden administration should revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, also known as the Iran nuclear deal, continue in Washington. Members of the Republican Party have accused President Joe Biden of ignoring the hostile attitude of the Iranian regime toward the US and its allies abroad in order to fulfill his campaign promise of returning to the JCPOA. A US garrison at Al-Tanf in Syria was last month attacked by a drone, while an Israeli-managed commercial oil tanker was targeted in the Gulf of Oman in July. Tehran has been accused of being behind both attacks. Seventeen Republican lawmakers last week sent a letter to the White House urging the president to desist from continuing diplomatic talks with Tehran and not to reward Iran for its violent behavior. They said Biden was sending a dangerous message to America's friends and adversaries alike that Washington is willing to lift sanctions and negotiate with the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism as it attacks their country, in reference to the Al-Tanf attack. "This attack is yet another reminder that your administration is setting the wrong priorities by working to re-enter the Iran nuclear deal. If Iran is willing to engage in this kind of behavior while negotiations are still ongoing, imagine the respect they will have for any agreement once the ink is dry," the letter read. It added that the administration continues to weaken America's ability to combat the Iranian regime by lifting sanctions.

The Vienna talks are set to resume on Nov. 29 after a five-month break, during which new Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi took office. How strongly he desires a deal remains to be seen,

but Tehran will continue pursuing its nuclear efforts in the meantime.

Kelsey Davenport, the director for nonproliferation policy at the Arms Control Association, emphasized that Washington should not reward Iran for continuing to violate the nuclear deal, warning of sending Tehran the wrong signal. "The Biden administration has to walk a fine line between demonstrating to Iran that Tehran will benefit from sanctions relief if the deal is restored, while not giving in to Iranian leverage," she said. While Tehran seeks the lifting of all sanctions, this month's decision by the US Treasury Department to impose sanctions on two Iranian entities and four individuals makes it clear that this option will not be available, which should push Iran to soften its language. Would it consider that? Absolutely not.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian criticized the US decision on Twitter, writing: "The White House calls for negotiations with Iran and claims to be ready to return to the JCPOA. Yet it simultaneously imposes new sanctions on Iranian individuals and entities. The purpose of negotiations is not talking for the sake of talking, but to achieve tangible results on the basis of respect for mutual interests."

So how should the Biden administration deal with the Iranian nuclear file? With the support of the Republicans, the president should abandon his campaign promise to revive the deal and explain the decision to his base by highlighting all the Iranian atrocities against the US, its allies and the millions of innocent people around the world, while tightening the sanctions on the Tehran government. Learning from Iraq, forced government change from outside will not benefit either country. However, the US supporting regime change would give the Iranian opposition inside the country motivation for demonstrations and civil disobedience. It almost happened in 2009 and it could happen again in 2021. Biden needs to find the courage to take a stand against the people that are pushing him to sign a new deal with Iran.

— Arab News

## The climate crisis is about the Global South's present

Disha A Ravi

COP26 has been criticised as the most "exclusionary" summit ever for civil society organisations, people from the Global South and those with disabilities. COP26 Coalition, a UK-based civil society coalition of environment NGOs said two-thirds of the people who it was helping travel to Glasgow were unable to make it because of visa restrictions, accreditation problems and COVID-19 vaccine inequity as a result of uneven access to vaccines

COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland, was an event where less than 0.0004 percent of the population met to negotiate our lives. World leaders, through their decisions on how to limit global heating, are the powers deciding who gets to live and who gets to die. Keeping temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) is not negotiable, and yet, we are not on track to meet it. According to Climate Action Tracker, even with the targets pledged during COP26 we will be heading towards 2.4C (4.3F) of warming.

Amid this, COP26 has been criticised as the most "exclusionary" summit ever for civil society organisations, people from the Global South and those with disabilities. COP26 Coalition, a UK-based civil society coalition of environment NGOs said two-thirds of the people who it was helping travel to Glasgow were unable to make it because of visa restrictions, accreditation problems and COVID-19 vaccine inequity as a result of uneven access to vaccines. This was especially harsh on the Global South, with many people denied a seat at the table. Activists from the Global South who managed to be at COP26 despite these hurdles have been cut out of pictures and excluded by the media. The exclusion of the Global South is a common theme in climate conversations and negotiations.

When we are excluded, our voices are silenced, our experiences go unheard and the reality of the climate situation in the Global South is blurred. This exclusion becomes a refusal to acknowledge the proximity of the climate crisis and casts it as a problem of the future when millions are dying today. Young people around the world are anxious about the future, and rightfully so, but a warped focus on it suggests that the general populace would rather care about white children's future than the Black, Brown and Indigenous children's present. If this is to continue, then we have already lost.

In my country, India, the climate crisis is an unwanted caller that has taken up space in our homes. She is not scheduled to arrive at a later date — she is already here. The world is currently at 1.2C (2.2F) above preindustrial levels and this is already brutal for so many people in India. Less than 50 percent of Indians have access to safe drinking water. Droughts, coupled with increasing demand and terrible groundwater management, make access to this water even harder. Lack of safe water means lack of sanitation, especially during a pandemic.

For some villages, droughts are becoming a way of life. Some 20 percent of the country faces drought-like conditions.

Elsewhere, there is extreme rainfall. Just last month, the southern state of Kerala experienced flooding and landslides due to heavy rainfall. This killed 42 people and stranded thousands. In northern India, heavy rain battered the state of Uttarakhand, causing flooding and killing at least 46 people. In my city, Bengaluru, the airport was flooded due to unprecedented rains.

We in India have experienced most of the morbid climate calamities on the menu ranging from cyclones, floods, and landslides to heatwaves and drought just this year. We know what it feels like to be affected by the climate crisis in numbing detail. I first noticed the preoccupation with the future among activists at Fridays for Future International when I joined the movement in 2019. Our campaigns and conversations focused on the future, and they did not measure up to the emotion of marginalised communities, such as the ancient tribes who have had their land snatched and laid siege to in the name of coal in India's Hasdeo forest, or people who have watched their homes wash away in floods.

Our messaging did not even come close to covering what it means to be an Adivasi (Indigenous) activist like HidmeMarkam who was imprisoned earlier this year and charged under counterterrorism legislation used to punish environmental defenders. The 28-year-old land and women's rights activist had been protesting against extractive mining and for locals' rights as well as fighting for Adivasis jailed on false charges. Environmental activists including myself (I was jailed for 10 days and released on bail in February during the ongoing farmer protests) are punished by the Indian government for asking for a liveable planet. SudhaBharadwaj, a trade union activist, lawyer, and teacher turned 60 in jail the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced India's commitments at COP26, with pledges including carbon neutrality by 2070 and an increase in the share of electricity generated by solar, wind, and other non-fossil fuel sources. Bharadwaj has worked to secure better wages for workers and land rights for Adivasis but was accused of being a Maoist with plans to overthrow the government. More than three years after her arrest, her trial is yet to start.

On the same day as Modi's announcement, a group of more than 50 Adivasis in Chhattisgarh state walked 30km (19 miles) to highlight the rising air pollution due to coal-fired thermal plants in Raigarh. People from these communities have had their land and forests taken away to build coal mines. Coal has affected their livelihoods and health, yet our prime minister wants to expand coal mining. Last year, India launched an auction for 38 new blocks for mining. Some of them pass through Adivasis' ancestral land. I could not unsee the overlapping injustices in my country and was desperate to change this. At Fridays for Future, I raised the issue of how our stance of focusing on the future removed us far from ground realities and we could no longer continue this. We cannot fail to highlight the loss and damages happening in the Global South now. When we do, we do an injustice to Adivasis and environmental defenders on the front line of the climate crisis.

This is why we at Fridays for Future decided to start MAPA — Most Affected People and Areas. MAPA was created to ensure that the focus is on people who are most affected by the climate crisis, to focus on the present, not just our future. We have been working on centring voices of those most affected through our campaigns, and by bearing witness to the loss and damages caused by the climate crisis today.

To fight the systems that are responsible for the climate crisis, we need news organisations, activists and governments to first acknowledge the urgency and proximity of the climate crisis. To elicit climate action, we must change conversations. We must live in the moment. And we need to strip environmentalism of its white garb because if we do not fight for the present — there is no future.

— AlJazeera

## Colonial surveillance: Palestinians already live in a tech dystopia

Malaka Shwaikh

Solitary confinement itself is a form of psychological torture. It's particularly true when prisoners are not allowed to leave their cells for long periods of time. Surveillance in these circumstances amounts to a form of subjugation and dehumanisation

FOR Israel, the basic human rights of colonised Palestinians, such as the right to privacy, are irrelevant. Earlier this year, a Palestinian friend told me that, while passing through an Israeli checkpoint in the West Bank, Israeli soldiers knew her location without even seeing her identity card. This was scary to hear, and it made me wonder if Israeli soldiers used facial recognition technology to identify my friend's face and destination. I knew there must be at least some surveillance mechanisms employed that we do not yet know about. This becomes clearer when we see Israeli soldiers taking pictures of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank — an act that is often live-streamed on social media platforms. It did not take long before we came across report of the Israeli military using smartphone facial recognition software called Blue Wolf to track Palestinians in the occupied West Bank. As an incentive to build the database, Israeli soldiers competed for prizes to see which unit could take the most pictures of Palestinians. This violated

basic human rights, including the right to privacy. The database contains profiles of virtually every Palestinian in the West Bank and includes a "security rating" for each one. When soldiers use their phones to capture the image of a person, a colour flashes signifying whether the individual in question should be arrested, detained, or let free. Across the world, this type of software is often used by authoritarian regimes to help oppress populations. There have also been debates about the legality and safety of facial recognition. The method itself can be inaccurate and misidentify individuals, which can put their life in danger. The software has been banned by several US cities, and the European Parliament called for a ban of its usage by police in public.

However, for colonial powers, basic human rights of the colonised are typically irrelevant. Hence, the new surveillance program does not come as a surprise. Palestinians, both within and outside Palestine, already live in a tech dystopia. Colonial surveillance has been constant and aims to strip them of what remains of their privacy.

In the city of Hebron in the West Bank, the Israeli monitoring program is happening without any notification to the local population. It eliminates spaces for safe and free social gathering because the cameras are always filming. The scale of Israeli mechanisms of control, intimidation, and surveillance that Palestinians have faced, and continue to face, is beyond the scope of any one article. That said, I will highlight two examples here: the population registry and prisons.

In both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the Palestinian population registry is fully controlled by the Israeli occupation authorities. All changes made to these records, including registration of births, marriages, divorces, deaths, and changes in address/name, require Israeli approval. Only after such approvals may the Palestinian Authority amend or issue an identity card. This in turn controls where Palestinians may live and whether they may travel to other areas in occupied Palestine. Methods of surveillance are also present in Israeli jails. As soon as Palestinians are jailed, they are monitored

as part of the Israeli technique of psychological warfare. And with advances in technology, human operators are becoming unnecessary.

Since 2003, the number of Israeli jailers has been continuously reduced, having been replaced with cameras. The manually operated door locks in jails have been replaced with electronic systems, with one prison officer in a central monitoring room to control a section of more than 100 prisoners. Having fewer prison staff may result in further psychological violence. In solitary confinement, for example, prisoners have regularly been prohibited from leaving their prison cells to get some daylight or practise sport because there are not enough prison staff to 'monitor them.' This results in them staying in their prison cells for long hours — if not days — on end.

Solitary confinement itself is a form of psychological torture. It's particularly true when prisoners are not allowed to leave their cells for long periods of time. Surveillance in these circumstances amounts to a form of subjugation and dehumanisation. It not only ensures Palestinians are constantly monitored but also prohibits them from exercising their basic rights, whether it's seeing the sun or walking outside.

In colonial contexts across all temporalities and geographies, the coloniser will not only try to oppress and dehumanise the colonised but will also treat them as 'controlled subjects.' The coloniser will ensure their rights are curtailed and their most intimate details, pictures and whereabouts are known. Colonisation means no privacy. It means invading your most intimate spaces whenever and wherever the coloniser wishes.

Israeli security and surveillance experts enforce politics of fear, and in so doing create a hostile and an aggressive program that enables the colonial order to justify its continued violence against the colonised. If the international community does not challenge such ideologies, they become complicit in continued violence and failing to hold those responsible to account. In doing so, they obstruct true justice and genuine confrontation of power.

— TRT World



## Briefs

## PM Khan hints at allowing...

FROM PAGE 01

He underlined that continued security and resolute counter-terrorism actions, respect for rights of all Afghans, and inclusivity in governance and politics would further contribute to Afghanistan's stability. The Prime Minister hoped that the interim Afghan government will continue to constructively engage the international community and will keep on taking positive measures to address the prevailing challenges. He said that Pakistan has been consistently calling for provision of immediate humanitarian relief for Afghanistan. The Prime Minister also underscored the urgent need to release Afghanistan's frozen assets and facilitation of banking transactions to prevent an economic meltdown. Prime Minister Imran Khan reiterated Pakistan's resolve to stand by the Afghan people by extending all possible support including humanitarian assistance-in-kind to withstand the coming winter season. In addition to the assistance already extended, the Prime Minister stated that Pakistan would provide essential food items including wheat and rice, emergency medical supplies, and shelter items for Afghanistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan also emphasized importance for the two countries to work together for facilitation of movement of people, trade, transit and regional connectivity for promotion of progress and prosperity in the region.

## Global convergence needed...

FROM PAGE 01

General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS). During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, current security situation in Afghanistan and bilateral cooperation in various fields was discussed. COAS said that Pakistan desires to maintain the tradition of bilateral engagement with all the regional players and wish for long term & enduring multi-domain relationship with Russia. COAS also reiterated the need for global convergence on Afghanistan for avoiding humanitarian crisis and coordinated efforts for economic uplift of the Afghan people. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in Afghan peace process, special efforts for border management, role in regional stability and pledged to play his part for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

## Switzerland lauds...

FROM PAGE 01

bilateral economic and commercial interactions. Both sides stressed the importance of regular high-level exchanges. On regional situation, the Additional Secretary underlined the grim situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, and Indian government's unilateral actions to alter its demographic structure. Moreover, views were exchanged on the situation in Afghanistan. Highlighting Pakistan's efforts to facilitate the evacuations from Afghanistan, the Additional Secretary apprised the Swiss side of Pakistan's help in evacuation endeavours as well as support for efforts for a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan. The Swiss side appreciated Pakistan's efforts and conveyed gratitude for Pakistan's assistance in evacuation of Swiss nationals and others from Afghanistan. Ambassador Nägeli also called on Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest were discussed. The Foreign Secretary highlighted the government's shift from geopolitics to geo-economics. While sharing Pakistan's perspective on the situation in Afghanistan, the Foreign Secretary underscored the importance of the international community's constructive engagement with Afghanistan to address common concerns and advance shared interests.



ISLAMABAD: Organizers and teams' representatives posing for a photo during the opening ceremony of RBS Diplomatic Football League season 5. - DNA

## Blinken says Qatar to handle US interests in Afghanistan

Qatar, home to a major US military base, has played a major role both in the diplomacy and the evacuations as the United States ended its 20-year war in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON: The United States on Friday agreed to set up an interests section in Afghanistan under Qatar, assisting US citizens following the shuttering of the embassy during the Taliban takeover. Welcoming his Qatari counterpart to Washington, Secretary of State Antony Blinken signed an agreement that established Qatar as the United States protecting power in Afghanistan with the Gulf ally to establish a US interests section at its Kabul embassy. "Let me again say how grateful we are for your leadership, your sup-

port on Afghanistan, but also to note that our partnership is much broader than that," Blinken told Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani. Qatar, home to a major US military base, has played a major role both in the diplomacy and the evacuations as the United States ended its 20-year war in Afghanistan. Around half of the 124,000 Westerners and Western-allied Afghans flown out in the waning days of the US military involvement transited through Qatar. The Qataris earlier played host to



negotiations between the United States and Taliban that led to the February 2020 agreement for the United States to withdraw troops. Since the Taliban takeover, US embassy operations in Kabul have been relocated to Qatar. The United States closed down its embassy in Kabul, which was one of its largest in the world, in August as it became clear that the Western-backed government was falling, with diplomats destroying sensitive materials and taking down the flag. Despite the Taliban's draconian

1996-2001 regime and years of war with the United States, US officials have been cautiously optimistic on dealing with the Taliban, saying that the Islamists are largely carrying out promises to let people leave the country. But the United States has ruled out any immediate recognition or reopening of its embassy in Kabul, saying it is waiting to see that the Taliban make good on other concerns including on the treatment of women and prohibiting Al-Qaeda from basing operations in Afghanistan. - Agencies

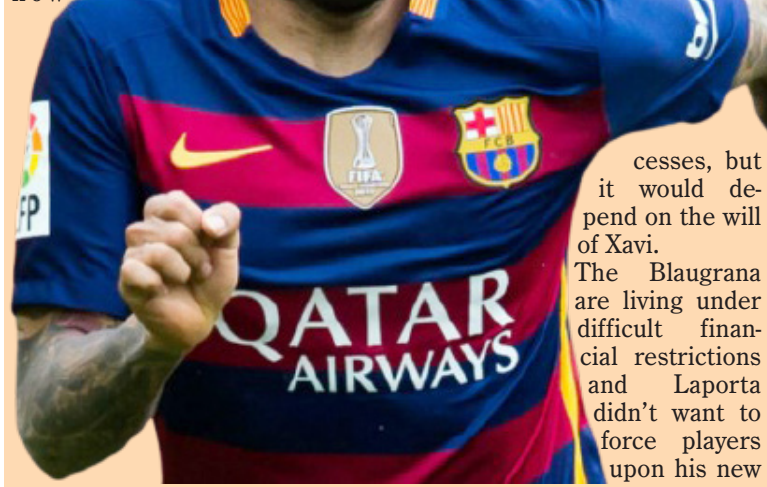
## Rahane to lead India for smoggy first NZ Test

NEW DELHI: Ajinkya Rahane will captain India in the first Test against New Zealand in the heavily polluted industrial city of Kanpur later this month, the Indian cricket board said Friday. Rahane will step in for the resting Virat Kohli, 33, who will return as skipper for the second and final Test against the reigning World Test Championship (WTC) holders in Mumbai. Citing his "immense workload", Kohli recently quit as India's T20I captain - replaced by Rohit Sharma - but will still lead the Asian giant's Test and one-day sides. The Board of Control for Cricket in India has also rested for the series other regulars such as Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammad Shami, Sharma and Rishabh Pant after they spent months in bio-bubbles for the Indian Premier League (IPL) and T20 World Cup. Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin will lead India's spin heavy bowling line-up which also includes rookie pacers Prasidh Krishna and Mohammed Siraj. New Zealand have included five spinners in their 15-man Test squad and will arrive in India immediately after their T20 World Cup final against arch-rivals Australia in Dubai on Sunday. The two Test teams last met at Southampton, England in June for the final of the inaugural WTC where India, led by Kohli, lost to New Zealand. The Test series starts from November 25 but the two teams will first compete in three Twenty20 matches on November 17, 19 and 21 featuring the same squad currently contesting the T20 World Cup. Kanpur, the venue for the first Test match, is one of India's most polluted cities, with smog levels in winter several times the maximum recommended by the World Health Organization. The noxious air rivals that of the capital New Delhi, where in 2017 members of the visiting Sri Lankan team vomited and wore pollution masks while playing. - APP

## Xavi gives green light for Dani Alves to return to Barcelona

BARCELONA: Joan Laporta may have made his first major move as president in appointing Xavi Hernandez as coach, but the former Al Sadd boss is now

set to make his own statement signing after he gave the green light to Barcelona's pursuit of Dani Alves. Rumours had been spread in recent days that the former Sevilla right-back would be open to rejoining the Catalan giants, the club where he enjoyed his greatest suc-



cesses, but it would depend on the will of Xavi. The Blaugrana are living under difficult financial restrictions and Laporta didn't want to force players upon his new

coach, instead giving him the greatest chance to succeed by allowing him to make decisions. Alves is now one step away from signing for Los Cules, with only an agreement on financial terms missing at this stage. He will become the first signing of the Xavi era, which is somewhat ironic as he was one of the very first to arrive in the Pep Guardiola era too. Xavi has identified the leadership that the Brazilian can bring, as well as solving an issue of depth at right-back, with the Catalan coach seeing Sergi Roberto as a midfielder and Oscar Mingueza as a central defender, with both of whom having been forced to act as utility players in the role during Sergino Dest's absence. - APP

## Frank Lampard pulls out of Norwich talks



LONDON: Frank Lampard has dropped out of the running to replace Daniel Farke as the new Norwich head coach. The former England international, 43, held talks with Norwich earlier this week. It is understood he

was among a number of candidates, including former Aston Villa boss Dean Smith, the club have spoken to about the post. Lampard has been out of management since his 18-month spell in charge of Chelsea ended last January. Norwich are bottom of the Premier League with five points from 11 games, with their next match against Southampton on 20 November. Farke was dismissed despite victory over Brentford last Saturday, the club's first league win of the campaign. The club's players returned to training on Friday, with head of football development Steve Weaver taking the session. Lampard guided Chelsea to fourth place and the FA Cup final in his one full season in charge, and a 3-1 win against Leeds in early December

2020 put the club top of the Premier League, but he was dismissed the following month as they dropped to ninth place. He did not sign a single player during his first season as the club were operating under a transfer embargo, but spent more than £200m on seven major arrivals in the summer of 2020, including £45m on Leicester's Ben Chilwell and £71m on midfielder Kai Havertz from Bayer Leverkusen. Before taking charge at Chelsea, Lampard spent one season in charge at Derby, guiding them to the Championship play-off final, where they lost to Aston Villa. Smith, who was sacked by Aston Villa on Sunday, is currently on a break in the United States but is understood to have spoken with Norwich before he left. - APP

## 7th disabled T20 c'ship: Multan in quarterfinals

MULTAN: Multan defeated Sargodha in both the matches and qualified for quarter finals of ICRP Presents SAF 7th Physically Disabled National T20 Cricket Championship. In the first match of the second phase of the National Championship organized by the Pakistan Physically Disabled Cricket Association on Friday, defending champions Multan made 249 scores for the loss of one wicket in 20 overs while playing first. Qureshi scored an unbeaten 101 off 64 balls with the help of 11 fours while Zaman Ali scored 75 off 37 balls and Jahanzeb Towana scored 45 off 18 balls. Khawar took the only wicket for Sargodha. In reply, Sargodha was bowled out for 79 in 19.4 overs. Ahsan Khalil remained highest scorer with 21 runs. From Multan Disabled, M Tariq got three for 10 while Zubair Saleem and Muhammad Asif got two wickets each. In the second match, Sargodha Disabled scored 144 runs for the loss of 7 wickets as Irshad scored 63 runs off 47 balls and Khawar scored 35 runs. Multan's M Harris took three wickets for 4 runs. In reply Multan Disabled chased the target of 145 runs in 8.1 overs without any loss. - DNA

## Austria to impose lockdown on unvaccinated

Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg told reporters on Friday that the government should give the "green light" for the move this weekend

VIENNA: Austria is days away from ordering millions of unvaccinated people to stay at home, its chancellor has said, in a rare move that underscores the increasing exasperation of European leaders towards those who have not yet been inoculated against Covid-19. Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg told reporters on Friday that the government should give the "green light" for the move this weekend. "The aim is clear: we want on Sunday to give the green light for

a nationwide lockdown for the unvaccinated," Schallenberg said at a news conference in Innsbruck. He had earlier called the country's vaccination rate "shamefully low," and hinted that the measure would be triggered within days. "In other states that rate is a lot higher - it is shameful as we have enough vaccines available," Schallenberg said at a separate press conference on Thursday. His warning came as a wave of Covid-19 infections sweeps central Europe. A three-week partial

lockdown was expected to be announced in the Netherlands on Friday evening, Reuters reported, with health officials reporting a rapid rise in cases there. Norway also announced new measures on Friday, while people in the German capital Berlin are preparing for fresh restrictions that come into place on Monday. Under Austria's plan, which was agreed in September, unvaccinated Austrians will face a stay-at-home order once 30% of intensive-care beds are occupied by

Covid-19 patients. The current rate is 21%, according to the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES), and a surge in infections has pushed it up quickly. Unvaccinated people are already excluded from entertainment venues, restaurants, hairdressers and other parts of public life in Austria. If the new measures come into place, the unvaccinated will be ordered to stay home except for a few limited reasons; the rules will be policed by officers carrying out spot checks on those who are

out. Around 65% of Austria's population is fully vaccinated against Covid-19, one of the lower rates in the European Union. "It is clear that this winter will be uncomfortable for the unvaccinated," Schallenberg warned on Thursday. "A lockdown for the unvaccinated means one cannot leave one's home unless one is going to work, shopping for essentials, stretching one's legs - namely exactly what we all had to suffer through in 2020," he said. - APP

## President Ilham gets highest Turkish award

FROM PAGE 01

the Secretariat of the Cooperation Council of the Turkic-Speaking States has been held in Istanbul, Azertag reported on November 12. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Japarov, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orban and Secretary-General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States Baghdad Amreyev attended the opening ceremony. The heads of state and government raised national flags in front of the building and cut the ribbon symbolizing the opening of the new secretariat building.

## Govt to face a united opposition, warns Fazl

FROM PAGE 01

"We foiled the conspiracy of the NAB Ordinance and EVMs," he said, adding he and Maulana Fazl did not discuss the PDM. Maulana Fazl said "We want elections in the country. People must get their right to vote." He said he is PDM president and could not decide on his own of including the PPP in its protest campaign.

Both the leaders also exchanged views over ongoing political scenario and anti-government strategy. They also deliberated upon the situation caused by the increasing inflation in the country. Earlier, signs of a thaw have emerged between the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) as both have established contact after many months.

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has reached the residence of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman in Islamabad for consultations regarding the prevailing political situation in the country. Both the leaders discussed the 'internal situation' of the Parliament and also mulled a joint strategy in this regard. This was Bilawal's first meeting with Maulana Fazl after quitting the PDM nearly six months ago.

The PPP had parted ways with the PDM in April this year alleging PDM parties had been levelling serious allegations against each other amid the show-cause notice controversy. Bilawal had then said: "We believe in politics with mutual respect and trust. The same ideology we follow within the alliance politics. The PPP CEC demands an unconditional apology to ANP [Awami National Party] and PPP for this obnoxious conduct. The PPP stands by ANP in this regard and we will not abandon them under any circumstances."

JUI-F leader Maulana Ghafoor Haidri had called the PPP move 'political suicide', 'blessing in disguise for PDM' and kind of support to the PTI government, while PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz had said JUI-F and PDM chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman would have a final word on its fate after the PPP's response. The ANP earlier alleging that the PDM had been 'hijacked by some of its member parties' had already parted ways with the group after receiving a 'show-cause notice' from alliance's general secretary who is also senior vice president of the PML-N Shahid Khaqan Abbasi. Earlier, Bilawal Bhutto said that opposition is united under the leadership of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif. My party will fully support opposition leader in joint session of the Parliament, he pledged.



## Briefs

## 10 EU nations causing 'high concern' over Covid

## AGENCIES

STOCKHOLM: Ten countries in the 27-member European Union face a Covid situation of "high concern", the bloc's diseases agency said Friday, warning the pandemic was worsening across the continent.

"The overall epidemiological situation... was characterised by a high and rapidly increasing overall case notification rate and a low but slowly increasing death rate," the European Centre for Disease Control said.

"Case notification rates, death rates, and hospital and ICU admissions are all forecast to increase over the next two weeks."

In its latest weekly risk assessment, the agency listed 10 EU countries in its highest category of concern - Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland and Slovenia.

"Countries with lower vaccination uptake continue to be the most severely affected," said the agency.

Germany was among 10 other EU nations classed as "high concern" and France among three of "moderate concern".

Italy, Malta, Spain and Sweden were of low concern.

The agency said four countries had been raised into a higher category since the last assessment, and five countries had been lowered.

## Countries urged to curb fossil fuels

GLASGOW: A draft statement of the COP26 summit Friday called on nations to ease their reliance on fossil fuels as talks entered their final hours without any sign of delivering the emissions cuts needed to limit global warming to 1.5C.

After two weeks of round-the-clock negotiations, delegates produced a round-up of their progress, which urged governments to accelerate "the phaseout of unabated coal power and of inefficient subsidies for fossil fuels".

Delegates in Glasgow from nearly 200 nations are charged with keeping the Paris Agreement temperature goals alive even as climate-driven disasters hit countries the world over.

The summit began with a bang as world leaders descended on Glasgow armed with a string of headline announcements, from a commitment to slash methane emissions to a plan to save the rainforests.

But progress has stalled in the underlying technical and now minister-level negotiations.

With one day left of scheduled talks, countries are hardly any closer to agreement over whether national emissions cutting plans must be ramped up in the short term, how climate action is reported, and how vulnerable nations are supported. - APP

## Lebanon failing its people: UN poverty envoy

## WEB DESK

BEIRUT: The Lebanese government is failing its people, the UN envoy on extreme poverty Olivier De Schutter said Friday, warning that the country is on course to becoming a failed state.

"Lebanon is not a failed state yet, but it is a failing state, with a government failing its population," he told a press conference in Beirut at the end of a 12-day visit to Lebanon.

"I saw scenes in Lebanon that I never imagined I would see in a middle income country," he said.

Lebanon's fragile government, formed in September to stem the country's worst-ever financial crash, has yet to take serious action to stop its downward spiral.

Around 80 percent of Lebanon's population is estimated to be living under the poverty line, as defined by international organisations.

After having fully lifted subsidies on fuel, the authorities are now gradually reducing them on medicine and flour.

## EU sees 'progress' on migrant crisis after Belarus flight ban

Minsk and Moscow have accused EU countries of failing to live up to international standards by blocking the migrants, who they say are seeking shelter after Western military "adventures" in the Middle East

## FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: The European Union said on Friday it was making progress in tackling a migrant crisis on the Belarus-Poland border after Turkey barred the citizens of three Middle East countries from flying to Belarus. Hundreds of migrants, mainly Kurds from the Middle East, have been stuck for days on the border in near-freezing temperatures, with the WHO saying on Friday it was "very concerned" about their plight.

Poland is refusing to allow them to cross, with the West accusing Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko of bringing them into the country to send over the border in revenge for sanctions.

In the first move to prevent more migrants from arriving, Turkey said that Iraqis, Syrians and Yemenis would no longer be allowed on flights from Turkey to Belarus because of "the problem of illegal border crossings" into the European Union.

"We are seeing progress on all fronts," European Commission vice president Margaritis Schinas told a press

## WHO 'very concerned' about stranded migrants

COPENHAGEN: The World Health Organization said on Friday it was "very concerned" about the health situation of thousands of migrants stranded in Belarus amid a border standoff with the European Union.

We urge "all states to protect the right to health of refugees and migrants along the Belarusian border, many of whom need medical assistance," said WHO Europe director Hans Kluge.

"I am very concerned about the thousands of vulnerable people who are stranded in no-man's land on Belarus' borders with Poland, Latvia and Lithuania, at the mercy of the weather as winter

fast approaches," he said.

Hundreds of migrants, mainly Kurds, have been stuck for days on the Belarusian-Polish border in near-freezing temperatures, with aid groups warning of a looming humanitarian catastrophe.

At least 10 have died in the region, seven of them on the Polish side of the border, according to the Polish daily Gazeta Wyborcza.

Western states accuse the Belarusian government of luring them to the country and sending them to cross into Poland in retaliation for sanctions over Minsk's crackdown on the opposition. - Agencys

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said talks were continuing with airlines and countries along possible migrant routes, and that the Turkish ban showed "we already have some success".

Amid reports this week of more flights from Turkey and the Middle East carrying migrants to Minsk, Western countries are demanding Lukashenko and his main ally Russia take steps to end the crisis.

After an emergency meeting at the UN Security Council on Thursday, the US and European delegations accused Minsk of endangering lives for political purposes and trying to divert attention "from its own increasing human rights violations".

Minsk and Moscow have accused EU countries of failing to live up to international standards by blocking the migrants, who they say are seeking shelter after Western military "adventures" in the Middle East.

In a show of support for Minsk, Russia has sent strategic bombers to patrol over Belarus this week and on Friday the two countries said a joint battalion of paratroopers was holding snap drills near the Polish border.

Moscow has rejected any claims it is involved in the migrant crisis, with President Vladimir Putin telling Europe it should "restore contacts" with Minsk if it wants a resolution.

## US Chargé d'affaires highlights US-Pak military ties

KARACHI: United States Chargé d'affaires a.i. William Steuer toured the USS Pearl Harbor, a visiting U.S. Navy ship, and observed a joint exercise between the U.S. and Pakistani navies during a visit to Karachi.

His visit highlighted the strong military-to-military cooperation between our two countries, according to a communique here on Friday.

Notably, this is a return to Karachi for the USS Pearl Harbor. The ship docked in Karachi in October 2005 after the devastating October 8 earthquake that struck Pakistan to assist with emergency earthquake relief.

Chargé Steuer delivered remarks at a reception on board the USS Pearl Harbor and expressed appreciation for the Pakistan Navy's participation in the Combined

Maritime Taskforce (CMF), and for its commitment to protecting sea lanes of communication and freedom of navigation in the North Arabian Sea as part of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150) and Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151).

"The military-to-military ties between the United States and Pakistan are strong and enduring," said Chargé Steuer.

"Through staff exchanges and joint exercises, we are working together to protect the world's most important shipping lanes, combat piracy, and counter terrorism. Together, we can help ensure a more peaceful, stable, and prosperous South Asia." The USS Pearl Harbor (LSD-52) is a dock landing vessel with the capability to transport U.S. Marines and vehicles. - APP



MINSK: Andrei Savinykh, Chairman of the Standing Commission on International Affairs of Belarusian Parliament met with Ambassador of Pakistan to Belarus Sajjad Haider at the Embassy premises. - DNA

## Skip big parties, urges German health agency

## FOREIGN DESK

BERLIN: Germans should avoid large gatherings amid a record surge in coronavirus infections, the country's health agency chief said Friday, adding that he himself would be skipping next month's New Year's parties.

"It's five minutes past midnight," warned Lothar Wieler, the head of the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), as the nation braces for new restrictions to contain a ferocious fourth Covid wave.

Germany registered more than 48,000 new cases over the past 24 hours, RKI data showed, a day after breaching the 50,000 mark for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

The weekly infection rate has soared to an all-time high of 263.7 per 100,000 people, and intensive care beds are filling up rapidly.

Several German cities kicked off months-long carnival celebrations on Thursday, with revellers required to prove they are fully vaccinated or have recovered from Covid before

entering the party zones. The country's much-loved Christmas market season is also on its way.

But Wieler said large gatherings "must be viewed very critically" and in some situations "clearly should be cancelled".

Indoor celebrations especially can act as super-spreader events "and everyone must really think about whether they want to expose themselves to that risk," he told reporters in Berlin.

"I personally won't be attending New Year's Eve parties. But I urge people not to wait until then to think about their actions."

Germany's Covid surge has been blamed on a relatively low vaccination rate, with just over 67 percent of the population of some 83 million people fully inoculated.

Other European nations are battling similar Covid surges. Austria has introduced rules that bar unvaccinated people from certain events and indoor venues. The Netherlands is planning a renewed "partial lockdown" as cases hit record levels.

## Tunisia MP gets jail term for sexual harassment of minor

TUNIS: A Tunisian member of parliament was sentenced Friday to a year in prison for sexually harassing a schoolgirl, the victim's lawyer said, in a case that sparked a nationwide #MeToo movement.

Zouhair Makhlouf, an independent member of the suspended assembly, was photographed in October 2019 apparently masturbating in his car in the coastal city of Nabeul.

The high school student who took the photos and published them on social media, who was a minor at the time, said he had followed her to school and pressed charges of sexual harassment and indecent assault.

Makhlouf, who was wearing a T-shirt of the Qalb Tounes party of which he was a member at the time, had his trousers down and was looking at the camera.

He argued throughout the trial that he is diabetic and had needed to urgently urinate in a bottle.

The victim's lawyer, Naima Chabbouh, said Makhlouf had been found guilty of indecent assault after a court session that went late into Thursday evening. - APP

## Russian military moves at Ukraine border 'rather worrying': EU

"We continue to watch the situation and the information we gathered so far is rather worrying"

## NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: The European Union said Friday that it was alarmed by Russian military activities close to Ukraine's border, after Washington demanded an explanation from Moscow.

"We continue to watch the situation and the information we gathered so far is rather worrying," EU foreign affairs spokesman Peter Stano told journalists.

He said the 27-nation bloc was monitoring the situation with partners including the United States and Britain and "we are open to look at further steps as necessary".

US top diplomat Antony Blinken on Wednesday warned Russia against making another "serious mistake" on Ukraine as Washington sought clarity about troop movements near the border.

Welcoming Ukraine's foreign minister to Washington, Secretary of State Blinken said that the US was "concerned with reports of the unusual Russian activity near Ukraine."

"We don't have clarity into Moscow's intentions, but we do know its playbook," Blinken told a joint news conference.

"Our concern is that Russia may make the serious mistake of attempting to rehash what it undertook back in 2014 when it amassed forces along the border, crossed into sovereign Ukrainian territory and did so claiming falsely that it was provoked," he said.

Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said the Russian movements were "unusual in its size and scope."

"It's not exactly clear what the Russian intentions are," he said.

Ukraine has been ensnared in a deadly war with Moscow-backed separatists in its east since 2014 when Russia seized the Crimea peninsula.

EU chief Ursula von der Leyen discussed the situation around Ukraine with US President Joe Biden during a visit to Washington this week.

"The EU and the US fully support the territorial integrity of Ukraine," von der Leyen tweeted after the meeting.

"And we are fully behind them in their efforts to modernise their economy and build up resilience."

An official at US-led NATO said the alliance "is vigilant and routinely monitors Russian force movements. It's important to ensure transparency and avoid any miscalculation."

Ukraine's foreign minister is set to hold talks with NATO head Jens Stoltenberg in Brussels on Monday.

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## AstraZeneca logs loss as costs jump

LONDON: British pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca, which is selling its Covid vaccine at cost price, said Friday that it had fallen into a loss in the third quarter.

The company posted a net loss of \$1.65 billion (1.44 billion euros) compared with a profit after tax of around \$650 million in the third quarter last year, a statement said.

AstraZeneca said it experienced higher costs in the latest July-September period following its mega takeover of US biotech company Alexion, as well as increased research and development expenses across multiple programmes, including its Covid treatments.

The group added that revenue from its Covid vaccine totalled \$2.22 billion in the year to date following delivery of around 580 million doses worldwide.

AstraZeneca's vaccine against the coronavirus pandemic was developed with the University of Oxford.

Last month, the drugs company revealed positive results from a trial of a treatment for Covid-19 symptoms.

Made from a combination of two antibodies, the AZD7442 treatment had been undergoing final clinical trials to assess its safety and efficacy.

"AstraZeneca's scientific leadership continues to provide strong revenue growth and exceptional pipeline delivery... including our long-acting antibody combination showing promise in both prevention and treatment of Covid-19," chief executive Pascal Soriot said in Friday's statement. - APP

Eight dead, 20 missing in DR Congo shipwreck

BUKAVU: At least eight people drowned and 20 others are missing after their motorised canoe broke in two on Lake Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo, authorities said Friday.

The large lake, straddling the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo with Rwanda, is one of many waterways in constant use in the vast country where roads are often not fit for purpose.

But in changeable weather, with waves slamming the hulls of perilously overloaded wooden boats where safety rules are routinely ignored, shipwrecks often occur at a heavy human and material cost. The governorate of South Kivu province said there were "eight deaths, 20 missing and 60 people saved" in the accident, which happened on Thursday.

Delphin Birimbi, a local civil society representative, told AFP the old canoe was overloaded and broke in two.

In 2019, a shipwreck claimed around 100 lives on the lake, prompting President Felix Tshisekedi to make life jackets compulsory for every passenger.

But in the canoes on Lake Kivu, standard orange life jackets are few and far between.

Tshisekedi, who had visited bereaved families, also promised new boats but none have so far materialised.

The head of state also promised the rehabilitation of four ports on the shores of the lake. - APP

Russia, Belarus holding snap paratrooper drills

MOSCOW: Belarus and its ally Russia said Friday they were holding joint military drills near Belarus' western border with EU member Poland where a migrant crisis is unfolding.

Belarus' defence ministry said on Telegram that a "joint battalion tactical group" of paratroopers from both countries was holding exercises at the Gozhsky range in western Belarus.

The ministry said the drills were carried out due to the "build-up of military activity" near the Belarusian border.

It added that Russian Il-76 aircraft and Belarusian military helicopters were involved in the drills, where servicemen were carrying out a "number of combat training tasks".

In a statement carried by Russian news agencies, the defence ministry in Moscow said it had sent paratroopers to Belarus for joint exercises as part of a "surprise combat readiness check". - APP

## Troika Plus to continue assisting Afghanistan

"All parties will continue to have dialogue with the Afghanistan in a constructive manner on the basis of respecting its sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence"

## WEB DESK

BEIJING: Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin Friday said that the participating countries of Trika Plus meeting expressed willingness to continue the humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and strengthening anti-terrorism and security cooperation with the country.

"China, Russia, Pakistan and US held the Troika Plus meeting in Islamabad to exchange the views on situation in Afghanistan," he said during his regular briefing.

Yue Xiaoyong, Chinese Envoy for

Afghan affairs, led the delegation to the meeting, he added.

The spokesperson said that China elaborated the position on policies on Afghanistan and stressed that Afghanistan was at a crucial stage from chaos to order and facing challenges on political, economic and humanitarian fronts.

"All parties will continue to have dialogue with the Afghanistan in a constructive manner on the basis of respecting its sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence," he added.

Wang Wenbin remarked that the Chinese side was ready to work with all parties and help to steady



ly improve the situation. In a joint statement issued after the meeting, four parties called to respect territorial integrity,

sovereignty and independence of Afghanistan and willing to continue practical engagement with Afghanistan and urge the international community for the provision of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.

"We welcome the role of UN as a coordinator in contributing to the stability and we condemned the terrorist attacks in the country," he added.

He said that they also met with Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi who shared the measures for building the inclusive government, protecting women rights and children

rights and counter terrorism.

Yue Xiaoyong, Chinese Envoy for Afghan Affairs, the US State Department's Special Representative and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Afghanistan, Thomas West and Russia's Special Afghanistan Envoy Zamir Kabulov participated in the meeting. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi presided over the meeting.

This is the first full-fledged meeting off the Troika Plus after Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan.

The last meeting was held in Doha on August 11 while another meeting was convened by Russia in Moscow on October 19.



**Briefs**

**Pak-KSA to ink MoU for financial support soon**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia will soon transfer the promised amount in the shape of deposits to Pakistan under the pledged financial assistance, the Kingdom's Ambassador in Islamabad Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki said. In an interview with the government wire service, he said a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be signed in a few days for the cash deposits and deferred oil payment facility. Saudi Arabia lately announced to deposit \$3 billion with the State Bank of Pakistan to address the country's balance-of-payments crisis. Besides, the Kingdom pledged a one-year deferred oil payment facility. The envoy said that the Saudi government considered Pakistan as a dear country with a very deep and strong relationship. The Kingdom always stood with Pakistan and extended support to it on multiple occasions, he added. "Our connection is with the Pakistani flag and we consider it our brotherly country. Pakistan has a very bright future," he added. Ambassador Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki said the people of Pakistan loved the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from the core of their hearts and held the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques in high esteem.

**FBR website under cyberattack**

ISLAMABAD: The website server of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) stopped working after coming under a cyberattack on Friday. Since the cyberattack, the FBR website and the main server have been down and efforts were under way to fix the problem. Taxpayers also faced problems in filing their taxes and availing of online services. However, the FBR has made available another link for the visitors. — DNA

**Govt taking steps for ensuring fiscal discipline**

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State of Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan says the government is taking necessary steps for ensuring fiscal discipline and consolidation, stabilizing the economy and accelerating growth. Responding to a question during Question Hour in the Senate on Friday, he said debt to GDP ratio decreased by four percent during 2020-21 and government expects that this ratio will decrease further by two to three percent during the ongoing fiscal year. To another question, the Minister of State informed the House that total domestic and external debt stood at 41 trillion rupees. Responding to another question, Ali Muhammad Khan said the government has developed a Refinance and Credit Guarantee Scheme for collateral Free Lending to small and medium enterprises of the country. He said the scheme envisages a time bound refinancing of around sixty billion rupees in three years by State Bank of Pakistan to selected commercial banks. The Minister of State said total subsidy of 25.84 billion rupees for risk sharing will be provided to State Bank of Pakistan by the government over a period of four years. Four ordinances were laid before the House. These include the Public Properties (Removal of Encroachment) Ordinance, 2021; the Regulation of Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electric Power (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021; the Public Private Partnership Authority (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021 and the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021.

# Hope TTP ceasefire deal turns into lasting peace: Afghan FM

Amir Khan Muttaqi also confirmed that 75 percent of the girls in the country, after a hiatus following the takeover of Kabul, had returned to schools

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Interim Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi on Friday said that Afghanistan hopes that the temporary ceasefire deal reached between Pakistan and the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) turns into lasting peace. On Monday, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry announced that the government of Pakistan and the banned outfit have reached a "complete ceasefire" during peace talks. While addressing a seminar at Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad during his visit to the federal capital, Muttaqi confirmed his role in mediating peace talks between both sides. Amir Khan Muttaqi also confirmed that 75 percent of the girls in the country, after a hiatus following the takeover of Kabul, had returned to schools. He was responding to a question regarding the situation

of education rights of girls in Afghanistan, at his public talk organized by the Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) here at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI). The Taliban after taking control of the country in August had closed the schools with millions of girl students confined to their homes, which had attracted criticism by the international community. However, the Acting Afghan FM stated that 75 percent of girls had resumed their education after returning to schools. He pointed out that it was "contradictory" of the international community to emphasize women's education, but have little focus on the salary of teachers, as the disbursement was getting difficult due to the freezing of the country's assets. He mentioned the negative campaign in foreign media against the interim government of Afghanistan, terming it contrary to the facts. In this regard, he



mentioned that the 500,000 civil servants were now being paid and not a single person was fired on the basis of political views. Also, no woman was removed from her job or salary cut. He said Afghanistan had around 3,000 clinics and hospitals, which were still operational. Muttaqi said there was no rationale behind the sanctions imposed by the "international human rights champions" on Afghanistan by freezing the assets. He said the reforms, which the international community wanted

the interim government to work towards, could be done "peacefully, and not through pressure tactics". He said the current cabinet with all ethnicities already fulfilled the requirement of the international community for an inclusive government. "We are being punished for something which is a possibility in the future," he said. Muttaqi said his government wanted Afghanistan to be no more a conflict ground for major powers. Afghanistan, he said, for the first time in 43 years had a central, responsible, and sovereign government which had control on every inch of the territory. "We, in Afghanistan have a historic opportunity to create a win-win situation for everyone. The new developments have opened new opportunities for stability," he said. Muttaqi, who arrived here on Wednesday leading a delegation shed light on the new developments in Afghanistan besides expressing views on the new "bal-

anced" foreign policy and relations with Pakistan. "We must not be a prisoner of the past. The peace in Afghanistan means peace in Pakistan and vice versa," he said. "We are now pursuing a balanced policy". He said there remained no anti-Pak elements in Afghanistan and the new government was trying its best to not let the territory be used against any other country. The Afghan acting foreign minister said since the takeover of Kabul without any bloodshed, there was peace due to the support of the people. He stressed that the "new government of Afghanistan does not pursue a policy of revenge". Muttaqi said Afghanistan, owing to its unique geographical location, could serve as a point of connectivity for the entire region. He mentioned that efforts were afoot to have a dialogue with Central Asian states for resumption of its trade with Pakistan, which he said, would also benefit Afghanistan.

**Crude oil prices go down in world markets**

ISLAMABAD: Crude oil prices fell to 82.87 a barrel in the world market. Last week the price of crude oil in the world market stood at 78 a barrel. According to Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority sources, on November 6, the government fixed the prices at 85 per barrel. OGRA started working to set the prices from November 16 to December 1, 2021. According to the global market, there is no justification for the forthcoming increase in the prices of petroleum products, OGRA sources said. The government can maintain prices by imposing the current rates of all taxes, OGRA sources added. Consumers can also get relief of up to Rs. 9 on petrol and diesel by eliminating or reducing levy tax. The government is levying Rs 9.62 per liter on petrol and Rs 9.14 per litre on diesel. OGRA will send a summary of prices of petroleum products to the Ministry of Finance on November 14. — APP



ISLAMABAD: A delegation headed by Interim Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi calls on Prime Minister Imran Khan. — DNA

## Will overcome difficult time, PM tells PTI members

The measures for inflation and public relief were also discussed in the meeting

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday once again advises ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) core committee that it is a difficult time but there is nothing to worry and we will overcome it. A meeting of the PTI core committee was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Imran Khan. According to the inside story of the meeting, the PM refrained from discussing the political issues of the opposition. Sources said that the measures for inflation and public relief were also discussed in the meeting. The prime minister urged the government to take measures for the welfare of the people and brief the people of steps being taken by the government to provide relief to the common. Regarding Pakistan cricket team's exit from the T20 World Cup, Imran Khan said

that men in green lost due to match pressure. Later, talking to media after core committee meeting, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhary Fawad Hussain said the PTI government is taking all possible steps to control inflation. The minister said inflation is a global phenomenon due to Covid-19 pandemic. He said the meeting discussed the inflation issue in detail and decided to increase funding under different initiatives including health, Ehsaas and Kamyab Pakistan to facilitate the people. He said the government is also committed to electoral reforms in the country to ensure free, fair and transparent elections and the Speaker of the National Assembly is in contact with the opposition to develop consensus in this regard. Fawad Ch said that matters related to local government elections in KP were also discussed during the meeting.

## Govt to put Shehbaz, Qaim Ali's names on ECL



ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to again put name of PML-N President and Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif on the Exit Control List (ECL). The government also made the decision to place name of former Sindh chief minister and veteran PPP leader Syed Qaim Ali Shah on the ECL. The federal cabinet approved the summary through circulation in this regard, the sources further said. The summary was forwarded by the Interior Ministry on the recommendation of the NAB. According to the sources in the Cabinet Divisions, Shehbaz Sharif's name was already on the ECL but still the government has given approval to again place his name on the ECL. Through a separate summary, the government also decided to list the name of former principal secretary Fawad Hassan Fawad on the ECL. — DNA

## Naval Chief meets military dignitaries of Kuwait

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi is on official visit to Kuwait. During the visit, the Naval Chief called on Deputy Director of General Directorate for Coast Guard Brigadier General Saleh Al-Fojeri, Under Secretary National Guard Lieutenant General Hashem Abdul Razzaq Al-Rifai, H.E. Chief of General Staff Lieutenant General Khaled Saleh Al-Sabah and Commander Kuwait Naval Forces Brigadier General Hazza Al-Alati, separately. Upon arrival at Sabah Al-Ahmad Naval Base, Chief of the Naval Staff was received by Deputy Director of General Directorate for Coast Guard and a ceremonial Guard of Honour was presented to the Naval Chief. During the meeting with Deputy Director of General Directorate for Coast Guard Brigadier General Saleh Al-Fojeri, regional maritime security and professional matters of mutual interest



KUWAIT: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi exchanging views with Kuwait Naval Force Commander. — DNA

were discussed. Naval Chief highlighted Pakistan Navy's efforts and various initiatives for ensuring maritime security in the region. Deputy Director of General Directorate for Coast Guard appreciated Pakistan Navy's initiatives in support of collaborative maritime security in the region and acknowledged significance of strong bilateral naval collaboration. Earlier, during separate meetings with Under Secretary National Guard at National Guard Headquarters and Chief of General Staff of Kuwait Armed Forces at Army General Staff Headquarters, professional matters of mutual interest including bilateral defence collaboration were deliberated. The dignitaries, while acknowledging the significance of strong bilateral military cooperation in diverse realms, stressed on enhancing collaborations in expanded military domains. Later, during the visit of Muhammad Al-Ahmad Naval Base, Chief of the Naval Staff called on Commander Kuwait Naval Forces Brigadier General Hazza Al-Alati.

## 'PML-Q ministers being ignored'

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Sources have revealed that the Pakistan Muslim League-Q (PML-Q) ministers are being ignored in important matters of Punjab. A meeting was held under the chair of Punjab Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi. The meeting discussed in detail the concerns faced by the party. Various suggestions regarding the attitude of the Punjab government were reviewed. It was also informed during the meeting that there were various complaints about the provincial government. The sources revealed that the coalition leadership and PML-Q ministers have been neglected in the important matters of Punjab. Consultation on all government decisions has been restricted to PTI level only, it added. While expressing reservations in the meeting, the sources also quoted that the PML-Q is not invited to any decision-making meeting. "Even being as ally party, the PML-Q is also being ignored in administrative measures in Punjab.

## US Consul General meets Chief Secretary Sindh

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Consul General of United States in Karachi Mark stroh held a meeting with Chief Secretary Sindh Syed Mumtaz Ali Shah at Sindh Secretariat on Friday. The US delegation also included Political and Economic Chief Alexandra Zetel, Zack Zetel and others. During the meeting, bilateral cooperation and other issues of mutual interest were discussed. During the meeting, Chief Secretary Sindh Syed Mumtaz Ali Shah informed the US delegation regarding education,



trade, economic and social developments in Sindh. During the meeting, the US delegation appreciated the steps taken in the field of health in Sindh specially Gambit Institute in Sindh regarding health.

The US delegation agreed to extend its support for the welfare of people of Sindh. The US Consul General Mark stroh said he would create opportunities for the US Investors for the development of special economic zones in Sindh. US Consul General Mark stroh expressed his interest in enhancing academic ties between Pakistani and US universities. During the meeting infrastructure development of Karachi and other issues were also discussed. Chief Secretary Sindh presented Sindh Topi and Ajrak to the US delegation.

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