



# Islamabad POST

Thursday, November 18, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

**EU encourages Pak SMEs to explore the EU Single Market**

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**Pakistan a true partner of Saudi Arabia: Envoy**

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**Djokovic into Semis after beating Rublev**

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## Briefs

### Asad rebuffs objection over census

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar Wednesday said objections raised by Sindh government on National Census-2017 is baseless as it was approved by the CCI. The Sindh was politicizing the issue by hatching conspiracies over the exercise, he said while addressing the joint session of the Parliament. He said the annulment of the 2017 census would have led to a greater loss for the Sindh province, resulting in the restoration of constituencies based on the 1998 process that would have remarkably brought down the number of their seats.

### UN nuclear chief to visit Tehran

DNA

TEHRAN: The head of the UN nuclear watchdog will visit Tehran Monday, Iran's atomic agency said. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Rafael Grossi had expressed concern on November 12 over a lack of contact with the Iranian government, describing it as "astonishing". He said he had hoped to meet Iranian officials ahead of the next meeting of the IAEA's Board of Governors, scheduled for next week. Later this month talks are due to restart in Vienna on reviving the moribund 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers.

### Taliban asks US to lift sanctions

DNA

KABUL: Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Abdul Qahar Balkhi on Wednesday urged the United States government to lift sanctions on Afghanistan and unfreeze its foreign exchange reserves to prevent a humanitarian crisis in the war-torn country. In a statement, the spokesperson said 2021 will mark the "centennial of relations between Afghanistan and America".

# Shehbaz labels EVMs 'Evil Vicious Machines' Next elections through electronic machines

Govt passes several bills during joint sitting including Elections Act 2017 and giving overseas Pakistanis the right to vote; Opposition stages walk out after passage of bills

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The government passed several bills in a joint sitting of the Parliament on Wednesday, with the Opposition rejecting the legislation, saying that the treasury benches had bulldozed the bills. The government successfully passed amendments to the Elections Act, 2017, allowing the use of electronic voting machines (EVMs) and giving overseas Pakistanis the right to vote in general elections. Voting on the amendments was earlier deferred — after strong protest by the Opposition — at Adviser to the Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Babar Awan's request, but the government, after a while put it to vote again. Following the passing of the bills, the Opposition staged a walkout, saying that National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser was not paying



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan attending the joint session of Parliament. — DNA

heed to their reservations regarding the government possessing fewer than the required numbers to get the bills passed. Some bills passed:

- The Elections Second Amendment Bill, 2021
- International Court of Justice (Review and Reconsideration) Bill, 2021
- The Islamabad Capital Territory Charities

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## Opp to challenge bills at every forum

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said the Opposition would challenge the bills passed in the lower house, as the government "did not have enough votes" to get them passed. "The NRO to Kulbhushan Jadhav, election amendment bill, and all other bills will be challenged at every forum," Bilawal said, speaking to media outside Parliament. "The government did not emerge victorious today in the parliament," Bilawal said. Bilawal



ISLAMABAD: Opposition Leader Shahbaz Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari talking to media. — DNA

al said he "tried his best" to draw the attention of the treasury benches and the NA speaker towards the joint sitting's rules, lamenting that they paid no heed to it. The PPP chairman explained that according to the law, more than half of the combined votes of a joint sitting were required to get a law passed in the Parliament. Explaining further, he said the treasury benches needed a minimum of 222 votes to get a bill passed in a joint session, where 342 lawmakers were from the lower and 100 from the upper house. However, he said that the government did not have enough numbers to get the bills passed.

## Realistic training in peace time vital

General Bajwa witnessed a Corps level exercise at Kharian

DNA

RAWALPINDI: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) witnessed a Corps level exercise at Kharian. COAS witnessed culmination phase of the exercise aimed at validating operational concepts as a sequel to Army War Games. The exercise aimed at enhancing operational preparedness of formations, encompassing defensive and offensive tasks for various contingencies. The exercise involved employment of latest weapon systems including VT4 tanks and combat air support. COAS appreciated the operational readiness and professionalism of participating troops. COAS expressed his complete satisfaction on the performance of newly inducted Chinese VT4 tanks equipped with sophisticated technology and latest weapon system coupled with enhanced mobility. COAS stressed that realistic training in peace time is must to meet any eventuality.

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## Justice Shamim's revelations testimony of Nawaz' innocence

Maryam says she hopes that the truth will be revealed one day



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The third major testimony in Nawaz Sharif's favour from within the judiciary has come, PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz said Wednesday while referring to the allegations levelled against the

former chief justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar by former Gilgit-Baltistan chief judge Rana Shamim in an affidavit. The chief judge of the GB apex court levelled serious allegations against former chief justice Saqib Nisar, stating in an affidavit notarised by a UK oath commissioner that he had been

witness to then CJ's direction to a high court judge not to release Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz on bail at any cost before the 2018 general elections. Maryam said that she had hoped that the truth will be revealed one day. "We were sure that the oppressor gets caught eventually but we [Nawaz Sharif and I] didn't expect the oppressor getting caught this soon," she added. The PML-N vice president further stated that the first court notice to have been sent should have been sent to Nisar over what Shamim has alleged. The response to the allegations levelled through an affidavit "should have been in the form of an affidavit," Maryam said as she lambasted Nisar, adding that the "liar ran away".

## Blast rocks Kabul

The explosion happened in the Daste-Barchi district

NEWS DESK

KABUL: A bomb blast killed at least one person in a neighborhood of Kabul populated largely by people from the Hazara Shiite minority on Wednesday, the Taliban confirmed. The explosion happened in the Daste-Barchi district. One civilian was killed and six were injured, Interior Ministry spokesperson Qari Sayeed Khoshty said on Twitter. Other witnesses reported more casualties. "Our initial information shows the bomb was attached to a minibus. We have launched an investigation," a Taliban official told the AFP news agency. "I heard a huge explosion. ... When I looked around a minibus and a taxi were on fire," he added. Pictures of burnt-out vehicles were being shared on social media.

## Electoral reforms to ensure fair, transparent elections

Fawad terms opposition leaders as 'political dwarfs'

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Wednesday felicitating the nation particularly nine million overseas Pakistanis, said the passage of Electoral Reforms Package would ensure free, fair and transparent upcoming

## FM felicitates PTI, allies

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Foreign Affairs Shah Mehmood Qureshi Wednesday congratulated the members of Pakistan Tehreek i Insaaf and thanked allied parties for the historic legislation passed in the joint session of the Parliament. In a tweet, he said the approval for use of electronic voting machines for stopping rigging in elections and for legislation related to public

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## EU encourages Pakistani SMEs to explore EU single market

The EU-Pakistan Business Forum aims to provide opportunities for both EU and Pakistani businesses

NAZIR SIYAL / DNA

KARACHI: As part of its efforts to support Pakistani SMEs to access opportunities in the European Single Market and maximize the benefit from GSP+, the European Union held the EU-Pakistan Business Fo-

rum for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in Karachi today. The EU-Pakistan Business Forum aims to provide opportunities for both EU and Pakistani businesses to work together to become engines of development and partnership and contribute to enhancing bilateral trade. Ambassador of the Euro-

pean Union to Pakistan, Androulla Kaminara, welcomed the participation of Government representatives, including Sindh Governor Imran Ismail and Prime Minister's Advisor on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood. The Ambassadors from Sweden and Denmark, as well as

EU Trade Counsellors from other EU Member States, participated in the event alongside local SMEs from four sectors - Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs), the chemicals and pharmaceuticals, the value added textiles and leather and gems, stones, onyx and jewellery designing. Speakers focused on the importance of SMEs, their role in value addition and importance to Pakistan's sustained economic growth. Participants were informed about how SMEs could benefit from the European Union's GSP+ Scheme, providing two thirds of tariff lines duty free access to the EU market with the rest on preferential duties.



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APWPC will enable women to participate in economic activities — Page 02

PAAA supports Azerbaijan to achieve global peace — Page 03

CII, IPS join hands to promote Islam in policymaking — Page 04

Time to revive 'cricket diplomacy' between India and Pakistan — Page 05

ICC sets up review to help Afghan women's cricket — Page 06

Razzak, Belarusian envoy hail agreement signed at ITIF — Page 07

State of the art 'Anti-Corruption Academy' established: Javed — Page 08





ISLAMABAD: Director-General of Inter-Services Intelligence, Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed, paid a farewell call on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. — DNA

## Governor urges youth to work hard for country's bright future

### BUREAU REPORT

FAIALABAD: Governor Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar has said that only those are remembered in history who serve humanity, not those who hold high positions and wealth. With passion and hard work, nothing is impossible in the world. Vice Chancellors in universities are based on merit and recommendation culture in universities is being eradicated. The Federal and Punjab Governments under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan are taking all necessary steps to provide opportunities for women to move forward successfully in every field.

He was addressing the first convocation of Government College Women's University Faisalabad on Wednesday and he was talking to the media. On this occasion, Chairman Anti-Narcotics Punjab Haji Ramzan Pervez, Commissioner Zahid Hussain, Vice Chancellor Prof.

Dr. Rubina Farooq, Controller Examinations Prof. Rizwana Tanveer Randhawa, University registrar Asif Ali, Founder Vice Chancellor Dr. Zikr Hussain, Vice Chancellor Agricultural University Faisalabad Dr. Aqrar Hussain and others were also present. Governor Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar said that I would like to say to the students who have graduated from universities, that wherever you go, you should do justice to your position for the service of humanity, because in history, only those who serve humanity are remembered. I am also proud that Pakistani women are making Pakistan's name brighter not only in their country but also in the world.

It is the responsibility of all sections of society to play their part in ensuring women's rights, including their share of property. In any country where women are not strong, the country is not strong. The Government believes in strong development and prosperity of women.

Institutions are strengthened by transparency and merit. Because of merit in universities, today Punjab's universities are among the top 500 universities in the world. Governor Punjab Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar said that I would like to say to the students who have graduated from universities, that wherever you go, you should do justice to your position for the service of humanity, because in history, only those who serve humanity are remembered. I am also proud that Pakistani women are making Pakistan's name brighter not only in their country but also in the world.

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## APUBTA to resume postponed call for protest

### ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Dr. Hafsa Jamshaid, associate professor of the NTU and an activist of All Pakistan universities BPS Teachers (APUBTA) has endorsed the decision of APUBTA to resume the postponed call for protest in front of Higher Education Commission from December 01, 2021, if HEC failed to fulfill its written and notified agreement for the uniform promotion of BPS teachers.

In a statement issued here today, she expressed concern over the inordinate delay in the circulation of the revised draft regarding BPS appointment and promotion statutes. She said that the joint committee had revised the draft statutes and it was decided in an agreement with HEC and FAPUASA that the same shall be uploaded for comments of all stakeholders on the HEC website not later than November 03, 2021. "But unfortunately, it was delayed that has created a situation of confusion among the BPS teachers", she said and added that the faculty is insisting on resuming the strike that was postponed due to the signed and notified agreement. She said that only the university BPS faculty is deprived of the legitimate rights of promotion though the same is granted in HEC ordinance 2002. "Amazingly the same right is available to all other employees working under the same ordinance and to all government employees across the globe", she added. Dr. Hafsa said that in this situation, the ABPUTA core committee under the guidance of Dr. Sami-ur-Rehman has rightly taken the decision to resume the postponed call for protest in front of HEC soon.

# APWPC will enable women to participate in economic activities

She said though women have more than fifty percent share in the population but they have only 12 percent share in the economic activities of the country

### ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Violence to women is the major hindrance and make them active to play their part for economic growth, FWCCI All Pakistan Women Presidents Conference (APWPC) is the important way to make them part of 16 days international campaign for Violence against Women which will not only enable the women to participate in the economic growth activities at country level but it will also improve Pakistan ranking at international level. Said Nilofar Bakhtiar, Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women. She was addressing to the participants of APWPC Conference organized by Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FWCCI) here today. She said that Pakistan's ranking is at 151 out of 157 world countries on Voice against Women. She said that National Commission for Status of Women is trying its hard to get reduced the ranking of Pakistan. She asked to the participating Presidents Women Chambers of Com-

merce to constitute Committees in their respective Chambers so that practical steps should be taken in this context. Mian Muhammad Adrees, former President, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) appreciated the commendable efforts of Mrs. Nighat Shahid, President FWCCI, Mrs. Rubina Amjad, Group Leader FWCCI and her team who worked day and night to make high profile of FWCCI. For Women empowerment, he said that Islam is a

complete Code of Life and women should abide by the teachings of Islam. Addressing the Conference, Zahid Hussain, Commissioner Faisalabad Division said that we should get guidance from Islam instead of seeing towards West. He said that violence to women is a crime and he will not tolerate any such incidence and rather asked the meeting participants to refer any such case direct to him. Mrs. Naushaba Shahzad, Executive Vice President National Bank explained various finance schemes an-

nounced by the State Bank of Pakistan and said rate of women accounts holders is far less and that will be enhanced from 7% to 30 percent in the next three years in addition to double the number of female staff in the banks. Earlier, President FWCCI Mrs. Nighat Shahid welcomed the incoming Presidents of All Women Chambers and said that purpose of the Conference is to forward problems of women entrepreneurs to the Government with unified approach.



## Commissioner settles dispute between SNGPL, residents

PESHAWAR: Commissioner Riaz Khan Mehsud on Wednesday successfully settled a dispute between the Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited (SNGPL) and residents of Warsak Road and Pajgi Road over delay in laying pipeline. The residents of Warsak Road and Pajgi Road have staged protest demonstrations and blocked Warsak Road for vehicular traffic in protest against SNGPL and the Chief Minister Mahmood Khan while taking notice of the issue had directed Commissioner Peshawar for settlement of the issue, said an official handout issued here on Wednesday. In this connection a jirga was held here the other day with Commissioner Peshawar Division, Riaz Khan Mehsud in the chair. Besides MPA Arbab Wasim, Deputy Chief, SNGPL Salman Sarwar, Chief Engineer (SNGPL), SP Rural Sajjad Khan, former member District Council Shams-ul-Bari, former nazim Jehanad Khan and Haji Roshan Khan participated in the jirga. The divisional commissioner while expressing dismay over delay in laying new gas pipeline directed Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited for installation of new pipe within a period of one week and immediate filling of the sumps dug for the purpose. Similarly, he also gave a two week deadline for the installation of new pipeline and filling of sumps on Pajgi Road and in case of failure in meeting the deadline warned of stern action against the responsible institutions and concerned officers. — APP

## NLC enhances outreach to promote regional trade

### BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: National Logistic Cell (NLC) has enhanced its outreach through road, marine and air cargo in addition to launching cargo service with a focused approach to promote regional trade, said Colonel Retired Abdul Qayyum Chief Executive Officer NLC Dry port Lahore. He was addressing the business community in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here today. He said that NLC has launched road cargo service for Iran, Azerbaijan and Turkey however next cargo consignment consisting of five trucks will move for Turkey via Afghanistan and Azerbaijan. He also gave a detailed presentation about the structure and operation of NLC and said that it is a national organization working

on a commercial basis on a self-sustained basis. He said that NLC has refurbished its cargo fleet with addition of 900 new vehicles just two years ago. "We are also providing marine and air cargo services to our potential clients", he added. Quoting statistics, Colonel Retired Abdul Qayyum said that 96% of imported goods are being cleared at Karachi ports while remaining 4% is shifted to the up-country ports. He said that NLC was also managing a number of dry ports with its presence throughout the country. About Lahore dry port, he said that it was handling 54% of the local imports and NLC was trying its best to provide best possible facilities with approximately the same charges received at Karachi with delivery at Lahore. He said that a local office of NLC has been established

in Gatti, however he wants to shift it to a commercial area in order to facilitate the local exporters and importers. He also requested Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh to provide space for this office in FCCI complex. Regarding dedicated train cargo service, he said that NLC had purchased ten locomotives but we could not start this service due to some unavoidable circumstances. He said that NLC has also purchased land in Allama Iqbal industrial estate where they intend to establish a freight terminal to provide cargo services to the local industrialists at their door steps. Responding to a question, he said that enforcement of the axle regime will enhance freight charges but it will help in arresting heavy expenses being spent on the regular repair and maintenance of the main road arteries.

## BOK opens Peshawar University branch

### DNA

PESHAWAR: Bank of Khyber crossed the milestone of its 200 branches by inaugurating its new Conventional Banking Branch at the University of Peshawar campus. The branch was inaugurated by Secretary Higher Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dawood Khan, Vice Chancellor University of Peshawar Prof. Dr. Muhammad Idrees Khan and MD Bank of Khyber Muhammad Ali Gulfranz.

On the occasion, Secretary Education Dawood Khan said that Bank of Khyber's performance and excellent services are commendable and its wide network across the province and especially its branch in Peshawar University campus is welcome for providing banking facilities to the students. Muhammad Ali Gulfranz, MD, Bank of Khyber, thanked the Secretary Education and Vice Chancellor, University of Peshawar and the University administration and said that today Bank of Khyber has crossed the milestone of its 200 branches. We are committed to improving our IT infrastructure to provide our customers with services and facilities that are up-to-date. We are also launching our new app to make mobile and internet banking more convenient.

## Italian envoy visits SSU's headquarters

KARACHI: Consul General of Italy Danilo Giurdanella and Police Attaché of Italy Luigino Amorosa visited different sections of Special Security Unit (SSU) Headquarters and applauded professional standards maintained in the unit. The Consul General and the Police Attaché were briefed by the Commandant SSU Zeeshan Shafiq Siddiqui about the various sections of the SSU and measures adopted to setup country's first Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T) team in

SSU to challenge any emergency situation if created by the anti-social elements and terrorists, said a statement. The Consul General and Police Attaché expressed happiness to see the progress of the Police Commandos in the field of counter terrorism. Danilo Giurdanella and Luigino Amorosa also witnessed a mock exercise conducted by S.W.A.T Commandos of SSU. They were presented honorary shield by DIG Security and Emergency Security Division Maqsood Ahmed. — DNA



KARACHI: The Organizer 3-days 17th ITIF Fair Vice President Ecommerce Gateway Pakistan (EGP), Umair Nizam reading diplomatic magazine "Centerline" after inauguration of the event. — DNA

# Pakistan hosts event dedicated to Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi

### DNA

LAHORE: The Youth Advocacy Network (YAN) and the Eurasian Regional Center of the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF-ERC), jointly organized an event dedicated to the 880th anniversary of the great Azerbaijani poet and thinker Nizami Ganjavi in Lahore, Pakistan. At the opening ceremony of the event, which was held both in the audience and online format, the chairman of the YAN Fshehat UHassan, Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov,

Pakistan's ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee, Acting Director General of ICYF-ERC Vusal Gurbanov welcomed the participants and emphasized the importance of the event, and noted the role of such events in the development of cultural relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. Minister Social Welfare and Bait-ul-Maal of Punjab province Syed Yawar Abbas Bukhari, also spoke at the event and emphasized that the event will contribute positively to the development of connections among the youth of both countries. Addition-



ally, Pakistan's support for Azerbaijan's fair position on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue was highly appreciated. During plenary discussions Shahin Yusifli, deputy dean

of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Baku State University, Jabbar Hussain, lecturer of the University of Education of Pakistan, Qaisar Nawab, chairman of the Pakistan-Azerbaijan Alumni Association, Uswa-e-Zainab, Pakistani poet and social media expert, Danish Tariq, YAN project manager spoke about the importance of Nizami Ganjavi's works, his contributions to medieval eastern poetry, and about the similarities between Nizami and Pakistani poet Allama Iqbal's poetry. The event, which was attended by students, scientists,

and experts, as well as representatives of leading public institutions of Pakistan, featured ghazals of Ganjavi. The main purpose of holding such events by the ICYF-ERC is to introduce cultures of peoples to each other within the Islamic geography. The purpose of this event is to contribute to the study of Nizami Ganjavi's poetry in the Muslim East, to promote the humanist ideas of this poet. It should be noted that, it is 5th international event, dedicated to the 880th anniversary of Nizami Ganjavi, held by ICYF-ERC.

## CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY STREET LIGHTS DIVISION-II

### TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are hereby invited on percentage basis for the following works from contractors / firms duly enlisted with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in appropriate category & Codes having validity / renewal of PEC license, Electrical License issued by Electrical Inspector Islamabad for execution of Electrical & Mechanical Works in Rawalpindi / Islamabad and NTN & GST registration with FBR.

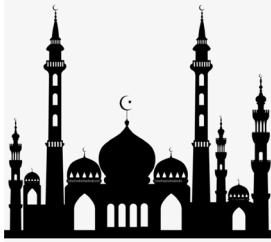
S.#	Name of works	Estimated cost	Earnest Money	Date & time of receipt of tender	Date & time of opening of tender
1.	Provision of Street Light System at Kahuta Triangle Industrial Zone Internal Streets Islamabad	Rs.20,042,865/-	Rs.601,286/-	07-12-2021 11:30AM	07-12-2021 12:00PM
2.	Rehab / Renov & Improvement of Road Lights System at Jinnah Avenue Off Set Lights Along With Metro Route From Centaurus Mall To 9 <sup>th</sup> Avenue F-8 Side, Islamabad.	Rs.3,563,099/-	Rs.106,893/-	07-12-2021 11:30AM	07-12-2021 12:00PM
3.	Rehab / Renov & Improvement of Road Lights System at Jinnah Avenue Off Set Lights Along With Metro Route Pedestrian Bridge To PARC Chowk G-8 Side, Islamabad.	Rs.3,978,379/-	Rs.119,351/-	07-12-2021 11:30AM	07-12-2021 12:00PM

- Tender Documents can be purchased up to 03-12-2021 before closing hours against payment of Rs.5,000/- for S.No.01 and Rs.3,000/- for S.No.02 & 03 (Non-Refundable) in shape of pay order / deposit at call from the office of Deputy Director Street Light Division, Shop No.01, Bazar No.08, Street No.57, Sector-G-6/4, Islamabad. No application for tenders will be received after schedule date and time.
- Tenders will be issued to those firms who provide copies of valid PEC License for the current financial year having appropriate Category / Codes EE-04, EE-06 and valid Electrical License issued by Electrical Inspector Islamabad renewed for the current financial year 2021-22 and NTN & GST registration certificates with active status along with written request on original letter pad of firm / contractor. PEC Certificate, Electrical License & Professional Tax Certificate 2020-21 in original will also be seen before issuance of Tender document.
- Bid Security / Earnest Money shall also be accompanied with the request in the shape of Deposit at Call (CDR) clearly indicating the Name of Firm issued by local scheduled bank in favor of Deputy Director, Street Light Division-II, CDA and should be generated only from firm's account. Cash / Cheque or open CDR without indicating name of firm will not be accepted and No application without Bid Security / Earnest Money will be accepted for issuance of tender.
- The tender will be issued only to those firms who provide an undertaking on Stamp Paper worth not less than Rs.50/- that the firm / contractor are not black listed by any government, semi government or autonomous body in Pakistan and also undertakes that if any information or document provided by firm for issuance of tender document is found incorrect or fictitious the firm is liable for legal action under the law. Without the undertaking tender will not be issued to firm.
- If the contractor wants to participate in the tendering through representative, the contractor will provide general / special power of attorney duly attested by respective court and only to legitimate attorney holder would be allowed to get tender documents.
- Relative of tendering authority may not be entertained for participation in the tenders.
- Tenders will be opened by Director E&M (Maint) in his office located at Room No.05 Ground floor "P" Block Pak Secretariat Islamabad on schedule date and time.
- CDA may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal. The CDA shall upon request communicate to any supplier or contractor who submitted a bid or proposal, the grounds for its rejection of all bids or proposals, but is not required to justify those grounds.
- In case of any Gazetted / Occasional Holiday(s), the tenders will be opened on the next working day.
- The additional valid documents mentioned in IB-11 of tender document must be submitted by the firm while submitting the tender, otherwise tender will be liable for rejection.
- The Bid Security / Earnest money of unsuccessful bidders will be retained / deposited in CDA bank account and released in the favor of firm's account only after acceptance of contract.
- Tender Notice can be seen on both CDA website [www.cda.gov.pk](http://www.cda.gov.pk) and PPRa website [www.ppra.com.pk](http://www.ppra.com.pk), whereas, tender Notice can be downloaded from CDA's website [www.cda.gov.pk](http://www.cda.gov.pk).

Deputy Director,  
Street Lights Division-II, CDA.  
Contact No.0300-9189525



## SERVICES



## Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	05:15 am
Zohr.....	11:53 am
Asr.....	03:26 pm
Maghrib.....	05:04 pm
Isha.....	06:30 pm



## Hotels &amp; Restaurants

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



## Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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## Emergency

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## Islamabad Metropolitan

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

## Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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## PAAA supports Azerbaijan to achieve global peace

Khazar Farhadov suggests to make a movie/documentary on the active and crucial role of Pakistani people particularly youth during the patriotic war of Karabakh

## STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Founder President Pakistan-Azerbaijan Alumni Association (PAAA), Mr. Qaiser Nawab alongwith Dr. Muhammad Shakeel Ahmed calls on the newly arrived Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Khazar Farhadov. The meeting was held at the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Islamabad, on 17th November 17, 2021. The meeting was also attended by Mr. Elchin Mehdiyev and Mr. Elnur officials of the Azerbaijan Embassy. The Ambassador was briefed about the inception of Pakistan-Azerbaijan Alumni Association and its active role in strengthening brotherly relations as well as promoting the youth diplomacy between Pakistan and Azerbaijan in the recent 5 years. Highlighting the strong collaborative and brotherly relationships between PAAA and Azerbaijan Embassy, Mr. Nawab apprised His Excellency that PAAA has organized a numerous youth focused activities including seminars, welfare projects and conferences in Pakistan and Azerbaijan, which have



greatly contributed to increase the brotherly relations between the youth of Pakistan and Azerbaijan. Dr Muhammad Shakeel Ahmed, Advisor PAAA, underscore that the

Pakistan - Azerbaijan Alumni Association is planning to establish Pak-Azerbaijan School System, Azerbaijan Study Centers in Pakistan and Pakistan-Azerbaijan International University in future. Ambassador H.E. Mr. Farhadov assured its fullest support to bridge the two brotherly countries in various fields of mutual cooperation. He believed that by making focused efforts and coordinating cooperative activities, the available prospects might be realized to the fullest. His Excellency underscored the necessity of city-to-city and people-to-people interaction that will provide impetus for strengthening relations in all areas of bilateral or multilateral. The Ambassador suggested to making movie/documentary on the active and crucial role of Pakistani people particularly youth during the patriotic war of Karabakh. The Association has extended her support to Azerbaijan's international outreach to achieve global peace and sustainability. The meeting concluded with the presentation of the sculpture of Karabakh Horse by PAAA in recognition to meritorious services of the Karabakh war Heroes.

## OPF initiative to support returning Pak expats settle



## KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: As the Covid-19 has badly affected the job market across the world particularly overseas Pakistanis, a countrywide initiative has been intensified jointly by the government and international organizations in order to support thousands of expatriates coming back to the country to make a new start and achieve a sustainable employment as well as

businesses. The Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) is implementing the initiative on economic reintegration of returnees in collaboration with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in Pakistan. As part of this programme titled 'Returning to New Opportunities', the OPF at a ceremony presented trade-specific toolkits to returning Pakistanis as an in-kind support to help them start sustained self-employment. The programme is commissioned by the Germany's Fed-

eral Ministry of Economic Cooperation & Development (BMZ) with Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis as its implementing partner. Secretary Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis Ishrat Ali was the chief guest at the ceremony who presented trade-specific toolkits to 53 returning migrants as an in-kind support. These migrants have also completed comprehensive business development training from the Pakistani-German Facilitation & Reintegration Centre (PGFRC), established at the OPF premises. Managing Director OPF, Dr. Amer Sheikh, members of Senate and National Assembly Standing Committees on Overseas Pakistanis & HRD, members, OPF Board of Governors, representative from German Embassy as well as international organizations attended the ceremony. Addressing at the occasion, Head of PGFRC, Dr. Mansoor Zaib Khan shared that the objective of the programme is to support returning migrants and local population to find better jobs as well as sustainable business opportunities. He mentioned that over 800 returning migrants in the trades of electrician, plumber, carpenter, mason, photographer, and culinary arts will benefit from this capacity building leading to in-kind support intervention.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in a group photo with Bahrain's Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of the Council of Representatives of Bahrain Ms. Fawzia Bint Abdullah Zainal at Parliament House. - DNA

## Sheikh Amir Waheed nominated as Convener ICCI Expo Committee

Expo Committee would organize various expos this year including industrial expo, property expo, marble & granite expo, gems & jewellery expo and women handicrafts expo: Sheikh Amir Waheed

## NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has nominated its former President Sheikh Amir Waheed as Convener of Expo Committee for the year 2021-22 to work for organizing various expos in order to promote the busi-

ness activities more effectively. Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry presented the formal letter of nomination as Convener of Expo Committee to Sheikh Amir Waheed during his visit to ICCI. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice

President ICCI, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Raja Safer and Ramzan Jatt were also present at the occasion. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry congratulated Sheikh Amir Waheed, former President ICCI on being nominated as Convener, Expo Committee.

He said that manufacturers of this region were producing various quality products and expos/exhibitions were the best way to introduce and highlight their potential. He said that Sheikh Amir Waheed was a dynamic business leader and hoped that he would play his new role effectively to promote business activities through organizing various expos. Expressing his views, Sheikh Amir Waheed, former President ICCI thanked President ICCI for nominating him as Convener of ICCI Expo Committee. He said that the Expo Committee would organize various expos this year including industrial expo, property expo, marble & granite expo, gems & jewellery expo and women handicrafts expo.

He hoped that these expos would help in showcasing the potential of regional products and improve their trade and exports.



## STEM to build capacity of young generation

## MUHAMMAD JABRAAN

ISLAMABAD: The innovative Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) project being implemented by Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) will serve as catalyst for capacity building of the young generation, enabling them to play their due share in socio-economic development of the country. "The project proposal titled "Launching of STEM in Pakistan" was approved by the Departmental Development Working Party (DDWP) of Ministry of Science and Technology in the month of August at a total cost of Rs 993.784 million with 36 months duration", an official of PSF told APP on Wednesday. The STEM project, officially launched by President Arif Alvi, will be executed all over the Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, with close liaison and consultation of provincial authorities and ministries. Giving the details of the project, the official informed that initially "50 pure Government Higher Secondary Schools (HSSs)" will be selected from the country through nominations by the respective provincial governments. Selection of HSSs for STEM has two-fold advantage, first these schools are administered by a single Head up-to grade-12 and second usually the HSSs have fewer resources as compared to Model schools and colleges. STEM project will also play an important role in overall development of the school system. The official informed that the selection of students for STEM education would be based purely on aptitude of the students. Mini STEM FABLABs will be established in the existing buildings/infrastructure of 50 Higher Secondary Schools, on the pattern of internationally acclaimed digital fabrication labs while grant would be provided to each HSS for maintenance of STEM Lab. Training modules on STEM education with integrated teaching approach will be developed for Matric (SSC level) and F.Sc. levels. Under the project, local training on STEM will be provided to 200 science teachers (four from each HSS, two from Secondary and two from higher secondary level).

## President, PM condole demise of Rafiq Qamar

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday extended condolences to Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed on the death of his brother. In their separate messages, both expressed grief over the passing away of Sheikh Rafiq Qamar, the elder brother of Sheikh Rashid Ahmed. The president and the prime minister prayed for the departed soul to rest in peace and grant patience to the bereaved family. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi also expressed grief over the demise of the brother of Sheikh Rashid.


## Govt notifies transfer, posting of officers

## STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Wednesday notified transfer and posting of high rank officers. According to a notification issued by Establishment Division, a BS-20 officer of Secretariat Group, Muhammad Riaz, presently at the disposal of National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTC), under Federal Education and Professional Training (FE&PT) Division, on deputation basis, is transferred and posted as Joint Secretary, Inter Provincial Coordination Division, with immediate effect and until further orders.

## CTD playing crucial role in maintaining law & order

ISLAMABAD: Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of Islamabad police is playing important role in maintaining law and order in the city and it has professional capability to counter any challenging situation. Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman said this while speaking at the concluding ceremony of six-week long course held for personnel of CTD. A total of 20 personnel including females participated in the course and they demonstrated their skills to counter any challenging situation. - APP



Estd. 1860

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For further information please contact the following.

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**Mobile: 0300 8553342**



## Briefs

## Police arrest six drug peddlers

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested six drug pushers and recovered around nine kilograms of drugs from their possession here on Wednesday, informed police spokesman. Gujjar Khan Police, while taking action against drug pushers, recovered 1.5 kg of hashish from Jawad Haider, 2.4 kg charas from Ghulam Abbass and 1.6 kilograms of hashish from Iqbal Hassan. Similarly, Jatli Police, during an action, netted Waseem Haider and recovered 1280 grams of charas from his custody. Kahutta police caught Samar Iqbal and confiscated 1070 grams of hashish from his possession. Police have registered separate cases against all of them, and further investigation was in progress. — APP

## Five held for possessing illegal weapons

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Police, in their crackdown against illegal weapons, rounded up five accused from different areas and recovered illegal weapons from their possession.

A police spokesman informed that Airport police held four accused including Bilal Sharif, Mohsin Ali, Sherbaz and Sharjeel and recovered four 30 bore pistols and ammunition from their possession. While Taxila police arrested one Adil for having a 30 bore pistol and ammunition. Separate cases have been registered against all the accused while further investigations were underway, he added.

## SNGPL establishes control room

ISLAMABAD: The Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) on Wednesday established a control room here at its regional office to ensure uninterrupted supply of gas to consumers during the peak winter season. The facility has been set up at its main office in I-9 Industrial Area on special directives of Regional General Manager Khurram Ayub Khan, which would remain operational around-the-clock under supervision of senior officers, a news release said. The control room, operating with contact number 051-9257736, would promptly address individual and collective complaints of its consumers, coming from different localities including Islamabad, Wah Cantonment, Attock, Fateh Jang, Murree Taxila and Kahuta. The control room would also monitor the working of Emergency Centers established in other localities. — APP

## Bhimber Dam to start by 2022

ISLAMABAD: The construction works on 2 MW power generation Bhimber Dam Project is likely to start from April, next 2022. The Bhimber Dam project is proposed to be built over Bhimber Nallah located in Bhimber District Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K). The dam is expected to be completed by March, 2024 at the cost of Rs. 86.089 million, said an official source. The AJK government has accorded approval for inclusion of Bhimber Dam project in current Financial Year's annual development programme with allocation of Rs. 60.564 million. The Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) will make every effort to complete the project study within already submitted PC-II cost and requested to arrange approval of PC-II, allocation and release of funds. The PC-II proforma for feasibility study submitted to ministry of water resources (MoWR) last month for arranging its approval from competent forum. — APP

## CII, IPS join hands to promote Islam in policymaking

Chairman Dr Qibla Ayaz said there exists a lot of similarity between the works of CII and IPS which is leading to the formalization of working together via this agreement

## STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Aimed at developing synergies to promote application of Islamic principles and teachings in national-level policymaking, Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad and the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) inked down a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) here in Islamabad.

Signed by IPS' Vice Chairman Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain and Secretary CII Dr Ikram-ul-Haq for a renewable period of three years, the MoU is not only set to jointly foster application of Islamic principles in national policies, but also to facilitate exploration, cooperation and collaboration between the two institutions in carrying out a range of activities including joint research and publishing endeavors, co-organizing seminars, conferences and human development ventures, encouraging and



facilitating dialogue among scholars, experts and policymakers on the matters of intellectual resources, with each other and dissemination of research and knowledge and expertise

analysis to the concerned stakeholders as well as to the public in general.

Speaking on the occasion, CII Chairman Dr Qibla Ayaz said there exists a lot of similarity between the works of CII and IPS which is leading to the formalization of working together via this agreement. He hoped that this collaboration will not only reinforce CII's advice and arguments over matters of national interests but also pave the way for new suggestions and ideas.

Apart from the signatories and Chairman CII, the signing ceremony was also attended by Chairman IPS Khalid Rahman, Inamullah, DG Research, CII, Ghulam Dastageer Shaheen and Mufti Ghulam Majid, senior research officers at CII, Syed Nadeem Farhat, senior research officer at IPS, Dr Shahzad Iqbal Sham, senior research associate, IPS and Mohammad Wali Farooqi, research officer on Pakistan Affairs' desk at the Institute.

## Brutalities cannot suppress Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD: National Security Adviser (NSA) Dr Moed Yusuf on Wednesday said India must understand that no amount of systematic brutalities, rampant use of force or brutal clampdowns can suppress the indigenous Kashmiri struggle.

The NSA in his tweet on his official Twitter handle lambasted the Modi government over recent wave of state-sponsored killings and atrocities unleashed on innocent Kashmiris resisting the Indian occupation in the illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK).

Dr. Moed said the extra-judicial killing of innocent Kashmiris in Hyderabad Srinagar by the fascist Modi regime only confirmed what Pakistan had stated in its dossier on fake encounters in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

## Rupee jumps Rs 1.13 against dollar

ISLAMABAD: The exchange rate of Pakistan rupee strengthened by Rs 1.13 against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Wednesday and closed at Rs173.75 as compared to the previous day's closing of Rs174.88.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market were recorded at Rs 175 and Rs 176.5 respectively. Similarly, the price of the euro was depreciated by Rs 2.28 and closed at Rs 196.62 against the last day's trading of Rs 198.90, the State Bank of Pakistan reported.

The Japanese Yen lost two paises to close at Rs 1.51, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.65 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 233.77 as compared to its last closing of Rs 235.42. The exchange rates of Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal decreased by 30 paises each to close at Rs 47.30 and Rs 46.32 respectively. — APP

## IRSA releases 112307 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Wednesday released 112307 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 45051 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1486.89 feet, which was 94.89 feet higher than its dead level 1392 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 24500 and 60000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1165.75 feet, which was 115.75 feet higher than its dead level of 1050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 8244 and 40000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 69400, 56561 and 33285 cusecs respectively.

Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 4000 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 8307 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. — APP

## Traders demand patrolling in city markets

RAWALPINDI: Trader bodies of the city on Wednesday demanded to increase security around all markets areas as the business community was feeling insecure due to successive attempts of robberies in the shopping areas. Acting President Traders Welfare Association, Pakistan Sharjeel Mir, while congratulating newly appointed CPO Athar Ismail as Rawalpindi police chief here at his office, has expressed concern on ever-increasing encroachments on roads. He demanded that the City Traffic Police remove illegal encroachments to end frequent traffic jams affecting their business. Mir said due to lack of parking space, many markets of downtown areas were losing customers and distances of minutes were being covered in hours due to acute road encroachments, and traffic stuck ups. — APP

## APHC condemns Indian Gen. Rawat's shameful remarks

## AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD: All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has strongly condemned the recent remarks of India's Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat, in which he tried to create confusion and wedge among the freedom-loving people of the territory Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK). According to Kashmir Media Service (KMS), General Bipin Rawat addressing a function in New Delhi recently said that the common Kashmiris were providing them information about the people affiliated with the resistance movement and that they will lynch such persons.

The spokesman castigating General Rawat's remarks that Kashmiris were giving them information about the freedom-fighters termed it a sheer frustration on the part of Indian authorities.

He maintained that after receiving a shameful defeat at the hands of the freedom loving people of Kashmir, who are engaged in a peaceful and democratic resistance movement for their just cause



of right to self-determination and whose entire leadership has been incarcerated in the hellish jails of India and the territory, the Indian military General was speaking the language of Nazism. He said such a statement speaks volumes about the anti-Kashmiri mindset of the Indian Army General and also shows that India is pursuing the policy of 'Divide and Rule' in IOJK. The APHC spokesman maintained that India is trying to create confusion and discord among the Kashmiris by issuing such hateful anti-Kashmiri remarks after failing to suppress them through all its brutal tactics. He reminded the Indian General that each and every Kashmiri is standing firmly like a rock behind the freedom struggle and no amount of Indian repression or its any wicked plan would make them relent in their pursuit of freedom from Indian slavery.

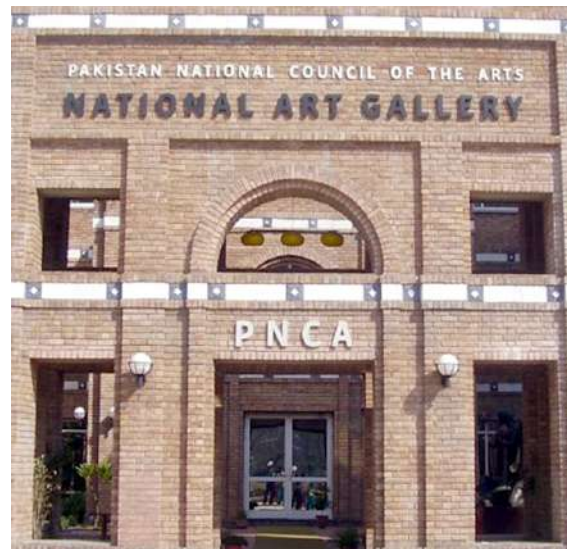
## Abdul Sattar &amp; Ashraf Sharif gives spell binding performance

Ustad Ashraf Sharif Khan is son of legendary sitar master Ustad Muhammad Sharif Khan Poonch Wala. He is as competent as his father & grandfather to perform traditional sitar

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: PNCA presented a stunning instrumental musical evening at its auditorium. Title: "Saaz Samandar". This was an exceptional musical evening with two maestros performing to create magic. Hassan Raza Saeed DG. PNCA welcomed the distinguished guests and thanked them for agreeing to perform on his special invitation of Hassan Raza.

Ustad Ashraf Sharif Khan is son of legendary sitar master Ustad Muhammad Sharif Khan Poonch Wala. He is as competent as his father & grandfather to perform traditional sitar. Ashraf's music combines astonishing technical proficiency with perfection in musical expression. The melodic beauty of his style, accentuated by his dynamic rhythmic development and the virtuous technique, produce a unique



musical experience, equally appreciable to novices and connoisseurs of South Asian music. His music transcends regional boundaries, and is accessible to all, Ashraf Sharif Khan played only the most popular and familiar raags like darbari, yaman, jaijaiwanti, peelu and bahi-

raveen & achoob raags Great Tabla player Ustad Abdul Sattar Khan Tari, belonging to the Punjab gharana of Tabla players Tari, is a disciple of Ustad Mian Shokat Hussain Khan, Great Tabla player of the sub-continent. Tari started his career by accompanying great singers

like Mehdi Hassan Ghulam Ali, Pandit Jasraj, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Roshan Ara Begum.

Later he developed interest in singing after having training from Mehdi Hassan, became an accomplished singer as well. Audience was spellbound when the performance started and his skill was evident.

Earlier Hassan Raza in his welcome remarks praised the two Legendary Tabla & Sitar maestros & said they are pride of Pakistan, who have represented the country & abroad also. PNCA is committed to promote and preserve the work of great artists, and also expanding its activities to other provinces & regions of Pakistan. The spell-binding performances by Tari Khan and Ustad Ashraf Sharif received huge applause from the audience that had packed the hall. It was a hugely successful and enjoyable night.



ISLAMABAD: Rector International Islamic University Prof. Dr. Masoom Yasinzai giving away shield to the participants during inaugural session of International Conference on "China Pakistan Economic Corridor Building Narratives" at IIUI Faisal Mosque Campus. — APP

## Schools to be sealed for refusing Measles vaccine

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali on Wednesday said that strict action would be taken against those educational institutions for not administering anti-measles/Rubella vaccines to children enrolled there. Chairing a meeting to review the ongoing anti-measles drive arrangements at government and private schools, the DC said there were reports that students at various schools were refusing to get themselves vaccinated against the fatal viruses of measles and Rubella. He directed Assistant Commissioners of all tehsils to follow up the two-week-long vaccination drive refusal cases.

Muhammad Ali warned that

schools administration who refused vaccination; not only their schools would be sealed instead FIRs would also be registered against them.

Meanwhile, District surveillance officer Dr Waqar Ahmed told APP that 1556 outreach teams, 328 medical officers, 1812 skilled persons besides 1812 team assistants, and 3368 social mobilizers were participating in administering doses to children between nine months to 15 years of age. He said that over 500,000 children have so far been administered both vaccines during the campaign, while the set target to cover 2.3 million children of the campaign would be achieved by November 27. — APP

## NSTP holds graduation of 16 startups

True ideation emanates from a problem-solving mindset and the ability to take the first step in furthering a very young business idea: Wahaj us Siraj, CEO Nayatel

## NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: National Science and Technology Park held the Graduation Ceremony of the 2nd cohort of its Hatch 8 programme of 16 disruptive startups at the main Campus of National University of Sciences and Technology. Hatch 8 programme is a 6-month pre-incubation program of NSTP, which is designed to take in entrepreneurs in the ideation stage of their product development and transform them into viable businesses. The program offers a variety of services, ranging from workshops to boot camps, free co-working space, as well as access to men-

tors and investor networks.

Whilst congratulating the graduates, Wahaj us Siraj, CEO Nayatel remarked upon the boons of innovation and its impact on the society at large. He said that true ideation emanates from a problem-solving mindset and the ability to take the first step in furthering a very young business idea. Of the 16 startups, four were given awards for high achievement on the basis of revenue generation, customer base and socio-economic impact. The winning startup, RADWI, which makes remotely accessible IoT based Home Automation Solutions, was awarded a cheque of PKR 100,000 along with priv-



ileged residency at NSTP, while the runner-up, Oven Diaries, received PKR 50,000. Two startups were given "NSTP Rising Star" award and received a cheque of PKR 50,000 each.

Vice President, National Science and Technology Park, Dr Rizwan Riaz thanked all esteemed guests for attending the ceremony and noted that "the 16 graduating startups have shown tremendous perseverance and strength to overcome the market challenges and hurdles caused by Covid19 pandemic. He added that "NSTP offers a complete spectrum of enabling services and environment that connects stakeholders, provides digital and physical access to information and knowledge base of Pakistan premier university NUST, through a centralised repository". Since its inception, NSTP, which is Pakistan's first Science and

Technology Park, has played an integral role in promulgating the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem of the country. Within a span of two years, NSTP has on-boarded 7 anchor tenants, 34 hi-tech SMEs, and 60 startups. The tenants at the park have created over 1,500 employment opportunities, raised over PKR 209 million in investment funding, and registered a revenue growth of PKR 1.7 billion. The occasion was also graced by Ambassador: Deddy Faisal, Minister Counsellor - High Commission of Malaysia as he praised the talent of the youth at NUST and NSTP role in strengthening the tech ecosystem of the country.



## CPEC Phase II

EARLIER this week, the government hosted a marketing session for about 70 Chinese companies as it plans on initiating the second phase—which will focus on industrial development—of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This was an important meeting during which the CPEC Authority (CPECA) chairman Khalid Mansoor briefed the attendees on the latest developments on the CPEC horizon, various business opportunities and incentives for investment. The main focus of Phase II is to enhance bilateral cooperation in industrial, technological and agricultural sectors for which business-to-business collaboration will present various opportunities and avenues for success. It is imperative to attract investors towards our special economic zones (SEZs) since four out of the nine agreed zones are now at an advanced stage of development and are in the process of being populated. The incentives offered by Pakistan for SEZs are regionally competitive as they include 10-year income tax exemptions in addition to exemptions of customs duty on the import of capital goods. During the meeting, Mr Mansoor also explained that this next stage can accelerate socio-economic development in Pakistan with the help of Chinese investment and transfer of technology. In order to achieve this, the focus is going to be on export growth in areas such as textiles and IT, and import substitution in the sectors of steel and agriculture by generating employment opportunities and promoting joint ventures. This is all positive, but we must also push for further diversification in the areas of technology and for the transfer of Chinese research and development centres in order to upscale our local capacity in these areas. Our agriculture sector in particular can benefit significantly when it comes to improving the quality of seeds and yield, and also in terms of modernising our mechanical cultivation and harvesting. The possibilities are immense and it is a matter of seeing through the implementation of this phase successfully without any delays or issues.

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## Iran and US on the way of negotiation

Dr. M Akram Zaheer



The Iranian leadership's views on the nuclear talks are unclear, but there are growing indications that the president Raisi and the clerics are more distrustful of the United States than ever before

IRAN'S new president Ibrahim Raisi seeks diplomatic way to end the sanction regime. At his swearing ceremony on August 5, 2021, he stated that the Crisis in the region must be resolved through inter-regional dialogue. He spoke that "I extend my hand of friendship and brotherhood to all the countries of the region, especially to our neighbours, and I warmly shake their hands". Few weeks ago, Washington also advised Tehran to turn to the talk quickly on reviving a nuclear deal. In addition, if the president of Iran is genuine in his determination to see the sanction lifted, well that is precisely what's on the table in Vienna". Washington hopes Iran Tehran seizes the opportunity now to ad-

vance diplomatic solution".

There are many reasons why analysts think that the situation is changing. It is the first general course of Sino-US diplomacy. When National Security Adviser Jack Sullivan and Secretary of State Anthony Blinken met with top Chinese diplomats in Anchorage in March, the tone was bitter and reproachful. On July 26, under-secretary of State Wendy Sherman struggled to meet with Chinese counterpart. China advised United States to change its highly misguided mind-set and dangerous policy of thinking China as an imaginary enemy. Before her arrival Mr Wang said that China would not accept the United States super position in the relationship. A few weeks after, same senior official of China also met to the Taliban leadership. China's "wolf warrior" diplomacy is crystal clear because it openly complains about United States behaviour, ridicules the decline of the United States, and it also expresses that Washington is facing the consequences of China's violation. In broader scenarios for Sino-US relationship are deteriorating. The absence of collective efforts by the P5 + 1 to bring Iran back to the UN Security Council is another interesting reason. Russia has many differences with the Biden government and also has complex relations with Iran, including direct involvement in Iran's civilian nuclear program. However, Russian officials are clearly concerned about the possibility of Iran's proliferation and speak of the need to limit Iran. Russian diplomat Mikhail Ulyanov has played a key role in the Vienna-based nuclear talks with Iran and played a role of messenger between Iranian and American officials. A senior US negotiator said in closed-door meeting last week and appreciated Russia's positive role. He described Russian willingness to adopt "very cooperative approach". In it, they want to work with us to see if we can get back to the agreement. Another reason is Chinese increasing its investment in Persian Gulf particularly in

Iran that is clear violation of US sanctions against Iran. With the beginning of the Trump administration and the growth of the Biden administration, China has made clear violation of US law. Iran desperately needed cash, meanwhile, China has benefited from subsidized oil. As long as the nuclear talks continue, a few barrels of oil here and there can act as a negotiator. However, Chinese imports a record amount of oil from Iran has increased more than eleven million barrels per day. The future of the nuclear talks is still unclear whether Iran will be agreed with the United States, and it is also unclear that China will agree to cut off its imports. Although China also has serious concerns about Iran's proliferation, but is happy to be freely involved in global efforts to stop Iran. China expresses all the feelings about its desire to resolve the dispute through negotiations, but at the same time adheres to its agreements with Iran. Both the countries are business partners and China is the only big customer of Iranian oil due to its isolation in the world. China accounts for about a third of Iran's trade and Iran accounts for less than 1% of China's trade. China's economy is 30 times larger than Iran's and its population 18 times larger. China is an elephant and Iran is an ant. Although China does not agree with the proliferation of Iran, but it does not feel threatened by Iran. China also sees Iran as a useful tool in its foreign policy, as a way to get closer to the United States and its allies, and takes Iran as its proximity. The main thing is to pull the trigger. The Iranian leadership's views on the nuclear talks are unclear, but there are growing indications that the president Raisi and the clerics are more distrustful of the United States than ever before. Tehran is examining the declining of American influence in the region. China is allying with the Iranian resistance and pursuing a goal of gaining special blessings from Iran which will bring energy benefits for it.

— akramzaheer86@yahoo.com

## A cure for health inequalities in the Muslim world

Dr. Azeem Ibrahim

Muslim-majority countries are mostly in an arc across northern Africa and the Middle East to Bangladesh. For the most part, these are relatively poor countries, apart from the low-population hydrocarbon states in the Gulf region

THE UN estimates that the global population will reach 10.9 billion by the end of the century. Much of this growth will come from Muslim-majority countries — most of which are completely unprepared for such an expansion in their populations. One key issue identified by the UN is emerging health inequalities that will be exacerbated by poor infrastructure, poverty and stagnant economies. In order to fully understand this challenge, it is useful to examine the social determinants of health in terms of income differentials, social systems and political choices, and different disease prevalence across ethnic groups. The main factors cited are often variances in nutrition, education, employment and living environment, but the concept can become

rather nebulous when drawn too widely or where population groups with substantial differences are compared. The existing research tends to show predictable between-country variations due to socioeconomic status and gender relating to differences in morbidity and mortality. However, much less is known about the cross-national variability of health outcomes and health inequalities tied to ethnicity, race or migration status. In general, we know that marginalized minority groups often experience earlier mortality and worse overall health relative to majority populations. This starts to point to some of the complexities. In some instances, the Muslim population is made up largely of migrants who may suffer varying degrees of social exclusion, prejudice and problems accessing healthcare. The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced long-known links between poor health and low income, but also in many countries points to the ways in which low income is related to ethnicity. In turn, in many countries, certain ethnic groups are also often Muslim-majority. In Europe, this partially follows the patterns of colonial control, so most of France's North African communities are Muslim, while in the UK the same is true for those from South Asia. However, other communities are the result of migration for work, such as the Turkish community in Germany, or the result of refugee crises. Globally, the Muslim population can be split between those who are minorities in their particular state and those who live in Muslim-majority countries. In the first instance, in addition to their religious identity (and often particular ethnic backgrounds), the issues revolve around the degree of social exclusion

in that state. In Muslim-majority states, the issues can often be linked to questions of governance as much as the actions of the Muslim community itself. Thus, in contrast to Pakistan, Bangladesh is often praised for sustained efforts to improve population health, including access for women. Finally, Islam's widespread prohibition on alcohol usage helps to remove a major source of ill health in other social or religious groups. Equally important, Islamic teachings on charity and income equality can, potentially, have a powerful role in Muslim-majority countries, but are harder to apply where the Muslim community is a minority. Also, as a community, the provision of healthcare is an important feature reflecting the importance of social interaction within the faith. Muslim-majority countries are mostly in an arc across northern Africa and the Middle East to Bangladesh. For the most part, these are relatively poor countries, apart from the low-population hydrocarbon states in the Gulf region. Within this group, there are health successes despite low levels of income, in particular Bangladesh, which is often cited as a success story. Equally, there is no systemic difference between Muslim-majority countries and their immediate neighbors in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa. What is left is actually good or bad policy choices, linked to better or worse governance. Islam offers economic tools for poverty alleviation. The key challenge in the Muslim world remains — it is poverty that drives many of the health problems and limits the ability of the population to mitigate and adapt to the rapidly emerging health problems associated with climate change.

— Courtesy Arab News

## Curtailing smog

URGENT warnings of Pakistan's hazardous air quality in cities like Lahore continue to be raised while governmental efforts to counter this imminent threat remain slow. Reports of increased vulnerability to respiratory diseases as well as throat and eye infections have scared the public which is being urged by the government to avoid going outdoors and wear face masks as a protective measure. Advertisements by the authorities in news publications ask for people to step up and report cases of stubble burning, high-emission cars and polluting brick kilns. We have clearly crossed the point at which self-monitoring was an option and instead, radical steps are required to mitigate some of the damage done to our environment. According to statistics released, the transport sector is responsible for 43 percent of the country's air pollution levels, industries 25 percent and waste burning is at 20 percent. The use of eco-friendly cars in our country is severely limited and data on carbon emissions from cars through fitness certificates shows that there must be a serious push towards sustainability by the government.

At the same time, the practice of stubble burning has become so prevalent that bouts of smoke can be seen escaping to the sky from the M2 as well. Similarly, brick kilns and industrial establishments have a big hand in polluting the air as well for which anti-smog committees have been established. The job of these groups should be to ensure that policy change occurs, various stakeholders abide by environmental laws and that accountability prevails to set a precedent that such a toxic atmosphere cannot be nurtured. New and innovative solutions are also being proposed with more research and technological development in the modern day. For instance, an experiment on using artificial rain to get rid of the smoke artificially is being carried out by the Punjab University Centre for Integrated Mountain Research. High-polluting cars should be kept off the roads through heavy fines and fitness certificates, and if nothing else, should be kept away from busy city centres at peak hours. Such strong directives are needed if some headway is to be made for improving the environment.

## Time to revive 'cricket diplomacy' between India and Pakistan

Ishtiaq Ahmad



A glimmer of hope emerged earlier this year, when the UAE used its good offices to restore the cease-fire along the Kashmir frontier. In Sept, Saudi FM Prince Faisal bin Farhan, while visiting India, offered to mediate and ease Indo-Pak tensions

ALTHOUGH India and Pakistan are out of the T20 World Cup in the UAE, the iconic hug of the respective cricket team captains after India's defeat in its match with Pakistan highlighted an important point: The persistence of a deep public yearning for peace, despite three-quarters of a century of wars and tension. Following up on this random expression of mutual affection could heal old wounds between the two subcontinent nations. Cricket is the sport their citizens love most. Deep animosity does sometimes find jingoistic expressions whenever either side faces a defeat — as it did this time in India, with instances of violence against Kashmiris celebrating Pakistan's victory. But there are examples in recent history when so-called 'cricket diplomacy' helped normalize bilateral relations. The credit for initiating cricket diplomacy between the two nuclear archrivals goes to former Pakistani military ruler Gen. Muhammad Zia, who visited India in 1987 to watch the India-Pakistan match in Jaipur at a time when the two countries were close to the brink, having amassed their armies close to the borders. A war was averted. Since then, cricket diplomacy has often come into play to reduce mutual tensions. In the late 1990s, then-Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee instructed the players to "win not just matches but hearts" during their Pakistan tour. In 2005, another military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, watched an India-Pakistan cricket match in New Delhi on the invitation of the Indian premier, which spurred Kashmir talks. And in 2016, Imran Khan, Pakistan's current prime minister and cricket legend, was present at the T20 World Cup in Kolkata as a goodwill gesture. This was the last time Indo-Pak cricket teams played in each other's countries. Since then, with the Hindu nationalist rule in India and the subsequent military backed regime in Pakistan, the bilateral relationship has suffered a serious downturn. The 2019 military skirmish across the Line of Control in Kashmir further sparked hostility, putting an end to the cease-fire agreement signed in 2003. A glimmer of hope emerged earlier this year, when the UAE used its good offices to restore the cease-fire along the Kashmir frontier. In September, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, while visiting India, offered to mediate on Kashmir and ease Indo-Pak tensions. The Gulf allies could be ideal peace brokers, for having viable economic interests in India as well as close relations with Pakistan, but the success of their mediation depends upon the willingness of the nations in conflict. This is where the spirit of camaraderie shown in the recent T20 World Cup game

by the Pakistani and Indian team captains Babar Azam and Virat Kohli, respectively, can gain political currency. It meant that for a people with a shared history spanning centuries it did not matter who won or lost. But such spirit of the game can replicate itself in the politics of peace if the wielders of power are also willing to walk an extra mile to mend fences. The key driver of Indo-Pak conflict is the security issue, rooted in their zero-sum approaches toward bilateral disputes such as Kashmir and regional quagmires in countries like Afghanistan. The cost of conflict is enormous. Take, for instance, trade. Its current volume, conducted through three countries such as the UAE, is worth \$2 billion. If normalized, it has been estimated it would instantly increase tenfold. India would benefit from relatively cheaper textile products from Pakistan, which in turn could gain from India's edge in pharmaceutical and software technology. Also, imagine the consequent scale of tourism in a region where the historic divide of 1947 has left the Muslims of Pakistan craving for the relics of the Mughal era, and the Hindus and Sikhs of India aloof from the roots of their respective religions. The price of this perpetual security-centric issue is starkly visible in their growing scale of poverty, disease, and hunger, currently accentuated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Perhaps its most embarrassing outcome lies in the emergence of Bangladesh as the richest country in South Asia, despite being much smaller than India and born out of Pakistan in 1971. Though structural barriers such as power asymmetries and rigid discourses of ideology have frequently undermined progress in the normalization process, the two countries have also been willing to prevent the conflict from getting out of control. For instance, nuclear confidence-building measures have been in place for well over three decades. The current Kashmir cease-fire was also made possible by secret talks between their security interlocutors in the UAE. Since February, their chiefs of military operations in the disputed corridor have once again been in regular contact through hotline. Moreover, while resolving conflicts such as Kashmir may take a long time, opportunities of regional integration such as the 2010 Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline agreement can be instantly explored to overcome zero-sum competition in post-America Afghanistan. However, the revival of the Indo-Pak peace process, the so-called composite dialogue, requires a trigger, which again seems to be emanating from the cricketing circles. Indian cricket board president, Sourav Ganguly, recently invited his Pakistani counterpart to the Indian Premier League final. The IPL is such an expensive sporting event that Ramiz Raja, Pakistani cricket board chairman, has subsequently termed it "bankrolling" Pakistani cricket. Part of the money that the International Cricket Council earns from the IPL eventually ends up promoting Pakistani cricket. In the cricket world, an India-Pakistan match represents the most exciting event, given the amount of emotion and passion involved among the spectators glued to live streams or watching inside the stadium. If the sport is played in either country, it is altogether a different ball game. Interestingly, the revival of this fascinating tradition currently suits Indian cricketers who wish to recover from recent international losses and Pakistani cricketers who are deeply disappointed with Britain and New Zealand for canceling Pakistani tours — even more so, their respective cricket fans. For pragmatic reasons, the embattled regimes of Indian and Pakistani premiers, Narendra Modi and Khan, respectively, may also find political respite in the comeback of the cricket season, both Test and T20 matches, in their home grounds. All it takes is the announcement by their respective cricket boards to resume the all-favorite India-Pakistan cricket series. This single step may once again pave the way for meaningful progress on the other pragmatic end of socio-economic connectivity, and also the resumption of dialogue on resolving rather cumbersome security matters.



## Briefs

## Next elections through electronic machines

FROM PAGE 01  
Registration, Regulation and Facilitation Bill, 2021

- The SBP Banking Services Corporation Amendment Bill
- The National College of Arts Institute Bill
- The Muslim Family Laws Amendment (Amendments in Section 4 & 7), Bill
- The Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) Bill, 2021
- Hyderabad Institute for Technical and Management Sciences Bill
- Islamabad Rent Restriction Amendment Bill
- The Criminal Law Amendment Bill
- The Corporate Restructuring Companies Amendment Bill
- The Financial Institutions Secured Transactions Amendment Bill
- The Federal Public Service Commission (Validation of Rules) Bill
- The University of Islamabad Bill
- The Loans for Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Purposes Amendment Bill
- The Companies Amendment Bill
- The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission Amendment Bill
- Pakistan Academy of Letters Amendment Bill
- The Port Qasim Authority Amendment Bill
- Pakistan National Shipping Corporation Amendment Bill
- Gwadar Port Authority Amendment Bill
- The Maritime Security Agency Amendment Bill
- The Emigration Amendment Bill
- The Privatization Commission Amendment Bill

The International Court of Justice (Review and Re-consideration) Bill, 2021, that allows the right to review and reconsideration to Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav was also passed in the Parliament. The statement of objects and reasons of the bill says that the government of India initiated proceedings against Pakistan in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), concerning alleged violations of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 24 April 1963 "in the matter of detention and trial of an Indian national, Commander Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav", who had been sentenced to death by the Military Court in Pakistan in April 2017. The Opposition resorted to a strong protest after the government bulldozed the bills, with the Opposition and treasury benches coming face-to-face and a scuffle breaking out. Meanwhile - In the joint parliamentary session, PML-N President and Opposition leader Shehbaz Sharif has said that the government wants to pass black laws through the parliament vowing to deter government's move. He said the government does not want to go to the people and it is relying on the Electronic Voting Machines, terming the EVMs "Evil Vicious Machines." The joint parliamentary session was held on Wednesday under the chair of National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser. The session was opened with a heated debate on the Electoral Reforms Bill, 2021 by PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif. While taking floor in the house, the PML-N president expressed opposition's firm resolve to oppose tooth and nail the government's attempt to railroad unjustified legislations through the parliament. "We will become an iron wall in front of these legislations," Shehbaz vowed. He alleged that the government and allies wanted to bulldoze the EVM bill from the parliament. "An electoral reforms committee formed by the Nawaz Sharif government had held 117 consultative meetings and passed bills. However, the PTI-formed committee held meetings only in June, August and September," he added. The government ministers brought all kind of accusations against the Election Commission of Pakistan when the commission refused to implement government's order regarding use of EVMs, he added. "Only eight countries are using EVM technology. Even Germany, a country with advanced technology, does not use the EVM for polls," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Permanent Secretary Matthew Rycroft in a photo with a group of students. - DNA

## Kontaveit, Muguruza book WTA Finals showdown

Estonia's Kontaveit earned a 6-1 3-6 6-3 win over Maria Sakkari of Greece to secure her place in the final as she tries to win her first major title. Muguruza and Kontaveit played in a group match earlier in the event, with the Spaniard winning 6-4 6-4



## SPORTS DESK

GUADALAJARA: Two-time Grand Slam champion Garbine Muguruza will play Anett Kontaveit in the final of the WTA Finals in Mexico. Muguruza's power was too much for Paula Badosa as she beat her fellow Spaniard 6-3 6-3 in their semi-final. Estonia's Kontaveit earned a 6-1 3-6 6-3 win over Maria Sakkari of Greece

to secure her place in the final as she tries to win her first major title. Muguruza and Kontaveit played in a group match earlier in the event, with the Spaniard winning 6-4 6-4. "I'm very happy," said Muguruza after beating Badosa. "I lost the first match in the round robin [against Karolina Pliskova] and I was already looking for flights [home]." The encounter in Guadalajara was a first meeting between Badosa and Mu-

guruza, who broke in the third game of the opening set and never looked back. Badosa was let down by double faults at key times, with one of her six setting up set point, which Muguruza converted with a forehand winner. Frustration bubbled over for the 24-year-old, who repeatedly shouted at herself and slapped herself on the face at one changeover, and Muguruza capitalised by winning five games in a row to take charge of the second set. World number five Muguruza overcame a brief wobble when she went 0-30 while serving for the match but recovered to seal victory when Badosa netted a backhand. She will now seek to go one better than Spain's 1993 runner-up Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and win the title on Wednesday. World number eight Kontaveit broke Sakkari twice on the way to winning the first set of their match but the Greek levelled to force a decider. In the third set, Sakkari broke first but she could not hold on to the advantage as Kontaveit immediately levelled at 3-3 before going on to win.

## Fakhar, Shadab move up in ICC Rankings

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani batter FakharZaman has advanced eight places to 40th in the MRF Tyres ICC Men's T20 Player Rankings released Wednesday. Fakhar's unbeaten 55 against Australia in the second semifinal in Dubai made him achieve the feat while spinner Shadab Khan has also moved up seven places to 16th position after bagging four for 16 in the same match. Meanwhile, Mitchell Marsh and David Warner have made notable progress in ICC Men's T20I Player Rankings after helping Australia win their first ICC Men's T20 World Cup title in Dubai on Sunday. All-rounder Marsh, who struck an impressive 77 not out off 50 balls to be named Player of the Match in the final against New Zealand, has progressed six spots to reach joint-13th position among batters while Player of the Tournament Warner's scores of 49 against Pakistan in their semifinal and 53 in the final have helped him move up eight places to 33rd position. New Zealand captain Kane Williamson, who top-scored in the final with a knock of 85, has gained seven places to reach 32nd position while Devon Conway is up three places to fourth position after scoring 46 against England in the first semifinal in Abu Dhabi. Other bowlers to gain in the latest update include Australia leg-spinner Adam Zampa, who is up two places to third, and fast bowler Josh Hazlewood, whose haul of three for 16 in the final sees him move up two places to sixth position. New Zealand's left-arm seamer Trent Boult is up seven places to 14th position after taking two for 18 in the final while Pat Cummins (up 24 places to 37th) and Chris Woakes (up 21 places to 46th) have also moved up the bowlers' list. England's Liam Livingstone is up seven places to third among all-rounders. Meanwhile, Canada batter Navneet Dhaliwal's consistent performances in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Americas Regional Qualifier have lifted him 36 places to 36th position. Dhaliwal's scores included 65 against Panama, 49 against Argentina and 44 against Canada. - APP

## Osaka voices concern over Peng Shuai

## AGENCIES

TOKYO: Peng Shuai has not been seen or heard of publicly since she accused a top Chinese official of sexual coercion World tennis champion Naomi Osaka has become the latest athlete to voice concerns over the whereabouts of Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai. One of China's biggest sporting stars, Ms Peng has not



been heard from since she made sexual assault allegations against a top Chinese official. The Women's Tennis Association (WTA) said it had confirmed that she is "safe and not under any physical threat". However, they were not able to directly reach her. "I was recently informed of a fellow tennis player that has gone missing shortly after revealing that she has been sexually abused," Ms Osaka tweeted, using the hash-

tag #WhereisPengShuai. "I hope Peng Shuai and her family are safe and ok. I'm in shock of the current situation and I'm sending love and light her way." It comes as a number of tennis players have spoken up about Ms Peng. Earlier this week, world number one tennis player Novak Djokovic said he hoped she would okay, adding that he was shocked. French player Nicholas Pietrangeli also weighed in, saying



"we are all concerned". Ms Peng - a former number one ranked tennis doubles player - had posted about the alleged assault against Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli on Chinese social media site Weibo in November. In the post, she said she was "forced" into a sexual relationship with Mr Zhang. Mr Zhang, 75, served as China's Vice Premier between 2013 and 2018 and was a close ally of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

## Beijing tightens Covid-19 entry rules

BEIJING: Strict new Covid-19 restrictions come into force in Beijing on Wednesday for visitors to the Chinese capital, requiring negative tests and dramatically cutting domestic flights as the city raises the drawbridge against the coronavirus ahead of the Winter Olympics. With less than 100 days to go to the games in February, China is bracing for a challenge to its zero-Covid strategy when thousands of international athletes descend on Beijing after months of strict border controls.

All visitors to the capital must now show a negative Covid test result from the past 48 hours, while flights from higher risk areas within China will be cancelled or limited to one a day at reduced capacity. "Beijing is the capital and has strong regional and international connections... The virus must not be introduced into Beijing and it must not spread in Beijing," sport spokesman XuHejian said at a press conference on Tuesday. - APP

## Djokovic into semis after win over Rublev

## AGENCIES

TURIN: Novak Djokovic was once again in imperious form as he qualified for his 10th semi-final at the Nitto ATP finals following a straight sets victory over Andrey Rublev in Turin. The world number one, who is targeting a record-equaling sixth title at the tournament to cap a sensational 2021, came through 6-3 6-2 in one hour and eight minutes to finish top of Green Group with a match to spare. The result also sees the 20-time Grand Slam champion claim his 40th win at the ATP finals, moving beyond Ivan Lendl into outright second position for most match victories at the competition, with Roger Federer way out in front on 59. An untidy opening period saw both players trade immediate breaks with Djokovic again showing early rust on serve, similar to his lull prior to easing past Casper Ruud in his opening match. The Serb didn't have it all his own way for much of the opening set as Rublev's booming forehand posed plenty of problems, but that all changed in game eight when Djokovic made the most of a backhand error from his opponent and swooped in to nail a crosscourt pass and claim a crucial break. The five-time champion then served out to love to take the opener in 36 minutes before claiming another break to lead 2-1 at the start of the second set. Djokovic's trademark elasticity in defensive



positions was once again key as he produced a devastating pass on the stretch to unlock the world No 5 and ensure the rest of the match would be a formality. Djokovic had never met Rublev in a competitive clash prior to this contest and he duly moved in front in the head-to-head when he broke once more in game seven before serving out the match to offer further evidence that he looks fresh and ready to end a six-year wait to lift this trophy once more.

## Argentina qualify for WC after Brazil draw

"Today we failed in the final third but the most important thing is coming away without a goal against"

## SPORTS DESK

MONTEVIDEO: Argentina qualified for next year's World Cup in Qatar as a point in their 0-0 draw with Brazil on Tuesday proved enough after defeats for Chile and Uruguay. The reigning Copa America champions came into the match against their arch-rivals knowing that a win might not be enough to secure their ticket, but a draw could be. And Chile's 2-0 defeat at home to Ecuador, coupled with Uruguay's 3-0 loss to Bolivia, sent Argentina through. It caps a fine year for Argentina and Lionel Messi, who won their 15th Copa America in July with a 1-0 final victory over Brazil at Rio de Janeiro's iconic Maracana stadium. "If we analyze this year, it was beautiful. What we've been through with the fans... everything was complete," said Rodrigo De Paul. Argentina welcomed back six-time Ballon d'Or winner Messi to their starting line-up while star forward Neymar missed out for Brazil. But Messi was unable to inspire his team in a match of few chances,



against opponents who booked their ticket to Qatar on Thursday with a 1-0 win over Colombia. Brazil remain top of the qualifying group, six points clear of Argentina, who took their unbeaten run to 27 matches. "We played very well in every match this year. We're already qualified for the World Cup," said Brazil's Fred. "Today we failed in the final third but the most important thing is coming away without a goal against." Brazil wasted a two-on-two break when Fred's pass forced Vinicius Junior wide, and his first touch ran out of play. It summed up a match that never caught fire and in which almost nothing came off from either side. Quick-thinking Matheus Cunha tried to score the goal of the qualification campaign when attempting to chip Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez from inside his own half, but his effort sailed over the crossbar.

## WHO HAS QUALIFIED FOR QATAR SO FAR?

Argentina  
Belgium  
Brazil  
Croatia  
Denmark  
England  
France  
Germany  
Netherlands  
Qatar  
Serbia  
Spain  
Switzerland

The 2022 World Cup in Qatar will feature 32 teams in eight groups of four.

The finals draw is scheduled to take place in April 2022, after the March break for international games.

Group stage:  
Nov 21 - Dec 2

Round of 16:  
December 3 - 6

Quarter-finals:  
December 9 - 10

Semi-finals:  
December 13 - 14

Final:  
December 18

## EU encourages Pakistani...

FROM PAGE 01

The Pakistani economy consists of almost 3.3 million SMEs. These consist of service providers, manufacturing units and start-ups. SMEs make up over 30% of Pakistan's GDP, account for approximately 25% of export generation and provide over 70% industrial employment. While in the EU, Europe's 25 million small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of the EU economy. SMEs provide two out of three industrial jobs in the EU. The Business Forum aims to play a key role in bringing together SMEs from EU and Pakistan to enhance their export orientation, collaboration in technology transfer and promotion of businesses. The EU Ambassador to Pakistan, Androulla Kaminara said, "Over the series of three events, we have managed to bring together SMEs working in diverse sectors from across Pakistan. This diverse range of products, which are covered under GSP+, represent a huge opportunity for Pakistani SMEs to allow them to fully benefit from GSP+ boost trade and strengthen bilateral trade for a prosperous Pakistan. Through this forum, we are trying to help create linkages between EU and Pakistani SMEs to understand their challenges and help overcome them - with a particular focus on technology transfer. The government's new SME development policy shows the commitment to help small businesses grow and contribute positively to Pakistan's economy. With the strong involvement of the business community today and continued engagement with the Government, through the EU-Pakistan Business Forum we hope to develop initiatives, build capacity and provide technical assistance to support the SME development process in Pakistan.

## Realistic training...

FROM PAGE 01

"Continued practice of operational drills is imperative for effective response to wide ranging threats," COAS emphasised. Earlier, on arrival the COAS was received by Commander 1 Corps Lieutenant General Shaheen Mazher Mahmood in the exercise area followed by a comprehensive briefing on the exercise.

## Electoral reforms...

FROM PAGE 01

elections in the country. Talking to media outside Parliament House, he said the passage of Bills related to use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and grant of right to vote to overseas Pakistanis had proved once again that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was the largest party of the country having broad based support of the masses from every nook and corner of the country. He said the Majlis-e-Shoora has okayed unprecedented legislation passing the bills linked the basic rights of citizens and foundation of free and fair elections has been laid. He thanked coalition partners for extending support to the government. There will be i-voting system for Pakistanis living abroad, conducting elections was the responsibility of the Election Commission and legislation was responsibility of the Parliament. He said the legislation would help protecting the rights of women and children. Special courts for women and children would be set up. He said that government had made optimum effort to evolve consensus with the opposition on electoral reforms and adopt the bill unanimously but it played a negative role in the legislation process. - APP

## FM felicitates PTI, allies

FROM PAGE 01

welfare was a clear proof of complete confidence in Prime Minister. He felicitated overseas Pakistanis for getting the right to vote. "Overseas Pakistanis are our most precious asset and their demand for right to vote is very just." "By the grace of Allah, today Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan fulfilled another important promise made in its manifesto," he added.



## Briefs

## Uzbek, Kazakh leaders hold phone call



DNA

TASHKENT: The President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev had a telephone conversation with the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

According to the press service of the head of our state, current issues of further development of Uzbekistan - Kazakhstan strategic partnership and expansion of multifaceted cooperation were considered.

The main attention was paid to the promotion of practical cooperation, primarily to increasing the volume of bilateral trade, the preparation and implementation of long-term cooperation projects in the mechanical engineering, energy, agriculture, transport and logistics, pharmaceuticals, textile and food industries, and other priority areas.

The importance of intensifying regional contacts and cultural-humanitarian exchange was also noted.

An agreement was reached on the joint elaboration of new directions and specific programs of mutually beneficial cooperation by the governments of the two countries. The Heads of state also considered the schedule of the upcoming high-level meetings.

## US, Greece hold joint military drill in Aegean

AGENCIES

ATHENS: Greece and the United States on Tuesday held a joint military drill in the Aegean amid rising tensions with Turkey.

In the statement released by the Greek general staff, it was stated that the two countries held a joint training exercise in the Aegean, and Greek head of General Staff Konstantinos Floros and U.S. Ambassador to Athens Geoffrey Pyatt visited the USS Mount Whitney warship of the U.S. 6th Fleet, which participated in the exercise.

In the statement, it was noted that communication and maneuvering exercises were carried out in the PASSEX type exercise, in which ships of the Greek naval forces and warplanes of the Greek air force also participated.

The drill comes a week after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that "Greece, as a whole, has turned into a U.S. military base."

The Turkish leader was referring to United States' numerous military installations in Greece's Alexandroupoli (Dedeagac).

The two neighbors, allies in NATO, are at odds over a number of issues such as competing claims over jurisdiction in the Eastern Mediterranean, air space, energy, the ethnically split island of Cyprus and the status of islands in the Aegean.

## Hungary records highest Covid deaths, cases

MONITORING DESK

BUDAPEST: Hungary's number of daily COVID-19 deaths and new officially recorded cases on Wednesday climbed to highs not seen since a devastating pandemic surge last spring.

Government figures showed 178 daily deaths and 10,265 new cases in the country of fewer than 10 million. The latter figure approached record pandemic highs set in March, while daily deaths were the highest since May 1.

The numbers reflected a worsening pandemic situation in the Central European country, which in spring had the highest COVID-19 death rate per capita in the world. An early leader in inoculations, Hungary has struggled to overcome vaccine hesitancy in recent months. Around 40% of its total population has still not received a jab. It lags nearly 9 percentage points behind the average vaccination rate in the rest of the 27-country European Union.

## Razzak, Belarusian envoy hail agreement signed at ITIF

"Economic development in Afghanistan would directly impact Pakistan, and PM Imran Khan has categorically advised to increase trade with the neighboring country"

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce, Textile and Industry, Razzak Dawood along with H.E. Mr. Andrei Metelitsa, the Ambassador Republic of Belarus inaugurated Belarus-Pakistan Business Forum here on Wednesday.

Advisor to Prime Minister has said the agreement signed with Belarus at the International Trade and Industrial Fair (ITIF) was of utmost importance, which would promote advanced education in the country. On the second day of the event, Lakhani's University signed three agreements with institutions in Belarus. Razzak Dawood said Afghanistan's regional connectivity would increase in a couple of months, which would also benefit Pakistan's external trade.

"Economic development in Afghanistan would directly impact Pakistan, and Prime Minister Imran Khan has categorically advised to increase trade with the neighboring country."

Minister said the economy was heading in the right direction post-covid. "Presence of foreign delegates at the fair proved the confidence of international community in Pakistan's ability to deal with the pandemic. He informed that Pakistan was



increasingly tapping the non-traditional markets adding, he would soon Nigeria in this regard. Advisor appreciated E-commerce

Gateway and said the organisation was playing an active role in promoting exports. A large number of local and foreign

visitors appeared on the second day of the fair at a local hotel. Vice President E-commerce Gateway Umair Nizam said the

turnout surpassed their estimates by 50 percent. He said the citizens visiting the fair observed all SOPs.

## Afghan stability vital for region: Amb. Aftab Kokher



DNA

VIENNA: Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Kokher meets Mr. Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian National Council.

Ambassador of Pakistan to Austria, Aftab Ahmad Kokher, met Mr. Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian National Council. They discussed all issues of mutual importance including

situation in Afghanistan, Jammu and Kashmir and bilateral cooperation in the fields of education, trade and parliamentary exchanges.

Wolfgang Sobotka recognized importance of bilateral relations with Pakistan. Ambassador Kokher urged him to play his role for further strengthening the relationship. President Sobotka also recognized the importance of interactions between parliamentarians

of the two countries. In this regard, he expressed his readiness to receive parliamentary delegation from Pakistan.

Talking about recent developments in Afghanistan, Ambassador Kokher said that peace and stability in Afghanistan were vital for Pakistan and the region. Pakistan had extended its full cooperation and worked with international community for evacuation

efforts from Afghanistan. Mr. Sobotka appreciated Pakistan for facilitation in evacuation of Austrian nationals from Afghanistan. Ambassador Kokher stated that Pakistan could not afford any further instability in Afghanistan leading to more refugees' influx and other serious security challenges.

Ambassador Kokher briefed Mr. Sobotka about the humanitarian crisis and human rights violations in illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and urged that Austria and European Union should play their role for the right to self-determination to the Kashmiris. Ambassador Kokher also invited Wolfgang Sobotka to visit Pakistan at his convenience. The President of the National Council of Austria welcomed the invitation and expressed his interest to avail any opportunity to visit Pakistan.

## CHP wants old Turkey, overthrow of democracy

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkey's Republican People's Party (CHP) aims to overthrow democracy and the economy, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Wednesday in renewed criticism against the main opposition.

"The project led by the CHP aimed to resurrect the old Turkey, overthrow our democracy, crush our economy and take our people captive," Erdogan said at the Justice and Development Party's (AK Party) group meeting at Parliament in the capital Ankara. Erdogan said that the CHP, by rejecting the Syria and Iraq troop mandate votes as well as its stances after that, is targeting Turkey directly and added that this change in stance did not happen on its own but through directives coming from abroad.

The AK Party, the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and the opposition Good Party



(IP) backed the Iraq and Syria motion. The CHP and the pro-PKK HDP, however, voted against it. The motion allows the Turkish military to carry out cross-border operations in northern Iraq and Syria for two more years, from Oct. 30, 2021, until Oct. 30, 2023. It stated that the risks and threats posed by on-going conflicts near Turkey's southern land borders "continue to rise." "Those that are thanking the CHP, putting its back after the vote, hold their strings. The CHP has been aspiring to be the subcontractor of Turkey's sworn enemies within the country," he added.

## Smog-shrouded Delhi shuts schools

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: New Delhi has shut down schools until further notice, urged people to work from home and banned non-essential trucks from entering the Indian capital due to dangerous levels of air pollution.

One of the world's most polluted cities - home to some 20 million people - New Delhi is cloaked every winter in a thick blanket of smog.

On Saturday, the Delhi state government had ordered schools to close for a week and banned construction work for four days.

But in an order passed late

on Tuesday, the Commission for Air Quality Management for Delhi said all educational institutions should remain shut until further notice.

Five coal-fired power plants around New Delhi have also been temporarily shut down, according to an order from the panel on air pollution, which comes under the federal Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Trucks except those carrying essential goods are barred from entering the capital until November 21 and most construction activities in Delhi and its neighbouring cities were halted, the order said.



BAKU: Pakistan ambassador to Azerbaijan, Bilal Hayee meets with the head of Icherisheher Museum Center (Old City Museum Center) administration to discuss future cooperation with Walled City Lahore Authority to deepen cultural ties. - DNA

## Azerbaijan condemns Armenia amid fresh clashes

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry said that at least seven Azerbaijani soldiers were "martyred during combat operations" on the Armenian border on Tuesday

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijan on Wednesday condemned Armenia over the killing of seven soldiers in recent clashes between the two countries. In a statement, Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry strongly condemned "the Armenian side's continuing military provocations on the basis of revenge."

"The military-political leadership of Armenia is directly responsible for the escalation of the situation in the region and for preventing the implementation of the tripartite statement," the statement added.

The ministry said "all kinds of threats and military provocations against the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within the internationally recognized borders" will be responded to accordingly. Earlier on Wednesday, Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry said that at least seven Azerbaijani soldiers were "martyred during combat operations" on the Armenian border on Tuesday.

Ten other soldiers were also injured during the operations, the ministry added. On Tuesday, Azerbaijani Defense Ministry

## 7 soldiers 'martyred': Baku

BAKU: At least seven Azerbaijani soldiers were "martyred during combat operations" on the Armenian border on Tuesday, Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry has said.

In a statement on Wednesday, the ministry said 10 other soldiers were also injured during the operations.

"The situation on the Azerbaijani-Armenian state border has stabilized since the evening of November 16," the statement read. "The provocation and military adventurism committed by Armenia on the state border completely failed..."

Earlier, the ministry said Armenian forces carried out "large-scale provocations" against

Azerbaijani army check posts in the Kalbajar and Lachin border regions.

In response, the Azerbaijani army launched an emergency operation, a statement said, adding that the movement of Armenian forces was blocked. Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed the border tensions with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. Relations between the former Soviet republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan have been tense since 1991, when the Armenian military occupied Nagorno-Karabakh, also known as Upper Karabakh, a territory internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, and seven adjacent regions. - DNA

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday discussed the border tensions with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

Relations between the former Soviet republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan have been tense since 1991, when the Armenian military occupied Nagorno-Karabakh, also known as Upper Karabakh, a territory inter-

nationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, and seven adjacent regions.

During a 44-day conflict that started in late September last year, Azerbaijan liberated several cities and 300 settlements and villages that were illegally occupied by Armenia for almost 30 years.

Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the UN Yashar Aliyev has said Armenia failed to reciprocate the peace agenda put forward by Azerbaijan.

Aliyev made the remarks at the UN Security Council open debate - "Maintaining international peace and security: Peace and security through preventative diplomacy: a common objective to all the principal organs of the United Nations".

"Armenia has failed to reciprocate the peace agenda put forward by Azerbaijan. Recent large-scale armed provocations by Armenia against Azerbaijan in the border area between the two states, to which the Azerbaijani armed forces adequately responded, as well as Armenia's continued territorial claims are the result of irresponsible actions on the state level and of dangerous revanchist ideas overtly propagated in Armenia," Aliyev stressed.

## Ukraine holds drill near Crimea

FOREIGN DESK

KYIV: Ukraine's armed forces have conducted drills near the borders of Russian-annexed Crimea, the defence ministry said in a statement on Wednesday, amid growing tensions on the country's frontiers.

The drills simulated Ukrainian marines, tanks and aircraft repelling an enemy attack, the defence ministry said. It also released footage showing marines manoeuvring with large-calibre machine guns, grenade launchers, tanks and helicopters. Earlier this month Ukrainian border guards, police and the national guard also held drills on the border with Belarus aiming to protect the country from possible attempts by migrants to breach the frontier.

Ukrainian authorities have said Russia has left military units near the Ukrainian border after exercises, with the number of troops in the area now totalling at least 90,000 and the forces holding a series of large-scale drills.

U.S. officials said they were worried about the build-up of Russian military power near Ukraine and the migrant stand-off between Belarus, a close ally of Russia, and the European Union.

## Indian comedian sparks anger among nationalists

FOREIGN DESK

NEW DELHI: Comedian Vir Das' "Two Indias" monologue which he performed in Washington, DC, doesn't appear to have hit the right notes with some back home in India.

According to local media agency NDTV, the satirist's routine has prompted the BJP party in Delhi to file a complaint with police for insulting the country on foreign soil. Spokesman Aditya Jha posted a picture of himself standing outside a police station in New Delhi, calling for Das to be arrested. The comedian's monologue sparked a fierce debate online with some saying the response demonstrates rising intolerance since Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014. Telling a packed audience at the Kennedy Center venue in the US capital, Das pointed out some of the disturbing contradictions in Indian life: "I come from an India where we worship women during the day and gangrape them at night." Was went on to say: "I come from an India where we scoff at sexuality and yet f\*\*\* till we reach a billion people."

## Germany hits new infection high

WEB DESK

BERLIN: Germany on Wednesday reported record levels of COVID-19 cases as the country faces a virulent fourth wave of the pandemic that has taken hold since late October.

The country's public health agency, the Robert Koch Institute, reported 52,826 new cases of coronavirus infection in the past 24 hours, the highest rate registered since the pandemic began in early 2020. That represents an increase of 13,150 cases compared with the same day a week ago. The seven-day incidence rate measuring cases per 100,000 people also reached a record high of 319.5, up from 312.4 the day before. The death toll from COVID-related causes rose in 24 hours by 294 to 98,274.

Despite the high infection rate, the death toll still remains below that at the peak of the pandemic in December 2020 owing largely to the fact that around two-thirds of the population is vaccinated.

However, experts have warned from the beginning of the rollout that the number is not high enough to keep the virus under control. One of Germany's top virologists, Christian Drosten, predicted last week that the country could see 100,000 more COVID deaths over the winter if the vaccination rate did not increase and other measures were not taken to stem the spread.



## Briefs

**UK inflation soars to ten-year high on energy costs**

### FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: British inflation spiked close to a 10-year high in October on increased energy bills and resurgent post-lockdown demand, data showed Wednesday, sparking talk of a pre-Christmas interest rate hike. The annual rate jumped to 4.2%, the highest level since November 2011, the Office for National Statistics said. That followed 3.1% in September and was more than double the Bank of England's 2% target. In reaction, the pound jumped against the euro and dollar as traders priced in a December interest rate hike from the BoE. The data "now makes it odds-on that all the pre-Christmas headlines will be of the Bank of England steals Christmas variety, if they do bite the bullet and belatedly nudge rates higher", said CMC Markets analyst Michael Hewson. Rising consumer prices ramp up the cost of living, especially when wages fail to keep pace. The data "makes for uncomfortable reading and goes to show the punishing effects of higher energy and food prices on family finances," said Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.

### China applauds CPEC Authority

BEIJING: China on Wednesday applauded China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority on Wednesday for hosting a meeting of Pakistani based Chinese companies and briefing them about more investment opportunities in Pakistan. Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Zhao Lijian applauded the efforts from Pakistani side to increase input in the development. The meeting was attended by Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Asad Umar, SAPM on CPEC Affairs, Khalid Mansoor and Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Nong Rong. Khalid Mansoor briefed the participants on the latest developments with regard to CPEC and stated that Phase-II of the CPEC is aimed to enhance the bilateral cooperation in Industrial, Technological and Agricultural sectors. Zhao Lijian remarked that the development of CPEC has entered in the stage of high speed and quality development. "We believe, we will better focus on agriculture, industrial development, people's livelihood, while ensuring the good operation of the existing projects," he added. The spokesperson said that the both countries would try to make the CPEC a demonstration project. "We also hope that Pakistani side will provide more enabling conditions and convenience for Chinese companies to do the business in Pakistan," he added. The CEOs and representatives of over 70 Chinese companies attended the meeting held in Islamabad while a number of companies joined through video links as well. - APP

### Sikh pilgrims reach Pakistan

#### DNA

LAHORE: Sikh pilgrims from India arrived in Pakistan today via the Wagah border to attend the 552nd birth anniversary of Guru Nanak - Sikhism's central figure - that falls on November 19 this year. Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Indian government on Tuesday decided to meet the demands of thousands of Sikh pilgrims and agreed to reopen the Kartarpur Corridor. The passage had been closed for the past 18 months. Pakistan and India had closed the corridor in March 2020 to curb the spread of the deadly coronavirus pandemic.

# State of the art 'Anti-Corruption Academy' established: Javed

Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB said that NAB is an apex anti corruption organization of the country which has assigned a gigantic task of eradication of corruption from the country

#### KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB chaired a meeting to review performance of Training and Research Division of NAB at NAB Headquarters. During the meeting, it was informed that on the directions of Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman NAB, NAB has established its own state of the art "Pakistan Anti-Corruption Academy (PACA)" at NAB Headquarters as NAB always accords high priority for training/capacity building of its Investigation Officers and Prosecutors on regular basis on modern lines as training is continuous process which is an effective tool for improvement and maintaining the quality of Investigation Officers and Prosecutors. Justice Javed Iqbal, Chairman

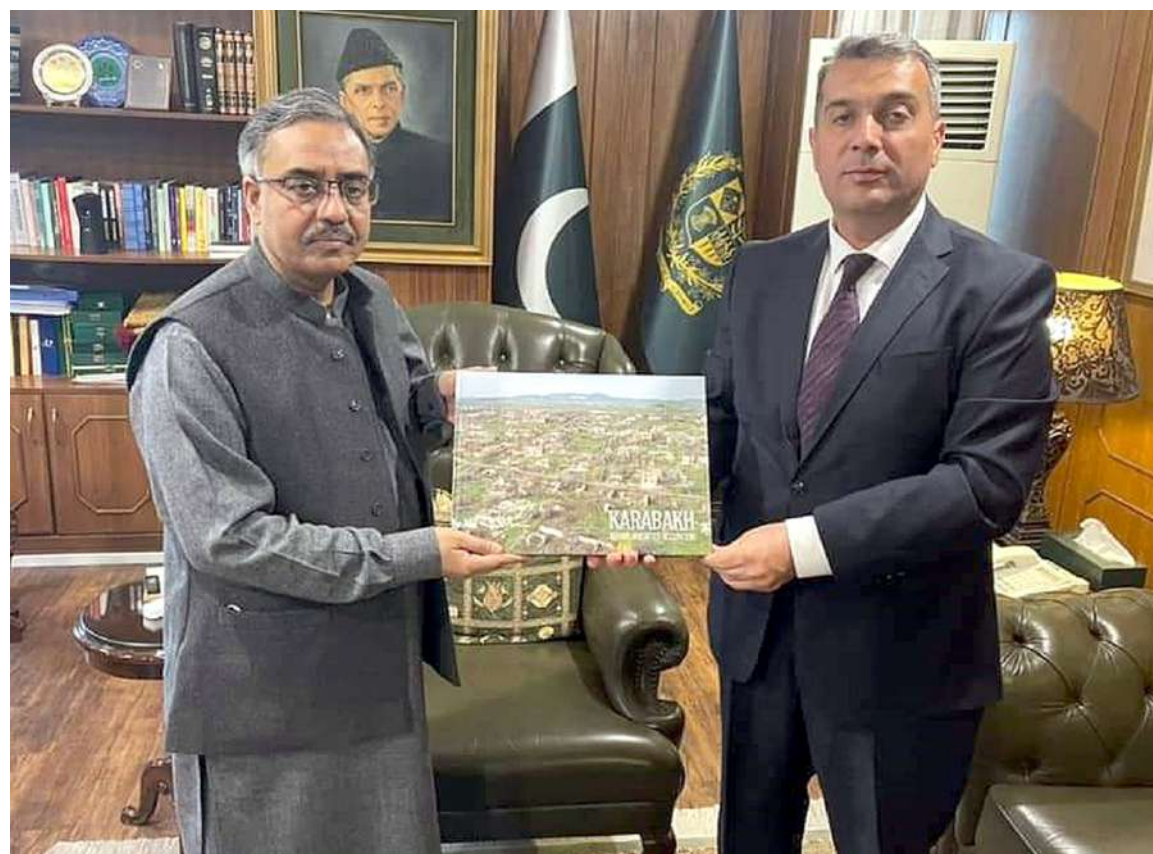
NAB said that NAB is an apex anti corruption organization of the country which has assigned a gigantic task of eradication of corruption from the country. He said that this requires an extremely dedicated and highly trained manpower to undertake this responsibility. He said that NAB attaches great importance to its Human Resource Development. Accordingly, He said that Pakistan Anti Corruption Academy (PACA) was established which will act as a hub of disseminating and practicing the knowledge in the field of anti-corruption worldwide. The Academy will offer standardized and tailor-made training, seminars, conferences, opportunities for dialogue and networking, and will act as an anti-corruption think-tank to empower professionals for the



future white collar crimes challenges. It will provide a new, holistic approach to anti-corruption education and research, delivers and facilitates anti-corruption training for practitioners from all sectors of governance, and will provide technical support and assistance to a wide variety of stakeholders.

PACA draws on an unwavering drive towards excellence, innovation, and a commitment to rendering itself accessible to sister institutions across the globe by using multi-faceted training methods, tools and techniques. Corruption is a most significant roadblock in the process of governance improvement, development and progress. PACA will strive to develop a hall-mark and culture and practice of integrity and accountability. He said that the mandate of "Pakistan Anti-Corruption Academy (PACA)" has been mandated with 5 core functions including Training & Capacity Building of officers of NAB and others in the field of Financial Crimes Investigation, Forensic Examination, and Prosecution; Carrying out research and reformation projects to highlight system weakness and propose im-

provement based on need assessment, system analysis research and latest good practices in fields of financial crimes and prevention of corruption reforms for good governance.; Training & Research in Collaboration with International and national Institutes; Forensic Examination Development and Curriculum Development & Accreditation of Investigators in the field of financial crimes and anti-corruption. The Chairman NAB appreciated the performance of Training and Research Division and said that establishment of state of the art "Pakistan Anti-Corruption Academy (PACA)" of NAB is a milestone in the history of NAB which will be helpful a standardized syllabus for all investigation officers and capacity building of prosecutors on modern lines to ensure quality and uniformity.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov met with Sohail Mahmood, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. - DNA

## Belarus says to hold EU talks on migrant crisis

MOSCOW: Belarus said Wednesday that President Alexander Lukashenko and German Chancellor Angela Merkel agreed in a telephone call that Minsk and Brussels should discuss the migrant crisis on the Belarusian-Polish border. Thousands of migrants, mainly from the Middle East, are camped on the border in what the West says is revenge for sanctions slapped on Lukashenko's regime after its brutal suppression of protests against his rule. Lukashenko and his mainly Russian President Vladimir Putin have rejected the accusations and criticized the EU for not taking in the migrants. Citing Lukashenko's press service, Belarus state news agency Belta said the Belarus leader and Merkel "agreed that the problem as a whole will be brought up to the level of Belarus and the EU". "Relevant officials to be determined from both sides will immediately start negotiations to resolve the existing problems," Belta said. Those discussions will also consider the wishes of the migrants to get to Germany, the news agency added, saying that Lukashenko and Merkel agreed on maintaining contacts. - APP

Home Office. "These ties are reliant on an effective and well-functioning migration relationship and the UK is committed to strengthening our visa routes and facilitating those wishing to travel between the two countries," said Matthew Rycroft, adding that the Home Office is delivering an immigration system that offers clear opportunities to the brightest and best from Pakistan to come to the UK to study, work and live. During his visit, he talked about the UK Home Office's new immigration system that will level the global playing field to those wishing to come to

## Senior British official visits Pakistan, affirms Pak-UK ties

#### SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The most senior official in the UK Home Office, Permanent Secretary Matthew Rycroft is visiting Pakistan on a two-day tour to discuss shared priorities and future cooperation to affirm Pak-UK ties. UK and Pakistan have a long and shared history that is bolstered by the 1.6 million Pakistani diaspora in the UK that is at the heart of the relationship between the two countries. It is these people to people ties that makes Pakistan a particularly important partner for the UK

the UK. Pakistani students will benefit from new graduate routes, providing an excellent opportunity for Pakistani students to enter into skilled roles in the UK job market. The Permanent Secretary took part in a range of engagements and meetings at the Ministry of Interior and associated agencies to discuss challenges affecting operational cooperation and identify areas of mutual interest to expand collaboration. Highlighting the ground-breaking collaboration between Metropolitan Police and Pakistani authorities last year, which resulted in getting justice for the murder of Dr Imran Farooq, Mat-

thew Rycroft set out his desire to work more closely with the Government of Pakistan to tackle shared threats and bring criminals to justice. On recent developments in Afghanistan, Rycroft discussed a host of security issues including narcotics smuggling, human trafficking and illicit finance. This is the second visit of a senior British representative to Pakistan in the last three months. Former Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab visited Islamabad early September and met with senior Pakistani leaders including Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. (Picture on Page 06)

liamentary party meeting but he did not grace the House proceedings. It was later learnt that the prime minister would return to the parliament once leaders of the opposition parties finished their speeches. Imran Khan did return to the House after the government members starts to deliver their speeches. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Imran Khan has clarified that he has no personal agenda behind legislation related to electoral reforms. Prime Minister Imran Khan reached Parliament House to attend the joint session. In his informal media talk, the premier said that country's future is linked to fair democracy practices. Replying to a query, the premier said he is not worried and ready for everything.

## Russia warns of catastrophe sans Afghan normalcy

#### DNA

MOSCOW: The situation in Afghanistan will deteriorate into a catastrophic scenario if the Taliban (outlawed in Russia) fail to normalize it, Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev told Russian journalists on Wednesday at an annual meeting of the secretaries of the security councils of the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). "This year, the situation in Afghanistan is particularly relevant because of the Taliban's rise to power, which was a natural consequence of the 20-year irresponsible policy of the United States and its allies," Patrushev specified, Russian TASS news agency reported. "The situation unfolding today in Afghanistan is unprecedented both in military-political and socio-economic terms. If the new authorities in Kabul fail to normalize the situation, and the international community fails to provide effective support to the Afghan people, the scenario could become catastrophic, involving a new civil war, the general impoverishment of the population and famine," the Russian security chief added. Patrushev said it was difficult to precisely predict what consequences the region would face, particularly CIS nations and the entire world under a negative development of the situation. "Surely, they would be extremely grave," he stressed.

## Covax hits 500 million Covid vaccine deliveries

#### NEWS DESK

GENEVA: The Covax scheme aimed at equitable global access to Covid-19 vaccines has now delivered more than 500 million doses around the world, figures showed Wednesday. Covax was established to ensure poorer countries get Covid jabs but the facility has been hit by setbacks as wealthy nations hog doses straight off the production lines. Covax, co-led by the World Health Organization (WHO), Gavi the Vaccine Alliance, and CEPI, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, had said at the beginning of the year it hoped to deliver two billion doses in 2021. "Thanks to incredible hard work and dedication from partners and health workers, Covax has delivered 500 million Covid-19 vaccines to 144 countries and territories," Gavi chief executive Seth Berkley said on Twitter. The 92 poorest participating territories can access jabs for free via Covax, with donors covering the costs.

## Saudia Arabia considers Pakistan a true friend: Envoy



ISLAMABAD: Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki on Wednesday called on Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed and discussed matters of mutual interest. During the meeting besides Pak-Saudi relations, they also discussed the matter of terrorist incident with the Saudi diplomat in 2011 in Karachi and decided for early completion of the investigation. Sheikh Rashid said that the newly constituted investigation team by the Sindh government will complete its report within 30 days. He said that Pak-Saudi relations

were based on love and mutual understanding. Ambassador Al-Malki said the government of Saudi Arabia considered Pakistan a dear country with a very deep and strong relationship. He said Saudi Arabia always stood with Pakistan and extended support to it on multiple occasions, adding that the relationship with Pakistan was regardless of any government in power. "Our connection is with the Pakistani flag and we consider it our brotherly country," he said, adding that he saw a "very bright future of Pakistan". - APP

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