



# Islamabad POST

Saturday, November 27, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

**Lt. Gen. Nigar Jauhar: Pakistan's First female Colonel Commandant**

Detailed News On Page-01

**Envoy urges joint trade ventures**

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**Strong narrative more effective than wars: Fawad**

Detailed News On Page-01



**Briefs**

**Arif Alvi stresses on population control**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Arif Alvi emphasized to control the rising population across the country on Friday. According to the details, he said that since Pakistan does not hold enough resources, the control on rising population and promotion of female education can bring prosperity to the conditions of the country. While addressing on International Donors Conference in Islamabad, President Alvi said that for the social and economical success of the country the rise of female independence holds great significance. Arif Alvi went to mention that healthy women establish healthy societies. Due to the culmination in population across country, burden on the national resources is increasing, he added.

**Inflation our issue, not poverty**

DNA

KARACHI: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Finance Shaukat Tarin has said that all taxes on petrol have been abolished and that all benefits from the reduction in oil prices will be transferred to the people. Talking to media in Karachi, Tarin said if we do not refinance, something else will have to be done. "The real effective exchange rate should be close to 165, 166. Our money is undervalued by Rs10," he said, adding that there were rumours that lockers would be seized, but no such thing will happen. Tarin said that our problem is with the lower middle class because they are being exploited. "Our problem is not of poverty, but of inflation," he said, adding that according to the World Bank, poverty in the country has decreased by 1%.

**Holiday Notice**

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

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## France-U.K. channel crisis accelerates

The dispute underscores the diplomatic hurdles the two countries face in addressing the problem



MONITORING DESK

PARIS: French officials lashed out at Britain on Friday over a letter from Prime Minister Boris Johnson advising France to take back migrants who reach British shores, escalating a diplomatic spat just days after 27 people died trying to cross the English Channel. The French denounced Mr. Johnson's statement in blunt terms, calling it unacceptable, and disinvited Britain's home secretary, Priti Patel, from a crucial meeting on the migrant crisis on Sunday. The dispute, in the immediate aftermath of one of the deadliest disasters ever in the English Channel, underscored the diplomatic hurdles the two countries face in addressing the problem, as lingering tension over Brexit and disagreements on issues including trade and fishing rights continue to roil their relationship. In a letter sent to

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**Boris says no regrets after French fury**

NEWS DESK

LONDON: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has no regrets about publishing a letter to President Emmanuel Macron on Twitter proposing that France take back migrants who have crossed the Channel, his spokesman said Friday. France has called the move "unacceptable" and cancelled Britain's attendance at planned talks between European Union interior ministers on the issue set for Sunday. But asked by reporters at a daily briefing if Johnson regretted sending and then sharing the letter on social media, his spokesman said "no". "As the PM (prime minister) has said himself, both he and President Macron have a shared recognition of the urgency of the situation we're both facing," he said. "You'll see from the tone of the letter this is about deepening our existing cooperation and building on the work that's already been done between our two countries, which the PM in the letter paid tribute to."

## PM for boosting Pak, Uzbek economic ties

The premier was having a telephonic conversation with Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev



MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has underscored the need for enhancing bilateral economic relations between Pakistan and Uzbekistan through early conclusion of a Preferential Trade Agreement. In a telephonic conversation with Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, he underlined the importance of realizing full potential in diverse areas to achieve common goals and objectives. He also reiterated Pakistan's strong commitment to timely completion of Trans-Afghan railway project. Imran Khan hoped that peace and stability in Afghanistan will help advance connectivity agenda leading to regional prosperity. The Uzbek President graciously accepted the Prime Minister's invitation to visit Pakistan, which would further boost existing bilateral cooperation in various fields including economic and trade relations between the two countries.

**Fawad stresses strong narrative**

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Friday said that the strong and impressive narrative of any state was now more effective from wars. He said that it was a result of a narrative that forced America to leave Afghanistan despite occupying it within three hours in beginning. He was addressing the orientation session held here in Islamabad for the newly inducted Human Resource (HR) staff under the digitalization of

Continued on Page 06

## COAS Bajwa lauds role of AMC in ensuring high standards

Lt General Nigar Johar becomes first-ever female general to be appointed as Colonel Commandant of Army Medical Corps

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa in break with precedent has installed Lt General Nigar Johar "as first-ever female general to be appointed as Colonel Commandant of Army Medical Corps (AMC)", military said. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement issued on Friday said that the army chief visited AMC Centre in Abbottabad and laid a floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada and offered Fateha on arrival. "[The] COAS pinned the badges of rank to formally install Lieutenant General Nigar Johar as first-ever female general to be appointed as Colonel Commandant of AMC," it added. Speaking at the occasion, Gen Qamar lauded the contributions of AMC in ensuring high standards of health-



care during peace and war. "AMC has always answered the call of duty during natural calamities, both inland and abroad. Our doctors and paramedic staff have been frontline warriors against Covid-19 and displaying exemplary commitment and resolve for safety and well-being of the people of Pakistan," the COAS was quoted as saying. Installation of the first-ever three-star female general officer of Pakistan Army as Colo-

nel Commandant of AMC is indeed a matter of immense pride for Pakistan Army and the country, he added. Gen Qamar, as per the military's media wing, said, "Keeping pace with rapid advancements in medical science is imperative for the doctors and paramedics to keep themselves at par with modern militaries and best global practices in healthcare." Before becoming the first female officer to be promoted to the rank of lieutenant general owing to her spectacular performance in different leadership and administrative roles last year, Gen Nigar served as commandant Pak-Emirates Military Hospital, Rawalpindi. She has an illustrious career in the Army Medical Corps spanning almost three decades with a rich and diverse experience in management and leadership appointments in the armed forces.



SOCHI: Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. - DNA

**Protest erupts over Nasla Tower demolition**

Contingents of police and Rangers were deployed to disperse the demonstrators

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Protests by builders erupted on Friday on Shahrah-e-Faisal following orders by Chief Justice of Pakistan Gulzar Ahmed to demolish Nasla Tower within a week. A protest call was given a day ago by Association of Builders And Developers (ABAD) Chairman Mohsin Shaikhani. The association has declared that work on any of its construction sites will remain halted. It maintains that the builders were in possession of no-objection certificates and despite that, the demolition work on Nasla Tower was ordered. The protesters, who had gathered in large numbers in the afternoon hours, attempted to stop the demolition work. As a result, the flow of traffic was severely affected on the road considered to be the city's main artery. Contingents of police and Rangers were deployed to the site of the protest to disperse the demonstrators.

## Putin hosts Azeri, Armenian leaders

Putin says the meeting would be devoted to discussing the "revival" of the region

NEWS DESK / DNA

MOSCOW: The leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan have met for the first time in nearly a year, and the second time since they fought a war last year, but did not sign long-awaited agreements to reduce ongoing tension between the two countries. Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan met, along with Russian President Vladimir Putin, in Sochi on November 26. The three had plenty to discuss, as several issues continue to divide the two countries a little more than a year after the war: ongoing border tension, plans to open up borders and transportation links, and Armenian prisoners of war still being held in Azerbaijan.

In spite of sharply rising tension between the two sides, including heavy fighting less than two weeks earlier, Putin chose to accentuate the positive that has been accomplished since he brokered a ceasefire on November 9, 2020. He highlighted the fact that 53,000 [Armenian] refugees have returned to their homes following the fighting; that the 2,000-strong Russian peacekeeping contingent now stationed in Nagorno-Karabakh is working "with high marks from both sides," and that "large-scale military activities have not taken place." Both Pashinyan and Aliyev heaped praise on the Russian peacekeeping mission, despite discontent with the peacekeepers from both sides. Armenians resent their failure to stop Azerbaijan from continuing to lay on pressure, and from Azerbaijan for the fact that they are in effect preventing them from completing takeover of the rest of their territory. (Notably, while Azerbaijani officials

**Vladimir Putin, Aliyev discuss bilateral ties**

NEWS DESK

SOCHI: A bilateral meeting has been held between President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in Sochi. Welcoming President Ilham Aliyev, President Vladimir Putin thanked him for agreeing to come. Putin said there are many questions there, but in any case, I would like to start our bilateral meeting by saying that next year marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries. Suffice it to say that despite all the issues related to the pandemic and the associated restrictions in the economy, our trade turnover increased by 11 percent in the first nine months of this year.

Continued on Page 06

including Aliyev regularly describe the Russian presence as "temporary," Aliyev didn't use that word to Putin's face. "We hope that next year that work [of the Russian peacekeepers] will be continued and there will be more good results," he said in his one-on-one with Putin. Putin said the meeting would be devoted to discussing the "revival" of the region, "so that people can feel safe and carry out economic activities normally, can develop the economy."

**PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY EXHIBITION**  
 26-28 November, 2021  
 Pak China Friendship Centre, Islamabad.

**Musical EVENINGS**  
 Only Families are Allowed  
 27 NOVEMBER 2021 5:00PM  
 28 NOVEMBER 2021 5:00PM  
 PAK-CHINA FRIENDSHIP CENTRE, ISLAMABAD

## Briefs

## Govt working to promote non formal education

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Education, Professional Training, National Heritage and Culture Shafiqat Mahmood on Friday said that the government was working to increase literacy level and promote non formal education for taking the country forward through education.

Addressing the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC)'s meeting of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) regarding Advancing quality alternative learning (AQAL) Phase-II at a local hotel, he appreciated JICA for initiating AQAL phase II to address the root causes of out of school children and for working closely with the federal and provincial literacy departments to cope with these issues through innovative and locally appropriate strategies. The Minister said that the government was trying its best to address the out-of-school children issue through technology based solutions and single national curriculum (SNC) that would bring revolution in the field of education in Pakistan and strengthening systems of data. He added that Pakistan Institute of Education (PIE) would be created to strengthen data systems and promote research based planning in education. — APP

## GCU, YBU sign accord for collaboration

LAHORE: A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the Government College University (GCU) Lahore and Yozgat Bozok University (YBU), Turkey, for research collaboration, faculty training and student exchange. GCU Vice Chancellor Prof Asghar Zaidi and YBU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Ahmet Karadag signed the accord online. The 10-point accord signing was followed by a video conference among the heads and officials of both universities, said a GCU spokesperson here on Friday.

Turkish Consul General in Lahore Emir Ozbay, Director Younus Emre Cultural Centre, Ulas Ertas, and head of Communications Shakil Gillani were also present.

Prof Zaidi said commercialisation and internationalisation were the pillars of his strategic vision, so the GCU was entering into active collaboration and partnership with foreign universities. He said more than 64 international students from 13 countries were admitted to different disciplines at GCU Lahore this year.

He said he would be very happy to host the students and teachers from YBU and other Turkish universities at GCU Lahore. He also told the Turkish university officials about the history and traditions of the GCU. He also discussed possibilities for joint research in different disciplines. — APP

## Conference at Sargodha Varsity pays tribute to Allama Iqbal

SARGODHA: Senator Walid Iqbal Friday urged the youth to understand Iqbal's philosophical ideas for gaining global prominence and placing Pakistan in the ranks of world's most developed countries.

He was speaking at a national conference titled 'Thoughts of Iqbal: Past, Present and Future', organised by the Department of Urdu & Oriental Languages at Noon Auditorium here.

A rich tribute was paid to the national poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal in the two-day moot featuring panel discussions on philosophy and poetry of Iqbal, and a book exhibition with several literary masterpieces on Iqbal's vision and philosophy by prominent writers. Walid Iqbal, who is also the grandson of Allama Iqbal, was the chief guest at the conference, while former principal Punjab University Oriental College Dr Fakhar-ul-Hassan Noori presided over the conference. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest Federal Minister for Railways Azam Khan Swati, Chairman Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barla along with others cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the Pakistan International Property Exhibition at Pak China Friendship center. — DNA

## PASTIC-UAF organizes one day science exhibition

The exhibition was inaugurated by UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqrar Ahmad Khan and Pakistan Scientific and Technological Information Center (PASTIC) Director General Akram Sheikh

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: One-day PASTIC-UAF sciences, engineering, math, and information technology exhibition of projects and applications was staged at the Expo Center University of Agriculture Faisalabad in which students of 40 educational institutions exhibited their 300 innovative projects.

The exhibition was inaugurated by UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqrar Ahmad Khan and Pakistan Scientific and Technological Information Center (PASTIC) Director General Akram Sheikh.

It was arranged by Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC) UAF and Pakistan Scientific and Technological Information Center (PASTIC). It was themed at encouraging innovative trends in sciences, engineering and IT etc as a step towards knowledge-based economy, in which more than 300 projects were put on display. Prof Dr Iqrar Ahmad Khan said that in the modern era, only knowledge based economies are proving their mettle in the world and we have to polish innovative ideas to

redress the grievances of farming community, general public, and industry. He said that we have talented youth who come up with innovative ideas. He said if we provide them a proper platform, it will help refurbish their skills to play their due role in the

prosperity of the country. He said that information technology had become an integral part of our life as it helped the mankind to open up new window of the development and prosperity.

He added that the development made in the

last three decades due to IT was unmatched and it has turned the world in a global village.

PASTIC Director General Dr Muhammad Akram said that owing to increasing population, the students have to develop the entrepreneurship skills to become self-employed for poverty alleviation in the country. He said that they were missioned at developing a national science and technology/research and development information repository of indigenous information resources (databases) and to disseminate research and technology information through contemporary information services and tools.

Director ORIC Dr Zahir Ahmad Zahir said enhanced academia and industry linkages will ensure the knowledge based economy. He said that the country was blessed with talented people.

Dr Abdul Rasheed said that 300 projects from 40 educational institutions including 18 universities were put on the display. He said that they were making all possible measures to refurbish the skills of the students.

Dr Khurram Zia, Engineer Amir Hussain, Habib Gaba, Munawar also spoke on the occasion.



FAISALABAD: UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqrar Ahmad Khan inaugurates One-day PASTIC-UAF, sciences, engineering, math, and information technology exhibition of projects and applications at the Expo Center University of Agriculture Faisalabad. — DNA

## Governor Sindh stresses need for improving urban planning

PTI govt was striving hard to raise living standard of the masses. Imran Ismail remarked that the progress of journey under vibrant leadership of PM Imran Khan had begun

NAZIR H SIYAL

KARACHI: A Korean delegation led by Jonghyo Nam, Chief Advisor, Climate Change, UN Habitat and personnel from Korea Land and Housing Cooperation (LH) called on Governor Sindh Imran Ismail at Governor's House



here on Friday. The visiting delegation discussed in details about enabling environment and up-gradation of living conditions in urban slum areas of Karachi. It was informed at the meeting that United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is engaged in providing support through various humanitarian

and development projects. Chief Advisor, Climate Change, UN Habitat informed that UN-Habitat was providing technical assistance on (a) Development of Rural Housing, (b) Slums Katchi Abadi development, (c) Urban Regeneration to support the PM's 5 Million Housing Programme.

Governor Sindh appreciated the endeavours of the visiting delegation. He said that there was an urgent need for improving urban management and urban planning, what have been neglected in past despite the negative trends affecting the neediest sectors of the society.

He said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government was striving hard to raise living standard of the masses. Imran Ismail remarked that the progress of journey under vibrant leadership of PM Imran Khan had begun.

"The government had launched the biggest ever social welfare programme of the country's history 'Ehsas' to alleviate poverty and provide relief to the people", he added.

## KP govt set to launch skills trainings for youth



PESHAWAR: The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) is all set to trigger youth skills trainings in the province as international donors-funded TVET Sector Support Programme (SSP) has handed over a state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence to the KP Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (KP TEVTA) established in Hayatabad, Peshawar. The handing-over ceremony was held in Hayatabad where Advisor to Chief Minister KPK Abdul Karim Khan was the chief guest. First Secretary of the EU Delegation to Pakistan, Mr. Sven Ruesch; Cluster Coordinator for Training, Sustainable Growth and Decent Employment Opportunities, GIZ-Pakistan Mr. Olaf Handloegten; Managing Director KP TEVTA Engr. Sajjad Ali Shah and representative from the Embassy of Germany Ms. Antonia Peters attended the event. According to details, as many as five centers of excellence (CoEs) have been planned which is a collaborative initiative of the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVITC) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH under the TVET SSP, which is funded by the European Union (EU), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Norwegian Embassy. — DNA

## Punjab to launch multifaceted Labor Card

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Punjab will be the first province to launch multifaceted Labour Card clubbing 14 different features and facilities including purchase of subsidised essential items and concession in transport and Railways fare.

Addressing the business community at the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here on Friday, Punjab Employees Social Security Institution (PESSI) Commissioner Dr Bilal Haider said that Prime Minister Imran Khan was expected to inaugurate the project during the next month.

"The Labour Card will serve as a debit and ATM card, which could also be used for commercial purposes," he said and added that it could be used for getting direct access to loans under Punjab Housing Foundation and Akhuwat, etc.

He said: "It will ensure at least Rs 15,000 additional financial benefits to the secured workers currently getting minimum wages of Rs 20,000 to Rs 25,000," adding that 150 commercial organisations have so far agreed to provide 5 to 45 per cent discount to the card holders.

He said that 1,223,000 cards would be provided to secured workers within the next 60 days. He said that a large number of workers were employed in different industrial and commercial organisations, but they remained out of the social security net due to negligence of the department.

## Govt determined to nail down mafias: Gill

FAISALABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) for Political Communication Dr Shahbaz Gill Friday said that the government was determined to nail down mafias which were eroding the economic foundation of Pakistan.

He was talking to the media after addressing a public meeting and inaugurating various development projects, including a water filtration plant and his dera in Chak No 207-RB Majhiwal near Dijkot here.

He said, "Prime Minister Imran Khan is valiantly facing one after the other mafia and due to his hectic efforts, cane growers are getting their hard earned money in time".

He exposed the fertilizer mafia and said that intentionally low supply of urea was released to Punjab whereas 298% more urea was given to the Sindh.

He said that the vicious objective behind this unfair distribution was to hold this commodity at the crucial stage of wheat sowing and sell it at higher prices later by creating artificial shortage.

He said, "Distribution of fertilizer falls within the preview of 18th Amendment and hence federal government is unable to take direct action against this mafia". — APP

## KP trade bodies to support BMP

PESHAWAR: Thirty (30) out of the total 36 voters of the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and out of the total 36 votes, 30 members of the executive committee and general body attended the public meeting of the BMP and announced support for the candidates of the group.

Those chambers of KP that extended support to BMP included Dir Chamber, Bajaur Chamber, Mardan Chamber, Chitral Chamber, Charsadda Chamber, Charsadda Women Chamber, Peshawar Small Chamber, Mohmand Chamber, Swabi Chamber, D.I. Khan Chamber, Abbotabad Chamber, Haripur Chamber, Kohat Chamber, Mardan Chamber of Women, Pakistan Commercial Exporters Association and Mardan Association. — APP

## Service to people is central to Islam: Speakers

Maulana Jalandhri said that the crux of Islam, according to most credible ulemas, lies in the obedience of the Almighty, following of the Prophet's teachings and serving of humanity

DNA

KARACHI: Humanitarian actions and services form the very core of Islamic philosophy and principles and this is not only evident from the commandments of Allah and the teachings of Quran, but also manifested by the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) via his actions throughout his life.

These views were expressed by Maulana Hanif Jalandhri, the nazim-e-aala of Wafaq-ul-Madaris Alarabia Pakistan, while speaking on the last day of a two-day national conference 'Islam and Humanitarian Action: Prospects and Challenges', which was jointly organized by International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad at a private hotel on Thursday. The conference, which was attended by heads and representatives of several national and international social organizations was participated by researchers belonging to different

universities, seminaries and social welfare organizations from across the country who presented their dissertations.

On the concluding day of the conference, President of Al-Khidmat Foundation Pakistan Muhammad Abdul Shakoor, Kanwar Waseem, provincial secretary, Red Crescent Pakistan, Prof Dr Anis Ahmed, vice chancellor, Riphah International University, Islamabad and Maulana Mufti Abdul Raheem, Jamia Rashid Karachi chaired separate sessions.

Dr Shehzad Channa and Raheela Khan Advocate from Karachi, Dr Umar Saleem, Dr Maleeha Zeba Khan and Hafiz Osama Hameed from Islamabad and Aqsa Tasgheer from Lahore presented their papers on the occasion whereas Umair Hassan, head of Islamic Relief UK, Muhammad Abdul Shakoor, Al-Khidmat Foundation, Dr Muhammad Fayyaz Alam, Dua Foundation, Dr Shahida Noman, Shaour Welfare Trust, Dr Syed Aziz-ur-Rehman, Umair Siddiqui, member of Council of Islamic Ideology, Maulana Dr Zubair Ashraf Usmani from

Darul Uloom Karachi and Dr Sohail Akhtar, former president of Pakistan Islamic Medical Association (PIMA) expressed their views following the papers presentation.

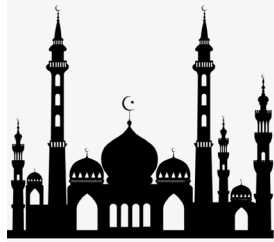
Sharing his views, Maulana Jalandhri said that the crux of Islam, according to most credible ulemas, lies in the obedience of the Almighty, following of the Prophet's teachings and serving of humanity. A living example of this, according to him, could be seen in the form of many humanitarian organizations which are working in the name of Islam and making collective efforts to serve humanity.

He further added that the madrassas and religious seminaries in the country are not only providing religious education to millions of poor, orphaned and needy students, but are also a source of sustenance for them. Referring to Wafaq-ul-Madaris Alarabia Pakistan, Hanif Jalandhri said that about 23000 madrassas from all over the country are affiliated with this Wafaq only, benefiting more

than 2.5 million students across Pakistan; and this the data from only one Wafaq while other Wafaqs can present the stats of their own. This underscores how these Wafaqs and madaris are playing not only a role of religious educational institutions, but also that of social welfare organizations.

Abdul Shakoor, President of Al-Khidmat Foundation, said social service organizations including Al-Khidmat are active for humanitarian service in the light of Islamic teachings and are committed to serving people, both Muslims and non-Muslims alike, in Pakistan as well as abroad, without any discrimination or hidden interest. Dr Maleeha Zeba Khan, non-resident fellow at IPS and assistant professor at National University of Modern Languages presented an interesting dissertation highlighting that about three quarters of the land is water based and a large number of people have been using these sea routes since times immemorial for maritime trade, fishing and security.

## SERVICES



## Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	05:22 am
Zohr.....	11:55 am
Asr.....	03:22 pm
Maghrib.....	05:00 pm
Isha.....	06:28 pm



## Hotels &amp; Restaurants

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



## Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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## Emergency

Rescue (Police).....	15
Bomb Disposal.....	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....	1122 & 16
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Motorway Police.....	9266044
Motorway Police.....	9270601-20
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Rawalpindi.....	9270601-20



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



## Departments

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



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G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8.....	9266316
Wapda Islamabad.....	9217579
Wapda Rawalpindi.....	111-309-309

## Islamabad Metropolitan

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

## Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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## Pak must not get caught into the crossfire of power rivalry

Ambassador Richard Olson (Retd) says the US did not view its competition with China as carving the world into blocs as had happened during the Cold War

## STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan needs to avoid getting caught into the crossfire of the great power rivalry in the Asia Pacific region and should not be forced to pick sides in the emerging security dynamics between the US and China. This was the key message of leading diplomats, former senior military officers, and eminent intellectuals at the International Seminar on "US' Indo-Pacific Shift: Risks and Opportunities for Pakistan" organized by the Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS) in Islamabad.

Senator Sherry Rehman was the Keynote Speaker, while other eminent speakers included Ambassador Richard Olson, Senior Advisor at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP); Admiral Asif Sandila, Former Chief of the Naval Staff of Pakistan Navy; Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani, former Foreign Secretary and Director at CASS; and Ambassador Inamul Haq, former Foreign Minister of Pakistan. The seminar was chaired by President CASS Air Marshal Farhat Hussain Khan (Retd), while Sitara Noor, Senior Researcher at the Centre



moderated the proceedings. President CASS Air Marshal Farhat Hussain Khan (Retd), while delivering the Opening Address highlighted the evolution of the US' Indo-Pacific shift and assessed the situation from a historical perspective. While analyzing US interests in the region, he stressed that the world was witnessing the implementation of the US' Indo-Pacific Strategy in the form of accelerated regional alliance formation, close

security cooperation and large-scale military build-up in Asia-Pacific. He also touched upon China's "Five Principles of Coexistence" and emphasized that these contrasting world views of two contemporary great powers reflected two different civilizational cultures and would have far-reaching impact on geopolitical, geo-economic and geostrategic spheres. The President concluded that US' unilateral approach towards India was very

destabilizing for conflict resolution in South Asia making Indian leadership more arrogant and reluctant to resume dialogue with Pakistan on outstanding issues like Jammu & Kashmir. In her Keynote Address, Senator Sherry Rehman maintained that of three great meta-trends, the digital age was the most important which was transforming the nature of power, and bending history in non-traditional paths. Commenting

on the US' Indo-Pacific tilt, Senator Rehman warned that the American neuralgia to contain the rise of China would force many countries to make umbrella choices based on military binaries. She noted that the US had made a clear decision to ally with India in multiple domains including space, defense, maritime and was now bound to India through its powerful diaspora. This, according to her, was an economic dominance that

had made the two countries' strategic alliance completely in sync with each other. On Pak-US relations, she lamented that Pakistan was viewed from the prism of Afghanistan and treated as a "mistrustful, transactional 'frenemy'", which she termed the "anti-hero of all allies." She cautioned against forcing regional countries to make zero sum choices between Washington and Beijing and stressed that interdependence should be the way forward. "Pakistan must walk away from making emotional decisions and should focus on the rational," she urged. Speaking from Washington, Ambassador Richard Olson (Retd) underlined that the US did not view its competition with China as carving the world into blocs as had happened during the Cold War. He stressed that US competition with China was not military rather, it was economic, and the former was willing to cooperate with China where it could such as on climate change, COVID-19, Afghanistan, and strategic stability. According to him, there existed a realization in US policy circles that asking countries to choose between US and China was unrealistic.

## Chairman FBR listens to complaints at E-Kachehri

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As a sequel to E-Kachehries held on monthly basis to comply with the directions of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Dr Muhammad Ashfaq Ahmed held an E-Kachehri at FBR (HQs) on Friday to listen to complaints and concerns of taxpayers. The complainants interacted directly with the Chairman, FBR, according to press statement issued by the board here. Chairman FBR listened to the complaints of the taxpayers and issued on spot directions for resolution of complaints. He appreciated the suggestions put forth by the taxpayers and assured them that their suggestions would be considered for formulation of tax policies and initiatives for taxpayers. He reaffirmed that FBR was taking all possible steps to facilitate the taxpayers. He also advised the taxpayers to visit their nearest RTO and Collectorate of Customs for redressal of any problem confronted by them. Chairman FBR has already instructed all field formations to resolve the outstanding issues of taxpayers and made it clear that any negligence in this regard will not be tolerated.

## IESCO notifies 2-day power suspension schedule

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday notified 2-day power suspension schedule for Saturday and Sunday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work.

According to IESCO spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Saturday from 09:00 am to 02:00 pm, Kariak, Gulshanabad, Dhok Noor, 502 Workshop, Adiala, Askari 14, Humayun, Humayun 1, Nogzi, Bhakri, Ghauri Garden, Sodran, Khanna 2, Al Noor Colony, Khanna East, City Sohawa, Kachhri, Sohawa, Dhok Awan, Lehtar, Khawaja, New Chawah, Ghazani Khan, Zia Masjid, Highway, Shakirullah, G-8, Orchard Scheme, Faisal Masjid, I-11/3, G-10/3, H-8/2, G-13/3, Dargah, NIH, AQ Khan, Kaldana, Patriata, Pir Sohawa, Nambal, Kayani Road, Officer Colony, Pind Hoon, Rata, Haider Road, Sir Syed Road, Chaklala, River Garden, Model Town, Scheme 3, Humayun-1, Kalia, Gulshan Fatima, Shah Jeewan, Chungi No. 22, Fazal Ahmad Shaheed, Basali, Bahr Kalial, Syed Kasran, Mahuta, Taxila, Mushtaq Hussain, Burhan, Shafi Chauhan, Hussainabad, Gondal Attock Cantt. Aminabad, Shadi Khan, Ghor Ghashti, Shah Dir, Malwali, Mathial, Nara, Khor, Kamdial, Khandha, Bahtar, Sarai Alamgir, F-Nine Chak Daulat, Mangla Cantt, Dina One Bakrala, Hasnot, Mal Awan, Boliara, Islampura, Sanghui, Nathwala, Dina City, Housing Scheme, Minara, Ara Bazar, Mureed, Main Bazar, Dhalid Express, Durgi Rajgan, Adi, Bhikri, Dandot, Hasil, Danda Shah Bilawal, Dharabi, Akwal, Bilalabad, Dharmand Feeders. From 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Abdul Raheem, Malik Altaf, Parbat Road, Shakirullah, Jinnah Super, New NIC, New F-7, FPSC, Mush-taq Hussain, Kala Khan, PMC, Fuji Cement Plant-2 Feeders. - APP

## Chairman CDA, President ICCI visit F-6 Markaz

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) along with the President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Friday visited F-6 Markaz, Supermarket and directed the concerned departments to further expedite ongoing development works. Chairman CDA Amir Ali Ahmed expressed satisfaction over the progress made in the ongoing development works in the supermarket, said a press release. Furthermore, the President of ICCI thanked the Chairman CDA and the management for the rapid development work and expressed the hope that the efforts of the present CDA management would further boost



the business in Islamabad. On this occasion, the traders community also apprised the Chairman CDA about their issues, Chairman CDA assured to resolve them as soon as possible. It is to be noted that rehabilitation work of two sit-out areas in F-6 Markaz Supermarket has been completed while lane marking, drainage, street lights, footpath repair work and other develop-

ment works were in final stages of completion. On this occasion, the Chairman CDA directed the concerned officers to provide all allied facilities to citizens especially traders community for promotion of economy and business activities in Islamabad and all the markets of Islamabad be given the status of model markets. Directions were issued that all development works be completed as soon as possible.

## Cold, dry weather to prevail

ISLAMABAD: Mainly cold and dry weather is expected in most parts of the country on Saturday, according to the PMD. However, smog/fog is likely to prevail in plain areas of Punjab. According to the synoptic situation, continental air is prevailing over most plain areas of the country. The weather will remain cold and dry in Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, KPK, Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan during next 24 hours. During the last 24 hours, the weather remained cold and dry in most parts of the country. The lowest minimum temperatures recorded during the last 24 hours were Leh, Ziarat -07C, Srinagar, Anantnag and Kalam -01 C. - APP

## Importance of Pakistan-Afghan dialogue discussed

ISLAMABAD: The participants of a dialogue between a visiting Afghan youth delegation to the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) in Islamabad highlighted the importance of a people-to-people dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Afghan youth delegation visited IRS here on Thursday as part of a weeklong workshop jointly organized by the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) and International Research Council for Religious Affairs (IRCARA). The session was applauded by all speakers for being a good effort towards bridging the gap between the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan. President IRS Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz stressed the importance of economic development and political stability in a dependant world of the twenty-first century. He further elaborated that the major reason for the Pak-Afghan gap was a matter of conflicting perspectives. He explained how the events that took place in Afghanistan had a spill over effect on Pakistan due to its close proximity. He also warned the audience against the dangers of fifth-generation warfare and its impact on the perceptions of the people of the two countries. - DNA

## Senate committee on Human Rights meets

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights was held on Friday in chair of Senator Walid Iqbal at Parliament House. The meeting was also attended by Senator Seeme Ezdi, Senator Falak Naz, Senator Qurrat ul Ain Marri, Senator Muhammad Tahir Bizenjo and senior officers of the Ministry of Human Rights along with its attached departments and agencies. Senator Keshu Bai was a Special Invitee. Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen M. Mazari was also present. The agenda of the meeting entailed consideration of the Juvenile Justice System (Amendment) Bill, 2021; the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection (Amendment) Bill 2021; the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and the National Commission on the Rights of the Child (Amendment) Bill, 2021. All of these Bills were presented in the Senate on November 19, 2021 and were referred to the Committee for detailed deliberation. The Juvenile Justice System (Amendment) Bill, 2021; the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection (Amendment) Bill 2021 and the National Commission on the Rights of the Child (Amendment) Bill, 2021 were passed unanimously by the Committee. Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen M. Mazari briefed the Committee of the nature of the amendments that were minor and introduced to replace the word "Government" with the "concerned department" in order to avoid delays and bring clarity in view of the Mustafa Impex Case. - DNA

## COMSTECH to promote Chinese traditional medicine

Mr. Nong Rong congratulated Prof. Chaudhary for winning the Mustafa Prize, conferred upon him by the Mustafa Foundation, Iran earlier this year

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH (The OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation) agreed to collaborate with China for development and promotion of Chinese traditional medicine in Pakistan. This was discussed by Coordinator General, COMSTECH, Professor Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Chaudhary and the Ambassador of Peoples Republic of China, Mr. Nong Rong during a meeting on Friday. Both the dignitaries discussed the avenues of bi-

lateral cooperation in the fields of science and technology between the two nations as well as in the OIC region. The Ambassador showed keen interest in the development and promotion of Chinese traditional medicine in Pakistan. Prof. Chaudhary appreciated the idea and agreed on a joint venture for the promotion and development of Chinese traditional medicine in collaboration with the Pakistani institutions. Mr. Nong Rong congratulated Prof. Chaudhary for winning the Mustafa Prize, conferred upon him by the Mustafa



Foundation, Iran earlier this year. The Ambassador presented Prof. Chaudhary with the Guangxi Golden

Silk Ball Friendship Award which was announced last year for him. On the recommendation of Guangxi Normal University, the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang, province of China decided to honor Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Chaudhary with the 2020 Guangxi Golden Silkball Friendship Award for his outstanding contribution to the economic and social development of Guangxi. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Chaudhary is world renowned medicinal chemist. He has published 1,175 research papers in the fields of organic and bi-

oorganic chemistry in international journals, 76 books and 40 chapters in books published by major US and European press. He has secured 40 US patents so far. Dr. Iqbal is D.Sc., Ph.D., and C. Chem. He has been awarded by different governments of Pakistan with Hilale-Imtiaz, Sitara-e-Imtiaz, and Tamgha-e-Imtiaz. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Chaudhary is currently serving as Coordinator General, COMSTECH and Director, International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences, University of Karachi.

## PO allegedly involved in murder case arrested

RAWALPINDI: Police Friday arrested a proclaimed offender (PO) who was wanted in murder case in the jurisdiction of Murree police station. A police spokesman informed that Murree police had registered the case in 2020 on the complaint of Rizwan Ali, nephew of the victim. The accused shot dead a woman over a peace of land's dispute. SP Kamran Amir said strict action would be taken against the anti social elements adding that arrest of notorious criminals involved in heinous crime would help in providing justice. - APP

## Briefs

## Police create halting points

ISLAMABAD: The police have created halting points to control crimes in the city with focus on curb street crime and theft incidents. More than 20 vehicles and 66 motorcycles will be used for this purpose and halting points to be created to keep a vigilant eye on suspicious persons and vehicles to curb the crime and criminal activities. These halting points will work in various timings in the city and their locations can be changed in various timings. IGP Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman said that halting points had been erected in various areas of the city. He said exit and entry points of Islamabad would be also cordoned off randomly along with other places at different venues and times. The IGP also visited various areas of the city to review overall security arrangements under this new plan. In order to prevent street crimes within the ICT, he said the police have adopted pro-active policy. He said patrolling system within ICT had been revamped while efforts had been accelerated to curb crimes in the city. – APP

## Weekly inflation eases 0.67 %

ISLAMABAD: The Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) based weekly inflation for the week ended on November 25, for the combined consumption group, witnessed decrease of 0.67 percent as compared to the previous week, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Friday. The SPI for the week under review in the above mentioned group was recorded at 168.16 points against 169.29 points registered in the previous week, according to the PBS data. The food commodities that contributed in decline in weekly inflation included tomatoes, the prices of which decreased by 15.42 percent on Week-on-Week (WoW) basis. Likewise the other commodities that witnessed decline in prices included onions (7.43%), chicken (6.62%), sugar (1.87%), wheat flour (0.95%), LPG (0.73%), rice Irri (0.59%) and gur (0.15%). On Year-on-Year basis, the commodities that witnessed decrease in prices included onions (37.91%), pulse Moong (28.20%), potatoes (25.82%), tomatoes (11.72%) and sugar (0.57%). Meanwhile, the commodities that witnessed increase on WoW basis, included washing soap (2.77%), bananas (2.11%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (2.01%), cooking oil 5 litre (1.32%), fire wood (1.09%) and pulse Masoor (1.03%). The items that witnessed increase in prices on YoY basis included, electricity for Q1 (75.32%), LPG (74.85%), cooking oil 5 litre (58.34), vegetable ghee 1 Kg (57.87%), mustard oil (56.31%), vegetable ghee 2.5 Kg (56.01%), petrol (44.35%), washing soap (41.52%), diesel (40.21%) and chillies powdered (34.18%). – APP

## IRD to hold 3-day training workshop

ISLAMABAD: Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue (IRD) International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) is organizing a three-day training workshop for Madrassa teachers and religious scholars from various universities and other religious institutes shall speak on inter faith and inter sect harmony, Islamic Methodology of research, Muslims contributions in history and it's various aspects. Those who have been invited for this workshop include Dr. Masoom Yasinzi Rector IIUI, Dr. Ayaz Afsar Vice President IIUI, Dr. Ikram Ul Haq Yasin Secretary Council of Islamic Ideology, Dr. Husnul Amin Executive Director IRD, Dr. Muhammad Aamar Khan Nasir, Editor Al-Shariah, Gujranwala, Syed Muzammil Husain Shah, Molana Tahami Bashar Alvi and Sahibzada Qamarul Haq. – APP

## EU project on support to tackle drug trafficking ends

EU-ACT is a EUR 12 million multi-country project and forms part of the EU Global Illicit Flows Programme (GIFP), along with seven other projects

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr Syed Kaleem Imam, Federal Secretary, Ministry of Narcotics Control and Dr Christian Raitz von Frenzt, First Secretary, Delegation of the European Union, formally closed the EU funded Project, EU Action Against Drugs and Organised Crime (EU-ACT). EU-ACT is a EUR 12 million multi-country project and forms part of the EU Global Illicit Flows Programme (GIFP), along with seven other projects. The GIFP works across four continents and incorporates projects that deliver responses to maritime and aviation trafficking, address drug supply, harm and demand reduction, arms trafficking and support trans-regional investigative best practice and post seizure judicial outcomes. EU-ACT reinforced the capacities of participating governments in disruption of the flow of illegal narcotics along the Southern and Northern heroin routes from Afghanistan and supported cooperation between them. Despite the challenges and limitations brought about by the global covid-19 pandemic, EU-ACT has still managed to bring added value to the co-operation between the European Union and Pakistan delivering a number of events and activities during its lifetime. The project had a broad remit covering drug supply, demand and harm reduction pillars allowing it scope to deliver diverse activities including support to Pakistani Law Enforcement Agencies but also working with experts and a charity in a schools prevention



programme. The project has since 2019 been implemented in Pakistan by FIIAPP, a Spanish public sector foundation, and the UK National Crime Agency. Significant activities delivered by the project include: November 2019 - specialist training for more than 200 law enforcement officers from a wide number of agencies, bringing them up to date knowledge and understanding of New Psychoactive Substances, which are causing increasing levels of harm to people here in Pakistan.

February 2020 - Trans-regional Operational Meeting in Karachi which brought together law enforcement officials from more than 15 countries to exchange knowledge and current trends and build stronger trust and co-operation between South Asia and East Africa. The Project sponsored delegations from the Ministry of Narcotics Control and Anti-Narcotics Force of Pakistan, in attending various international meetings and conferences, allowing Pakistan to highlight the excellent work it does in addressing the supply, demand and harm related to drugs both

nationally and internationally. Pakistan's leading role in drug policy was underlined by its sponsorship and active championing of UN resolution 61/2 "strengthening efforts to prevent drugs use in educational settings", and reflected by its subsequent Chairmanship of the Commission on Narcotics Drugs. The focus on protecting young people from the inherent harms of drugs also led to the delivery of prevention training in schools' activity which concluded yesterday following and intense period of "UNPLUGGED" training by experts from the EU Drug Addiction Programme. Due to the hard work, determination and professionalism of those involved, which brought together Ministries, agencies and staff from the Karim Khan Afridi Welfare Foundation here in Pakistan with the common goal of protecting and empowering its youth over 400 teachers being trained in an evidence-based methodology that addresses the underlying issues that affect the decision making of young adults. With support from the UK National Crime Agency, the Project has helped strengthen Pakistan's efforts at drug interdiction, particularly in the maritime domain. The joint efforts of the ANF and NCA, in co-operation with EUROPOL and other EU law enforcement has led to the seizure of more than 6 metric tonnes of heroin destined for the EU and resulted in more than a dozen arrest in Europe. There have also been multiple tonnes of other narcotics seized, underlining the importance of continued co-operation between Pakistan and its international partners.



ISLAMABAD: Zafar Bakhtawri Secretary General United business group is presenting his book "Jahan Dost" to the Chinese Ambassador H.E Mr. Nong Rong at his residence. – DNA

## RCB confiscates 7 truckload goods

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has confiscated seven truckloads of goods from different markets under its ongoing campaign against encroachments during last five days. According to RCB spokesman, the anti-encroachment operation on the special instruction of Cantonment Executive Officer (CEO) Muhammad Umar Farooq Ali Malik was being conducted on daily basis. He said the grand clean-up operation against encroachments had further been accelerated. He said encroachments were removed from Tench Bhatta, Chungi Number 22, Saddar and other areas. The vendors found selling their products while displaying on footpaths and different roads were imposed fines with warnings, he said adding, the encroachments both temporary and permanent were being removed. – APP

## PNS, PAS join hands for sustainable earth environment

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Nuclear Society (PNS) and Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS) joined hands to bring forth the remedies for a sustainable earth environment in a seminar entitled "Afforestation of Global Deserts for Sustainable Future of Earth Environments" held at PAS. The speakers focused on 'deserts' as the target for future sources of energy, food production, and even water harvesting. The futuristic scenarios discussed in the seminar were preceded by an equally thought-provoking presentation by the President PNS, Dr. Imtihan Elahi Qureshi, who dispelled the notion that nuclear technology is something to be shunned, claiming that the achievement of SDGs is, in fact, not possible without employing nuclear power plants for energy production, nuclear techniques for agricultural productivity, nuclear radiations for diagnosis and therapies of cancer treatment, using of stable and naturally occurring isotopes for monitoring of water resources, pollution types and levels, and global atmospheric precipitations. He noted that the role of peaceful uses of nuclear technology as well as the contributions of nuclear professionals in economic development is not well projected at the national level. Introducing the purpose and theme of the seminar, the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission's former hydrologist and Executive Member of PNS Council, Dr. Niaz Ahmad said that greening of deserts is necessary due to the increasing food demand of a rapidly increasing world population. Initiatives by Countries for greening Deserts, like China, Sahara Green Wall Project by African Union, Saudi Arabia, and UAE have been globally recognized as successful models in this respect. – APP

## PTA slashes MTR from Rs 0.70 per minute to Rs 0.50

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecom Authority (PTA) has reduced the Mobile Termination Rate (MTR) from Rs 0.70 per minute to Rs. 0.50 per minute from 1st January 2022. According to a statement issued by the PTA here on Friday said that rates will be further reduced to Rs. 0.40 per minute from 1st July 2022. Reduction in the MTR has been made after thorough consultation with the telecom industry. PTA is of the view that lowering MTR would allow more competitive and innovative offerings such as free minute off-net bundles for the consumers. It is expected to make the market healthier and beneficial in terms of lower tariffs for making off-net calls. It would also benefit smaller operators in terms of reduced net payments to be made to the bigger operators. In July 2021, PTA issued a consultation paper wherein it was observed that the current MTR of Rs.0.70 per minute in Pakistan is still higher than the benchmarking results of the MTR determination of 2018 and the MTRs prevailing in regional countries. – APP

## AIOU wins int'l acclaim owing to digital transformation

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is now being internationally recognized as a prestigious institution for offering quality education services and students from different countries are getting themselves enrolled in various programs of the University. Digital transformation of AIOU has helped it in reaching to international students, a press release on Friday said. AIOU has achieved a historical milestone by offering more than thirty educational programs for the international students for the first time in autumn 2021 semester. This groundbreaking achievement of the university is a testimony of dedicated and committed efforts of university administration and academia. In the first phase university has offered

admissions in matriculation and intermediate programs and hundreds of students from Malaysia, Italy, Canada, Africa and America got themselves registered in these programs. Directorate of International Collaboration and Exchange arranged an orientation session for international students in this regard and Dr Zahid Majeed gave a detailed briefing to the students regarding academic activities ranging from the submission of admission application to issuance of certificate/degree. He answered many of their queries and highlighted that Prof Dr Zia Ul-Qayyum has given special directives to respond to international students' issues on the priority basis through official communication. It is pertinent to mention here that uni-

versity has offered admissions in various programs during the second phase including Master of Arts/ Masters of Science, Teachers Training, Associate Degree, BS and 1.5/2.5 and 4-Year B.Ed. programs. The deadline for the submission of admission application is 6th December and all academic activities would be conducted online including final examinations. Admission application form for international students is uploaded online on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk). The entire procedure of admission is delineated in detail in the prospectus of the relevant program. In case of any further information, international students may access overseas link on the university website. – APP

## Dr Sania delivers talk on poverty alleviation at NUST

Several other care programmes include Ehsaas langars, orphanages, shelter and old-age homes, being run either completely by the Government or under private-public partnerships

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Senator Dr Sania Nishtar Friday delivered a talk on "Poverty Alleviation and Empowerment through Ehsaas Programmes" at the main campus of National University of Science and Technology (NUST). The event was hosted by NUST Institute of Policy Studies (NIPS). Dr Sania Nishtar, who is also a distinguished member of NIPS Advisory Council, expounded the theory of change behind the Ehsaas programmes that incorporate an all-encompassing approach towards capacity building of millions of underprivileged households. She said that there were different brands of the initiative under three broad categories: nationwide programmes, district-specific programmes, and new programmes, such as Ehsaas Tahafuz, which provides protection against catastrophic expenditures.



Several other care programmes include Ehsaas langars, orphanages, shelter and old-age homes, being run either completely by the Government or under private-public partnerships. She highlighted that a one-window centre for approaching them was already functioning in Sitara Market, Islamabad. She asserted that the timely intervention through Ehsaas had had

encouraging outcomes in the wake of Covid-19, highlighting that one of the steps taken under the auspices of Ehsaas during the pandemic was grant of stipends to most deserving marginalised women in the country. Dr Nishtar elaborated that the Ehsaas programme was fully aligned with Prime Minister's Naya Pakistan vision, adding around 50,000 scholarships were currently being provided

to students across the country. She apprised the audience that a new public donation mechanism was under formulation and soon people would be able to donate to the programme. She added that the mechanism would enable donors to keep a track on where and how their donations were utilised. Dr Nishtar also had an interactive

session with Ehsaas scholarship awardees studying at NUST. The event was attended by NUST staff, faculty and students. Earlier in his welcome remarks, Engr Javed Mahmood Bukhari, Rector NUST and Patron NIPS, stated that Ehsaas was by far, one of the most comprehensive poverty alleviation and social safety programmes, comprising multiple initiatives vis-a-vis equal opportunity creation, social safety net, eradication of geographic poverty pockets, and poor human capital development. The Rector maintained that NUST shares the vision of and is a staunch proponent of inclusive growth through creating educational opportunities for all. While mentioning that as many as 600 students of NUST are recipients of Ehsaas scholarship, he highlighted that the university inspires talented youth from all strata of society to pursue higher education at NUST, and accommodates students from low-income families under its need-based scholarships in overwhelming numbers.

## Govt ensuring urea supply to farmers

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Khuro Bakhtyar on Friday said that the PTI Government was taking all possible measures to supply urea to farmers at affordable prices for wheat sowing. While chairing the meeting with fertilizer industry, he assured that the constant monitoring of urea supply from manufacturing units and movement of fertilizers at selling point across the country, said a press release issued here. Khuro lauded the action of fertilizer manufacturers to blacklist the hoarders to smoothen the supply chain and market correction of urea nationwide. He appreciated the efforts of Punjab government against hoarders, adding that the same measures expected by Sindh government to provide urea at affordable prices for increased wheat production throughout country in interest of public welfare at large. "Owing to negligence of Sindh government towards controlling prices of essential commodities in province especially in Karachi and Hyderabad, the country had witnessed an increased inflation rate over the past years which had put a lot of pressure on our economy in term of high interest rate, which need to be done to control inflation," he added. Khuro said that the Sindh government had become a safe haven for hoarders and profiteers. – APP

## Special squad to check traffic violation

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has constituted Special Enforcement Squad to check violation of traffic rules on the main avenues of the capital. Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Muhammad Omer Khan said that this squad would have six teams and each team to comprise of four policemen. During the first phase, these teams would be appointed at Radio Pakistan Chowk, Ayub Chowk, Daman-e-Koh Chowk, G-11 Dhok Kashmirian Chowk, F-8 Exchange Chowk and E-11 Signal Margallah Road. SSP (Traffic) said that this squad has been constituted following the directions of IGP Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman and would help maintain traffic discipline and reduce road accidents. The SSP (Traffic) said that such measures for safe road environment would be extended during the second phase and more teams to be deputed on various roads. He said these teams comprise of hard working officers and jawans and would be provided all resources to check violation of traffic rules including violations of lane, signal, no parking signs, speed limits and use of fancy and unauthorized number plates and driving tinted glass vehicles. All teams of this squad would submit written report to SSP (Traffic) office on daily basis and would ensure smooth and disciplined traffic flow in the assigned areas. – APP

## SAWIE addresses climate change crisis

ISLAMABAD: SAWIE a digital unbiased farm advisory platform took part in Pir Mehr Ali Shah-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) Silver Jubilee celebrations continued in Rawalpindi. SAWIE is a brainchild of PMAS Alumni and it supported the "Emerging Engineering technologies in Agriculture" workshop at PMAS. The Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the university started on Nov 22 (Monday) and will conclude on Nov 27 (Saturday). The chief guests of the event were Prime Minister Pakistan Taskforce on Agriculture, Eng Gul Asghar Khan and Chinese Agriculture Commissioner, GU Wenliang who visited the SAWIE exhibition and appreciated the innovation. Speaking on the occasion, Wenliang said that China is trying its best to uplift Pakistan's agriculture sector and many agriculture projects have become part of CPEC to facilitate this progress. – APP

## Europe's new Covid wave

THE surge in COVID-19 cases in Europe is worrying since the continent accounted for 60 per cent of the recent global caseload. Several countries have been swift to deploy lockdowns or partial lockdowns, while others have closed public spaces to the unvaccinated. The result has been an outburst of anger on the streets. Protests, clashes or riots have erupted in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Croatia, Ireland, Denmark and Portugal, mostly over decisions to reimpose COVID curbs. Insufficient vaccine coverage is a reason for the uptick in infections, especially in Germany and Austria. Vaccines may not offer complete protection from the new coronavirus, but they reduce the severity of the infection and prevent certain death. That is why medical infrastructure in strongly vaccinated countries no longer feel the strain of the global pandemic. And it's the unvaccinated who are bearing the bulk of the new infections. When Austria plans to make vaccination a legal requirement in February, it's difficult to find fault with the officials, although it constrains individual freedom. The Czech Republic and Slovakia too aim to slap curbs on the unvaccinated. One of the newest variants, Delta, drives infections around the world; increased transmissibility makes it the most feared strain. And this strain is responsible for the latest COVID wave sweeping Europe. Since the 53-nation European region is at the centre of the pandemic, countries have to act decisively to prevent a slide back into the COVID chaos of 2020. The actions include curbs and vaccination. Or else, World Health Organisation's Regional Director Hans Kluge's warning of 50,000 more deaths by March will be a grim reality. The memories of lockdowns aren't pleasant, but those difficult days helped Europe tide over the worst COVID phase. When Russia records 1,252 deaths in a day and Poland 382, some form of restriction is required to break the chain of infections. Austria announced a national lockdown, Germany is considering one, but the United Kingdom doesn't seem keen on it. The new surge comes at a time when the world has learnt to live with the coronavirus. So a return to wearing masks will help, so also social distancing.

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Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti  
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



## Crime in Islamabad

HERE has been an alarming rise in crime statistics in Islamabad over the past year which has forced the Senate Standing Committee on Interior to take notice of the issue. During a meeting earlier this week, the Committee expressed serious concerns of robberies, dacoities and rape of women in the capital after police crime data showed that at least one case of rape was reported every day in the city during 2020. For a while now, Islamabad has had the reputation of being one of the safest cities in the country. However, with robbery and theft incidents taking place in broad daylight every other day, the situation is certainly getting out of hand. In fact, just last week the house of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Ms Nuzhat Sadiq was robbed in an upscale area of the city. Though this high-profile incident has gotten much attention, the numbers overall paint an even more worrisome picture. Just over the last year, over 10,000 incidents of crime have been reported in the Capital. Comparing the numbers over the years, it is evident that there has been a steady rise in the crime rate of the city. The figures also reveal how the city is becoming more dangerous for women and children as there have been a high number of cases relating to child abuse, domestic violence, kidnapping of women, violence against women, and incidents of rape. In fact, in 2021, 47 cases of rape have been reported thus far in Islamabad alone. The authorities must look into addressing this urgently as we cannot allow the security situation to deteriorate to the level of other big cities, especially considering the relatively miniscule population of Islamabad. There is a need for immediate action on part of LEA's and less photo-ops and PR exercises. However, in addition to increasing the capacity of the police to cope with rising crime, we need to understand the socio-political drivers behind this trend as well because increased policing cannot be a comprehensive solution in and of itself.

## Iran and the Taliban post US exit from Afghanistan

Dr. M Akram Zaheer



Although Washington rolled out the carpet under former corrupt Afghan officials but the Taliban declare Afghanistan through allies of Tajiks, thousands and Uzbeks to stop fighting the establishment

IRAN and the Taliban have long been at the forefront to find extraordinary foundations for bridging differences. But in recent days, Iran's foreign ministry has expressed outrage at the Taliban's management of the Panjshir Valley, indicating unrest among members of the both sides. In addition, Tehran feels to be insecure about Pakistani influence in Afghanistan because of strong ties between the Taliban and Pakistan, with some Taliban leaders locat-

ed near Islamabad. Although Iran opposes civil war and foreign intervention in Afghanistan but Mohammad Marandi, an Iranian-American educational and political analyst, told TRT World, clearing up that the Iranian Foreign Ministry had visited the Panjshir Valley. The Taliban's actions are clearly in opposition to the legendary Mujahideen leader, Ahmad Shah Masood, and his allied establishment. On Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh raised Tehran's concerns over the Taliban operation in the al-Shab Valley. The information received from Panjshir is disturbing. The attacks on Panjshir have been strongly condemned. The martyrdom of Afghan leaders is a very sad incident. Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad also criticized the Taliban and echoed its ancient influence but Marandi believes that relationship between Iran and the Taliban are no longer deteriorating, and he also realizes that "Ahmadinejad has nothing to do with Iranian political context. He says Tehran still examines the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. Tehran believes that the Taliban is not the same entity that came to power in 1996, and since it has special factions, it cannot be described as a relevant entity. Although Washington rolled out the carpet under former corrupt Afghan officials but the Taliban declare Afghanistan through allies of Tajiks, thousands and Uzbeks to stop fighting the establishment. But Fatima Karim Khan, a Tehran-based All-Iranian journalist, believes things are not what they used to be. "We can see that the honeymoon is over, but it's too early to prove what happens next," Karim Khan told TRT World. In addition, Karim Khan sees many problems within the new Afghan authorities. According to him, the Taliban talked of creating a multi-ethnic authority, but as you can see, the authorities are completely semi-Pashtun, the Hazaras have no role, and the Ta-

jiks, Uzbeks and Shiites have no role. The present Taliban is a Pashtun government. On the other hand, the Establishment no longer tolerates the Taliban in Afghanistan, along with non-Taliban Mujahideen leaders, Massoud and others. Iran has provided advance assistance to the Afghan Transitional Council, which includes key figures in addition to former President Hamid Karzai. But the Taliban were unwilling to negotiate with them. These are the most important elements that surround the path of Iran and the Taliban. And Mohammad Athar Javed, the owner of a tank based primarily in Washington and a partner in global security software in the United States, also warned about the escalation of tensions between Iran and the Taliban, therefore, we have to wait and see. Analysts agree that if Iran opposes the Taliban without delay, it will create problems because the West wants the anti-Iranian Taliban a good way to put pressure on Tehran. Now, the tension with the Taliban is that despite the withdrawal from Afghanistan, NATO, the world's most effective ally of US, still wants to destabilize Asia and wants to resolve every civil war conflict within the war-torn. But today the geopolitical and strategic environment of Afghanistan is different than past. The Sunni Taliban is no longer just a guerrilla force but they are ruling the country. Another Sunni group with the same alleged Islamic State is also operating in Afghanistan, and the country could attract similar militant groups that raise concerns in Iran. Instability in Afghanistan, conflict between factions and Sunni militancy are all factors that present Iran with a strategic issue that it may not have anticipated. The new Iranian government is already dealing with a weak economy and a third wave of Covid-19 infections. It now faces unpredictability on its eastern front.

- akramzaheer86@yahoo.com

## Talks with the TTP

Shujaat Hamza



The IS-K have been attacking Afghans, mostly the Shia minority on a consistent basis. Hundreds of people have lost their lives in bombings claimed by the IS in recent weeks. It is worth mentioning that the attack on Kabul Airport, which led to the deaths of 13 US military personnel among hundreds of other casualties was also claimed by the IS. The Taliban will have to counter them if they want to let the world know that their writ cannot be challenged

THE PTI government has recently announced that a temporary ceasefire truce has been reached with the Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan, as a result of ongoing negotiations which are taking place with Afghan Taliban acting as mediators. From a common Pakistani's point of view, it is good news that a ceasefire has been reached between the government and the TTP. The ceasefire with the banned organization came after the government not only granted amnesty to another banned religious organization, but also allowed it to participate in politics. The government had been accused of showing cowardice in this matter, but the citizens had breathed a sigh of relief after days of crisis and violence. The TLP chief Saad Rizvi has also been released on the eve of his father's death anniversary, and he has led the processions in this regard in Lahore. As far as the TTP is concerned, Pakistanis have bitter and heart-breaking memories associated with it and December. Even before December 16, 2014, there had been rounds of peace talks with the TTP and a peace agreement was reached, but the Army Public School massacre happened nonetheless. Pakistanis have still not forgotten the horrendous memories and horrific visuals of that December day. Afghan Talib-

an government is now the guarantor of the ceasefire, but until recently the Ghani led government of Afghanistan had been providing support and protection to the TTP and with its help, this organization has been carrying out terrorism in Pakistan. The Afghan Taliban are willing to compensate for the wrongdoings of the previous government and terrorism against Pakistan and to make mutual friendship the basis of peace. What more can Pakistan ask for? The Taliban have a lot of challenges in Afghanistan. First and foremost is the imminent economic collapse of the country. Just this week, The UN has warned of banking system collapse with people unable to repay loans. Another big threat is IS-K, the regional faction of notorious Islamic State. The IS-K have been attacking Afghans, mostly the Shia minority on a consistent basis. Hundreds of people have lost their lives in bombings claimed by the IS in recent weeks. It is worth mentioning that the attack on Kabul Airport, which led to the deaths of 13 US military personnel among hundreds of other casualties was also claimed by the IS. The Taliban will have to counter them if they want to let the world know that their writ cannot be challenged. With these factors, if the Taliban is helping Pakistan reach an understanding with TTP, it is a welcome move. The Taliban have none but a few voices who are vocal in their favour, Pakistan is one of them. The government of Pakistan has already dispatched tons of humanitarian assistance in food and clothing to Afghanistan. Just this week the Prime Minister of Pakistan has announced aid package worth Rs 5 billion for Afghanistan. Pakistan is also tirelessly trying to assure the world that the Afghan Taliban are now a message of peace and stability in the region and beyond, but how can Pakistan reassure the world if it itself is the target of terrorism from Afghanistan? With the economic and political situation Pakistan is going through, it will be wise and laudable if the Pakistani government, by negotiating, makes the TTP factions quit their movement and join the national sphere by acknowledging the constitution of Pakistan. It will indeed be a triumph for Pakistan. For this cause, all the political and religious schools of thoughts must support the relevant authorities, and avoid politicizing this sensitive issue that has impacts far beyond a province or area. The country is not in a position to endure intense fighting and anarchy in the North-Western parts of the country. Make no mistake, if the TTP gains ground and momentum as it previously had in late 2000's, the consequences will be felt all over Pakistan. It is beneficial for Pakistan and Afghanistan too, if the Afghan Taliban can bring the TTP on a serious negotiation table, with a fruitful outcome. Violence and anarchy in any of the two neighbors is no good thing for the other, as we have already witnessed in the past few decades.

- shujaat.hamza@gmail.com

## Pakistan beyond Glasgow Climate Pact

Munir Ahmed



Pakistan shall take up the transboundary issues with China and India with water and air quality on top of the priority. Both countries have damaged the air quality severely with their environment unfriendly practices. Burning of the agricultural field residues by the Indian farmers especially...

THE 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) closed with an unexpected compromised deal, from phasing out of carbon emissions as agreed in the Paris Agreement in 2015 to phasing down in the Glasgow Climate Pact. However, COP26 President Alok Sharma struggled to hold back tears following the announcement of a last-minute change to the pact by China and India softening the language of the final draft about "the phase-out of unabated coal power and of inefficient subsidies for fossil fuels" to "phase down" the coal use. A sheer disappointment for the world of the process as how could two countries jeopardize the phrasing of the deal. Both China and India are Pakistan's next door

neighbours with high industrial growth, and two of the top polluters. Their intentions are obvious with softening the Glasgow Climate Pact with a phrase "phasing down" the emissions. Though, China has stated recently no to the new coal-fired plants in their country, but exported some to Pakistan under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Some have been installed while some are in the pipeline. Pakistan has also to say no to the coal-fired power plants and cancel the LOIs issued last year. This will represent a clear stance and the political will of the state to genuinely reduce the carbon emissions under the UNFCCC regime. Secondly, Pakistan shall take up the transboundary issues with China and India with water and air quality on top of the priority. Both countries have damaged the air quality severely with their environment unfriendly practices. Burning of the agricultural field residues by the Indian farmers especially around the border between the two countries have caused severe impact of smog within India and neighbouring cities in Pakistan. Polluters shall pay the sufferers. Likewise, Pakistani farmers, brick kilns, vehicular and industrial emissions shall also be checked round the year. Heavy fines and imprisonment will be the only solution, not the anti-smog teams when the smog has happened. It has to happen every year because the authorities responsible for monitoring and implementation are grossly inefficient and in deep somber. Someone has to knock them down. UN Secretary-General António Guterres at the closing of the COP26 said about the deal, "It reflects the interests, the contradictions, and the state of political will in the world today. It is an important step but is not enough. We must accelerate climate action to keep alive the goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees". For the last six years, the developed countries were not delivering the \$100 billion climate finance commitment, and now China and India have done another dent to the very essential efforts to reduce the sufferings and to save the earth planet from the climate impact. The UN Secretary General has rightly asked the comity of nations to go "into emergency mode" by ending fossil fuel subsidies, phasing out coal, putting a price on carbon, protecting vulnerable communities by fulfilling their financial commitments. Indeed a pleasure to listen to that Pakistan played very well at the COP26. The civil society representatives present at the COP26 shared their views at the debriefing session organized by the Ministry of Climate Change. They hailed the leadership of Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM)

Malik Amin Aslam Khan that made Pakistan chair several sessions of the COP. Pakistan was elected as a member of the Six Non-Annex 1 members bureau, standing committee on finance, adaptation fund board, consultative group of experts, Paris Agreement compliance committee, Warsaw international mechanism on Loss/damage, adaptation committee, and technology executive committee. Pakistan will be chairing the G77+China group, and the Asia-Pacific Group next year (COP27). While appreciating the Prime Minister for his vision of the climate action and efforts of SAPM Malik Amin Aslam, we need to have vigorous implementation of the policies and laws to show genuine progress on the global commitments. Some policies and strategic frameworks were launched before going to the COP26. Great indeed. Pakistan's National Determined Contribution (NDC) to the COP26 was declared as one of the best. Also asked for a \$100 billion grant in a decade to reduce 50 percent of its carbon emissions. The country has promised 15 percent reduction in carbon emissions from its own resources. Before asking for more funds from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) or from the World Bank or GEF, the Pakistan government needs to check the implementation of its grant-driven projects that have suffered rampantly from the flawed leadership. Whereas some projects have delivered the objectives recently including the REDD+, Sustainable Forest Management and Generating Global Environmental Benefits (GGE) and will be successfully concluded in coming weeks, the leadership of the GLOF-II (Scaling-up of Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) risk reduction in Northern Pakistan) has failed to deliver since 2017. Known as inefficient, lousy and rude, the GLOF-II Project Director, Joudat Ayaz, is a senior bureaucrat working as an Additional Secretary with the Ministry of Climate Change. No action against him despite extremely poor performance over the years. The project had to conclude this year but extended to 2024. Will Pakistan be able to pitch itself for another Green Climate Fund project after this havoc with the GLOF-II? Very steadfast, blunt and upfront Azam Khan, the Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Imran Khan, and SAPM Malik Amin Aslam have to rethink about replacing such lousy leadership of their projects with some ones that dare to deliver.

- The writer is a freelance journalist and broadcaster, and Director Devcom-Pakistan. He can be reached at devcom.pakistan@gmail.com and tweets @EmmayeSyed

## Briefs

France-U.K.  
channel  
crisis  
accelerates

FROM PAGE 01  
President Emmanuel Macron of France on Thursday night, Mr. Johnson wrote that France and Britain should "put in place a bilateral readmissions agreement to allow all illegal migrants who cross the Channel to be returned," suggesting that if France took back migrants it would be a major step toward fixing the problem.

The letter prompted a fierce reaction from Gabriel Attal, a French government spokesman, who said the letter was "both poor in content and completely inappropriate in its form."

"Enough with the double-speak, enough with the constant externalization of problems," Mr. Attal, visibly irritated, told BFMTV on Friday morning. "It makes you wonder if Boris Johnson doesn't regret having left Europe, because every time he has a problem, he thinks that Europe should handle it."

Gérald Darmanin, France's interior minister, quickly announced that Ms. Patel was no longer invited to an emergency meeting that France will hold in Calais on Sunday with ministers in charge of immigration from neighboring countries like Belgium and Germany.

Mr. Macron said on Friday that the crisis required "serious" cooperation — but that Mr. Johnson's letter was not a serious effort. "You don't communicate from one leader to another on these issues by tweets and by letters that you make public, we aren't whistleblowers, come on," Mr. Macron said at a news conference in Rome, where he was on an official visit.

On Wednesday, about 30 migrants crammed onto a flimsy inflatable vessel were shipwrecked in the English Channel's frigid waters, and most of them — men, women and children — drowned. French prosecutors have opened an investigation to determine the exact circumstances of the disaster, and the identities and nationalities of most of the victims have not been confirmed.

US lawmakers  
meet Taiwan  
president

TAIPEI: Five U.S. lawmakers met with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen on Friday in a surprise one-day visit intended to reaffirm the United States' "rock solid" support for the self-governing island.

The bipartisan group of lawmakers from the U.S. House of Representatives arrived in Taiwan on Thursday night and planned to meet with senior leaders including Tsai, said the American Institute in Taiwan, the de facto U.S. embassy. No further details were provided about their itinerary.

The visit comes as tensions between Taiwan and China have risen to their highest level in decades. Taiwan has been self-ruled since the two sides split during a civil war in 1949, but China considers the island part of its own territory. China was quick to condemn the trip when news first broke Thursday night. "When news of our trip broke yesterday, my office received a blunt message from the Chinese Embassy, telling me to call off the trip," Representative Elissa Slotkin, a Michigan Democrat who is part of the delegation, wrote on Twitter.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian condemned the visit, calling it a violation of the "one-China principle" under which Taiwan is considered part of China.

"That individual U.S. politicians wantonly challenge the one-China principle and embolden the 'Taiwan independence' forces has aroused the strong indignation of 1.4 billion Chinese people," Zhao said. He added that unification of Taiwan and China is an "unstoppable historical trend." Representatives Mark Takano, D-Calif., Colin Allred, D-Texas., Sara Jacobs, D-Calif., and Nancy Mace, R-S.C., are also part of the delegation.

"We are here in Taiwan this week to remind our partners and allies, after two trying years that we've endured, that our commitment and shared responsibility for a free and secure Indo-Pacific region remain stronger than ever," Takano said. — APP

Polish President calls  
for more NATO troops

"They have to be coordinated. It's hard to assess it otherwise," said Duda

## WEB DESK

BRUSSELS: Poland's president urged NATO on Thursday to bolster its eastern flank in response to a Russian military build-up on a border with Ukraine. "Caution and vigilance from NATO, which is responsible for the military security of the allies, is necessary," Andrzej Duda said at a news conference alongside NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, following a visit to the alliance's headquarters in Brussels.

He said it would be sufficient to strengthen NATO's presence in the region, at least temporarily, and it could be done by directing additional units, intensifying NATO air policing operations, monitoring activities

or increasing the preparedness of soldiers from NATO missions already deployed on the eastern flank.

Apart from the Russian build-up, Poland's border conflict with Belarus was also addressed in a meeting with Duda and Stoltenberg.

Duda argued that Belarus is carrying out a hybrid attack on the EU, which he said is part of a package of destabilizing aggression by Minsk and Moscow, along with a recent drastic increase in gas prices and a reduction in supplies, and the Russian military mobilization around the Ukrainian border.

"They have to be coordinated. It's hard to assess it otherwise," said Duda. Stoltenberg reaffirmed NATO's strong presence

Iraq evacuates 608  
more refugees

BAGHDAD: Iraq's Transport Ministry on Friday announced it has evacuated 608 refugees who were stranded on the border between Belarus and Poland. The Director-General of the Iraqi Transport Company affiliated to the ministry, Abbas Omran, said in a statement: "Two charter flights successfully carried out the evacuation from Minsk Airport to Erbil and Baghdad airports, after obtaining official approvals from the Iraqi and Belarusian authorities." The statement added the refugees were evacuated by the official Iraqi Airways. On Nov. 18, Iraq announced the evacuation of 430 of its citizens stranded at the Belarusian-Polish border. In early November, many asylum seekers tried to cross the border to enter Poland from Belarus, where there are currently about 4,000 stranded asylum seekers, according to the Polish Press Agency. The European Union accuses Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko of coordinating the arrival of this wave of migrants and refugees to the eastern side of the bloc, in response to European sanctions imposed on his country after his regime's "brutal repression" against the opposition. — DNA

in Poland, including a multinational battlegroup. "All NATO allies have made clear that they strongly condemn the (Belarus) Lukashenko regime's exploitation of vulnerable people to pressure neighboring countries. This is inhumane and cynical, and we stand in full solidarity with the allies affected," he said. Referring to the Russian military build-up, Stoltenberg urged Russia to be transparent, reduce tensions and de-escalate. "NATO remains vigilant, and we continue to provide Ukraine with political and practical support," he said. Fighting between Ukrainian government forces and pro-Russian separatists since 2014 in Donbas has seen more than 13,000

people killed — a quarter of them civilians — and as many as 30,000 wounded, according to the UN. Media reports in recent weeks said US officials told Europe of their concerns about possible Russian preparations for a Ukraine invasion. This spring, Western countries were alarmed by what they called a military build-up near Donbas before Russia pulled its troops back. Tensions concerning Russian intentions in Ukraine are fueled by memories of its 2014 takeover of the Crimean Peninsula. Russian forces entered the peninsula in February of that year, with Russian President Vladimir Putin formally dividing the region into two separate federal subjects of the Russian Federation the following month.

Fawad  
stresses  
strong  
narrative

FROM PAGE 01  
the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP). Fawad said the effective presentation of state narrative was vital to win modern-era wars because morality has changed now compared to the past when powerful countries used to occupy the weak countries. The minister said the United States of America had conquered Afghanistan within three hours but could not achieve the objective of the war afterwards following the change in the definition of victory.

The information minister said since 1950, no country had annexed any country after conquering it. He said the modern times' wars required the presentation of opinion in an effective way. He said that the government wanted to make APP a digital news agency in the style of international news organizations like Reuters and AFP. About his digitalization plan of state media, the minister said he supervised the PTI media team since 2015 and felt that the state media was far behind the PTI in social media due to capacity issues.

He said that for the first time in the history of Pakistan recruitment was being done on merit, as the PTI regime wanted to create a system based on transparency. Minister appreciated the hard work and efforts of Managing Director APP Mubashir Hassan and his team for their tireless efforts to make the vision of the present government a reality. Tests were conducted through the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) for recruitment under this scheme.

Highly skilled professionals conducted interviews of the successful candidates and also conducted audio and video recordings of the interviews of the candidates to make the recruitment process transparent. For the first time, talented people were recruited for various positions like researchers, social media content writers, graphic designers keeping in view the requirements of digital media.

A presentation on the digitalization of APP was also given on the occasion which highlighted the role of APP in the field of journalism and the efforts being made to adapt it to the requirements of modern times. Under the Rs. 786.79 million digitalization project, modern studios would be set up in different cities, for wider news coverage. A total of 1,553 applications were received for induction in different posts of digitalization of the project of APPC.

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Vladimir  
Putin, Aliyev  
discuss  
bilateral ties

FROM PAGE 01  
This is a good indicator. Some 900 Russian companies operate in Azerbaijan. Russia has invested \$4.5 billion in Azerbaijan's economy. Russia is one of Azerbaijan's leading economic and trade partners.

President Ilham Aliyev said "First of all, thank you for the invitation. I am delighted to see you again. We have had a very active dialogue this year — we both met and often talked on the phone. We are very pleased with the development dynamics of our bilateral relations". Both the leaders discussed wide range of issues.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China Nong Rong called on Minister of State/Chairman BOI Muhammad Azfar Ahsan at his office. — DNA

Raducanu named  
Sunday Times Sports  
woman of the Year

LONDON: The teenager, who turned 19 earlier this month, ended Britain's 44-year wait for a women's Grand Slam singles winner with victory in New York. She had entered the tournament as a qualifier and the world number 150. Raducanu follows last year's winner, jockey Hollie Doyle and sprinter Dina Asher-Smith who won in 2019 and 2018. Raducanu's win at Flushing Meadows in September came after she reached the last 16 at Wimbledon two months earlier as a wildcard.

There she beat two top-50 players but had to retire from her fourth-round match against Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic with difficulties. But Raducanu was brilliant in New York, beating fellow teenager, Leylah Fernandez of Canada, in the final to become the youngest British player to win a Grand Slam title at the tournament. Elsewhere, Olympic gold medal-winning BMX rider Bethany Shriever, 21, took the Young Sportswoman honour while the Disability Sportswoman award went to 29-year-old wheelchair racer Hannah Cockroft, who won two Paralympic golds in Tokyo. Other award winners included cyclists Laura Kenny and Katie Archibald (Team of the Year) while jockey Rachael Blackmore, 32, was given a special Editor's Choice award after she created history in April by becoming the first female jockey to win the Grand National on Minella Times. — Agencies

Bangladesh dominate day  
one of first Pakistan Test

DHAKA: Wicketkeeper Liton Das and senior batter Mushfiqur Rahim dominated day one of the opening Test against Pakistan in Chattogram as Bangladesh scored 253/4 in 85 overs at the end of the day's play. Liton is undefeated at 113 while Mushfiqur Rahim is steady at 82. The duo reeled Pakistan bowlers, adding 204 runs to the fifth-wicket stand. Earlier, Bangladesh captain Moinul Haque continued the trend Mahmudullah had started in the T20s by besting Babar Azam at the toss, and, like Mahmudullah, opted to bat first. The home side came up with an aggressive approach but lost wickets at regular intervals. Left-arm pacer Shaheen Shah bagged the first wicket as he bowled a short delivery which was unplayable for Saif Hasan. Abid Ali fielding at short leg took a smart catch. Saif made 14 off 12 balls.



Shaheen's partner Hasan Ali joined the party and removed Shadman Islam from the other end. Shadman, who also scored 14, opted for a review but it was all three reds for Hasan. Pakistan skipper Ba-

bar Azam introduced off-spinner Sajid Khan who instantly produced dismissal. Bangladesh captain Moinul Haque (6) edged the ball but umpire didn't give out. The visitors reviewed it and it showed a

feather touch on UltraEdge. Bangladesh were left teetering after Sajid took a great catch diving to his left while fielding at point. The curse of 14 continued as Najmul Hossain Shanto was the third man to dismiss on this score. The visitors reduced Bangladesh to 69/4 at Lunch.

In the second session, Mushfiqur Rahim and Liton Das fought back and took Bangladesh to 171/4 at Tea. They added 102 runs in the second session to even things out. Both the batters knew their target of attack as they scored at nearly 3.5 runs per over. Shaheen persisted with the short-ball strategy at the start of the final session and managed to force Liton, who was at 67, to make an error but Sajid Khan dropped the simplest of catches. Pakistan had no fortunes after that opportunity as both batters were solid at the crease. — DNA

## Chaos at Bayern AGM

BERLIN: Former Bayern Munich president Uli Hoeness said he was "shocked" after the Bundesliga leaders' Annual General Meeting descended into chaos as supporters rebelled against a Qatari sponsorship deal.

"This is the worst event I've ever seen at FC Bayern. I am ashamed," fumed Hoeness after Thursday night's five hour-long AGM turned heated. Tension has been building between the German giants and a group of Bayern supporters disgruntled about the club's five-year sponsorship deal with state-owned Qatar Airways, worth around 20 million euros (\$22.5 million) per year. The deal is due to expire in 2023, but some Bayern members are putting pressure on current president Herbert Hainer and CEO

Oliver Kahn not to renew it. The club's rebels point to human rights groups, who accuse Qatar of exploiting foreign workers, particularly in the construction of stadiums for the next World Cup, which kicks off in November 2022, claims Qatari officials have rejected.

At Thursday's AGM, a large group of around 800 members reacted angrily amid shouts of "Hainer out!" and "We are the fans you don't want!" after the club had blocked a motion to allow members to vote on the Qatari sponsorship deal. Earlier Thursday, a regional court in Munich had ruled that Bayern was "not obliged to discuss the further sponsorship by Qatar Airways" and club bosses referred to the legal ruling during the AGM.

Faced with open rebellion

among their own members, senior Bayern figures insist there are better ways to influence the situation than not renewing the sponsorship deal.

"I remain firmly convinced that dialogue is the best way to bring people together," Hainer told the AGM.

The Bayern president revealed the club had "by no means decided to continue" the contentious sponsorship deal, but insisted they will see out the contract.

Kahn said the club did their due diligence before signing the deal in 2018, pointing out that Bayern has "a very clear criteria for such partnerships. There are compliance requirements, as with any partner". The Covid-19 pandemic has also taken a toll on Bayern by hitting Germany's richest club in the pocket. — APP

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## Briefs

## Czech president to name new PM

PRAGUE: Covid-struck Czech President Milos Zeman will leave hospital on Saturday and name centre-right leader Petr Fiala as the new prime minister a day later, his spokesman said Friday.

The 77-year-old left-winger was originally hospitalised on October 10, a day after a general election, and treated for liver problems that doctors have suggested could be cirrhosis.

Zeman was released from Prague's Military University Hospital (UVN) on Thursday morning, but had to return after testing positive for Covid-19 in the afternoon.

He was due to appoint Fiala on Friday, but his return to hospital ruled that out.

"President Milos Zeman will be released from the UVN to (his residence at) the Lany chateau on Saturday," Zeman's spokesman Jiri Ovacek said.

He "will appoint Petr Fiala as prime minister at 11:00 (1000 GMT) on Sunday, observing the valid hygienic-epidemiological measures".

Czech health ministry rules say everyone who tests positive should isolate for 14 days. Fiala told reporters he would discuss the future government with Zeman at Lany on Sunday, but said a decision on the exact shape of the meeting, including protective measures, has yet to be made. — APP

## Amb. Sajjad calls on Belarusian Deputy FM

DNA

MINSK: Ambassador of Pakistan to the Republic of Belarus, Sajjad Haider Khan met with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus Nikolai Borisevich.

The two sides discussed the development of bilateral trade and economic cooperation, as well as topical issues of the functioning of the Pakistani diplomatic mission in Minsk.

The Belarusian dignity informed the Ambassador about the development of the situation with migrants on the western border of Belarus, as well as about the approaches of undertaken by Belarus for its resolution. The Deputy Minister also shared the transparency and readiness of the Belarusian side for dialogue and cooperation with all interested parties, including international organizations.

## Russia mourns 52 dead in Siberia tragedy

GRAMOTEINO: A Siberian mining region began three days of mourning on Friday after officials said 52 people died in a coal mine accident and a rescue effort ended in tragedy.

Investigators have launched a series of probes into the disaster at the Listvyazhnaya mine in the Kemerovo region, the worst mining accident in Russia in more than a decade.

Officials said the mine had filled with smoke in the early hours of Thursday after an apparent gas explosion. Fifty-two people were killed, the emergency ministry said on Friday, including six rescuers who had been part of a search operation.

"This is a huge tragedy for the entire country and the Russian emergency ministry," acting minister Alexander Chupriyan said in a statement.

"Rescuers, just like miners, did their duty to the end," he said, and their names "will remain forever in our memory." The rescuers were to be given the Order of Courage — posthumously, the ministry said. Chupriyan said in televised remarks on Friday that another person had been found alive. No more details were immediately available.

There were 285 people in the mine when it began to fill with smoke on Thursday and miners described a frantic scramble to evacuate. — APP

## All Punjab chambers support UBG candidates

Dr Nouman and SVP candidate Hanif Gohar say that UBG top leadership led its Chairman Iftikhar Malik and patron-in-chief SM Munir a couple of days ago conducted result oriented successful electioneering at Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sargodha and Sialkot

## BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The majority of chambers of commerce and industry and trade associations in Punjab have announced to support the United Business Group panel in forthcoming Federation of Pakistan Chamber of commerce and industry.

Talking to media prior to their departure for Peshawar here on Friday presidential candidate Dr Nouman Idris Butt and SVP candidate Hanif Gohar claimed that UBG top leadership led its Chairman Iftikhar Ali Malik and patron-in-chief SM Munir a couple of days ago conducted result oriented successful electioneering at Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sargodha and Sialkot where all chambers and FPCCI affiliated trade associations of adjacent cities also attended meetings and made public their support by reposing full confidence in the United Business Group policies for effectively safeguarding the interests of the business community at all levels.

SM Munir said that UBG will continue to live upto the aspirations and expectations of their voters and take stake holders into confidence before compiling uniform proposals to be placed before government for redressal of genuine grievances being confronted by business community across the country.

In reply to a question, Iftikhar Ali Malik said that if UBG voted to

of doing business and government will be approached to offer more attractive package of incentives to boost export and bringing industrial revolution which he added will help improve socio economic conditions of the masses besides strengthening the national economy in addition to generating ample job opportunities for unemployed youth.

He said world over only private sector provided jobs and not governments so Prime Minister Imran Khan must attach great importance to business community and their elected representatives for sound health of national economy.

Hanif Gohar responding to a question, said that Prime Minister, federal ministers and



power, all out hectic efforts will be made on top priority for ease

advisors will be persuaded to include all stakeholders in the policy making process at federal and provincial levels to make them practically viable and yield positive economic impact on national economy.

He stressed the urgent need to rationalise the water, gas and power tariffs to minimise the cost of production for competing global markets.

He said all decisions were always taken by core committee and local leaders with consensus in a democratic manner.

Zahid Iqbal, Khalid Tawab, Rehmat Ullah Javed, Hameed Akhtar Chadda, Pervaiz Lala, Mian Waqar Ahmad and other trade leaders were also present on the occasion.

Italy, France sign 'historic' treaty

ROME: France and Italy on Friday drew a line under recent tensions and signed a new treaty to formalise their relations, against the background of a European Union in flux.

French President Emmanuel Macron and Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi put pen to paper at the Quirinale palace of President Sergio Mattarella.

An aerial acrobatic display by both countries' air forces followed.

At a press conference, the leaders of the two Mediterranean powers long bound by historical, cultural and linguistic ties emphasised their closeness but also their joint commitment to the wider EU project. Draghi called it a "historic moment", which "intends to favour and accelerate the process of European integration".

Macron said the treaty "seals a deep friendship".

"Founding countries of the EU... we defend a more integrated, more democratic, more sovereign Europe," he added. The treaty was signed just weeks before France takes over the rotating EU presidency in January, and at a time of change on the continent. Britain's messy exit and rows between the EU's liberal democracies and their eastern neighbours have roiled the bloc, while its de facto leader, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, is finally bowing out following September elections.

The so-called Quirinale Treaty is wide-ranging, covering the economy and industry, culture and education, security, cross-border cooperation and foreign affairs. — APP



MINSK: Ambassador of Pakistan to the Belarus, Sajjad Haider Khan calls on Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus Nikolai Borisevich. — DNA

## Turkish activist's trial resumes

## WEB DESK

ISTANBUL: The trial of jailed civil society leader Osman Kavala resumed on Friday with the first hearing since President Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened to expel 10 Western ambassadors who called for his release. The hearing comes with Erdogan facing one of the toughest economic tests of his rule since 2003, as the Turkish lira tumbles to record lows against the dollar.

The 64-year-old civil society leader and businessman, who has been kept in jail without conviction for more than four years, is accused of financing 2013 anti-government protests and playing a role in the 2016 coup attempt.

If convicted, he could be jailed for life without the possibility of parole. Western diplomats, including from countries whose envoys had been threatened with expulsion, as well as several opposition lawmakers were in court.

The philanthropist has become a symbol to his supporters of the sweeping crackdown Erdogan unleashed after the failed coup. Kavala, who denies the charges, snubbed Friday's hearing after his case sparked a diplomatic standoff last month when the 10 embassies — including the US, France and Germany — said in a highly unusual declaration that his continued detention "cast a shadow" over Turkey's democracy and judicial system.

Erdogan accused the diplomats of trying to "teach a lesson" to Turkey and threatened to expel them.

Kavala's case could prompt the Council of Europe human rights watchdog to launch its first disciplinary hearings against Turkey at a four-day meeting ending on December 2 — a procedure that has only been used once before in the court's history.

The watchdog has issued a final warning to Turkey to comply with a 2019 European Court of Human Rights order to release Kavala pending trial.

"Today we hope that the outcome will be different from last time and that Kavala will be freed and sent home under home arrest," a Western diplomat told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"Otherwise Turkey risks getting into trouble with the Council of Europe," the diplomat said. "This is the last chance."

## Kyiv thwarted a coup plot involving Russians: President

## FOREIGN DESK

KYIV: Ukraine has uncovered an attempted coup involving Russian citizens, claims President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The plot was allegedly planned to take place next week, he told reporters at a press conference on Friday. He did not accuse Russia of state involvement. Moscow has denied any role in it.

But Zelenskyy also said that his country was "fully prepared" for a possible military escalation on its borders with Russia.

"We have to rely on ourselves, on our army, it is powerful," Zelenskyy said on Friday amid increasing tensions.

"There are intimidations that a war will take place tomorrow ... we are fully prepared for any escalation," he added.

In recent weeks, the United States, NATO, and the European Union have expressed concern about Russian troop movements around Ukraine, with Moscow denying any such plans. Zelenskyy also said that his country faced "internal challenges" and said he had received information about a coup attempt on December 1.

According to the president's office, Kyiv has even received audio recordings of plans to involve Ukrainian business representatives in the seizure of power.

## Canada considers boosting military aid to Ukraine

## FOREIGN DESK

OTTAWA: Canada is considering bolstering military aid to Ukraine amid mounting tension concerning Russia's military amassing troops at its border with Ukraine, Canadian media reports said Thursday.

Defense Minister Anita Anand is mulling deploying hundreds of additional troops to support about 200 Canadian soldiers already in far west Ukraine on a training mission, according to the Globe and Mail.

The daily said other options being examined include moving a warship into the Black Sea or redeploying CF-18 fighter jets based in Romania.

Asserting that any reinforcement would be intended as a message to the Kremlin, the daily, however, underlined that no decision has been made despite pleas from the Ukrainian delegation for Canada and NATO

to do more at the recent Halifax Security Forum. Fighting between Ukrainian government forces and pro-Russian separatists since 2014 in Donbas has seen more than 13,000 people killed — a quarter of them civilians — and as many as 30,000 wounded, according to the UN.

Media reports in recent weeks said US officials told Europe of their concerns about possible Russian preparations for a Ukraine invasion. This spring, Western countries were alarmed by what they called a military buildup near Donbas before Russia pulled its troops back.

Tensions about Russian intentions in Ukraine are fueled by memories of its 2014 takeover of the Crimean Peninsula.

Russian forces entered the peninsula in February that year, with Russian President Vladimir Putin formally dividing the region into two separate federal subjects of the Russian Federation the following month.

## EU to stop flights from southern Africa over variant

## NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: The European Union said Friday it is planning to stop air travel from southern Africa to counter the spread of a new COVID-19 variant as the 27-nation bloc is battling a massive spike in cases. "The last thing we need is to bring in a new variant that will cause even more problems," said German Health Minister Jens Spahn.

EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said in a statement that she "proposes, in close coordination with the member states, to activate the emergency brake to stop air travel from the southern African region."

A new coronavirus variant has been detected in South Africa that scientists say is a concern because of its high number of mutations and rapid spread among young people in Gauteng, the country's most populous province.

Germany said von der Leyen's proposal could be enacted as soon as Friday night. Spahn said airlines coming back from South Africa will only be able to transport German citizens home, and travelers will need to go into quarantine for 14 days whether they are vaccinated or not. Germany has seen new record daily case numbers in recent days and passed the mark of 100,000 deaths from COVID-19 on Thursday.

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## Belarus's Lukashenko visits migrant centre

## NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: President Alexander Lukashenko on Friday visited a centre for the hundreds of migrants who remain in Belarus after attempting to cross into the EU via the Polish border, state news agency Belta said.

"The migrants have gathered around the president, greeting him with applause," Belta reported, also publishing photos of Lukashenko meeting with members of the Red Cross.

Thousands of migrants — mainly Iraqi Kurds — have spent months trying to get into the European Union from Belarus. The crisis escalated earlier this month with around 2,000 setting up a makeshift camp on the border in freezing conditions.

Western governments accuse Lukashenko of orchestrating the crisis by allowing in migrants and taking them to the border in revenge for sanctions on his regime.

Belarus denies these claims. The camp was cleared last week by border guards and the migrants moved to a nearby logistics centre.

## Tunisian navy 'rescues' almost 500 migrants

TUNIS: Tunisian authorities said Friday they had rescued almost 500 migrants whose boat ran into trouble off the North African country's coast during a bid to reach Europe.

"A sea patrol supported by units from the navy and the National Guard at dawn on Friday rescued 487 clandestine migrants of various Arab, Asian and African nationalities," the defence ministry said. They included 93 children and 13 women.

The vessel had set off from neighbouring Libya and was heading towards Europe when it was intercepted off the Tunisian city of Sfax, it said. The ministry published photos of a vessel carrying dozens of people, with many others swimming next to it.

Libya, already a major route for migrants seeking to reach Europe, saw a surge in departures as it plunged into lawlessness after a 2011 NATO-backed revolt.

Around half of those intercepted on Friday were Egyptians or Bangladeshis, along with dozens of Syrians and Moroccans and smaller numbers of Eritreans and Sudanese, the ministry said.

The interception was the latest in a string of similar operations to thwart sea crossings or to rescue migrants in unseaworthy boats. — APP

## Pak-RSA to establish joint commission

The document was signed by Pakistan High Commissioner to South Africa Mazhar Javed and S. Africa's Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Dr. GNM Pandor, in Pretoria

## DNA

JOHANNESBURG: Pakistan and South Africa Thursday signed an agreement for the establishment of the Pakistan-South Africa Joint Commission providing for an institutional mechanism for bilateral cooperation in all agreed areas of cooperation.

The document was signed by Pakistan High Commissioner to South Africa Mazhar Javed and South Africa's Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Dr. GNM Pandor, in Pretoria.

The signing of the agreement will provide an effective mechanism to review, monitor and expand cooperation in diverse areas.

Addressing on the occasion, Minister for International Relations and Cooperation, Dr. Pandor called the signing of the document a milestone in Pakistan-South Africa relations.

She stressed the need to add further substance to bilateral cooperation especially in the fields

of renewable energy, agriculture, health and higher education.

High Commissioner Javed expressed the confidence that the agreement would catalyze bilateral cooperative process, especially in terms of economic relations.

He also expressed the hope for an early visit by the Minister to Pakistan, to which the minister responded affirmatively.

In that context, he elaborated Government of Pakistan's "Engage Africa" initiative and the country's vision to tap the economic potential of its geographical location straddling different geographical regions. After the signing ceremony, High Commissioner Javed made a brief call on the minister in which issues of bilateral interest were discussed.

The Joint Commission shall meet every second year alternately in South Africa and Pakistan to review the implementation of programs and action of cooperation undertaken in terms of the agreement and to adopt a programme for future work.



## Briefs

### IHC throws out petition against Maryam, Khaqan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday dismissed a petition seeking initiation of contempt of court proceedings against Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz and former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi for allegedly making contemptuous remarks against the judiciary.

Chief Justice Athar Minallah announced the verdict he reserved earlier today. Female lawyer Khusroo Khaliq filed the petition requesting the court to punish the PML-N supremo's daughter and the ex-premier under the country's contempt of court laws for "their intention to insult the judiciary".

"The status of [ex-CJP] Saqib Nisar after his retirement is that of an ordinary citizen," the top IHC judge observed before reserving the verdict. "Judges should have a big heart as they sit at an exalted position." The petitioner stated that Abbasi said "if Nawaz Sharif can go to jail, then why cannot Saqib Nisar".

The PML-N leaders used insulting words against the judiciary and attempted to bring it to disrepute by speaking ill of Saqib Nisar, she added. The female lawyer pleaded with the high court to initiate contempt of court proceedings against them for "violating the dignity of justice".

### Country's total debt increased by 70%: Sherry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Vice President Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Senator Sherry Rehman said that the government has increased total debt of the country by 70%, every citizen has become indebted to Rs 235,000 now.

Expressing concern over the rising debt she said that by the end of the PPP government, country's total debt was 16.2 billion, in 2018 loans reached Rs 29.8 billion and now Pakistan's total debt and liabilities have crossed Rs 50.5 billion in 2021.

Sherry Rehman said that those who used to say that they will not take loans have taken a loan of Rs. 20.7 billion in just 3 years. This government increased the total debt of the country by 70%.

Earlier every Pakistani owed Rs. 144,000 however after the loans taken by this government every citizen has been indebted to Rs. 235,000 in just 3 years of this government now. An additional burden of Rs. 91,000 has been imposed on each Pakistani, she added.

### EU ending approval system for vaccine exports

WEB DESK

BRUSSELS: The EU will end its mandatory checks-and-approval system for Covid-19 vaccine exports when it expires at the end of the year, the European Commission said on Friday.

The mechanism, brought in January 29, was used in April to ban a shipment of 250,000 AstraZeneca doses to Australia, at a time that the European Union was struggling with low vaccine supplies.

Now the 27-nation bloc has fully vaccinated 68 percent of its population of 445 million and has ample stocks for a booster campaign that has started in several member states. The EU has pre-purchase agreements for up to 4.6 billion doses of eight different Covid vaccines, half of them coming from BioNTech/Pfizer.

# Germany, Pakistan enjoy strong, stable friendship

German Chargé d'Affaires, Dr. Phillip Deichmann says he was thrilled to see those youth playing football who usually don't get to enjoy the limelight

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: As part of celebrating 70 years of diplomatic ties between Germany and Pakistan, the German Embassy held a Football tournament in Islamabad for underprivileged children and teenagers from the area of Islamabad.

Eight mixed teams competed throughout the day in a format of 7 vs 7 with rolling substitute. Equipments for the players were sponsored by Forward Sports.

The German Chargé d'Affaires, Dr. Phillip Deichmann, said Germany and Pakistan have been enjoying a strong and stable friendship over the last 70 years. This friendship lives most vibrantly though peo-



ISLAMABAD: Dorota Berezicki, First Secretary and Head of Press and Culture Department, German embassy posing for a picture with the winner football team of Khubaib Foundation. – DNA

ple-to-people interactions – the most diverse, the better! This is why I am thrilled that today we can engage with young people, especially those who don't usually get to enjoy the limelight, and play some football. It is Germany's national sport, after all, and today's enthusiasm on the field shows me that it is also quite popular over here. The Football tournament ended with an award ceremony and was followed by dinner for everyone involved.

The German Embassy thanked all enthusiastic participants of football tournament. As part of Pak-German Dosti celebrations, the embassy wanted to spread some joy among orphaned kids & teenagers from the area.

### President Alvi to visit Turkmenistan

ECO is a regional economic trade and development Organization established in 1985

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi will pay an official visit to Turkmenistan to attend the 15th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) being held in Ashgabat on 28 November 2021.

ECO is a regional economic trade and development Organization established in 1985. Pakistan, Iran and Turkey are its founding members. The three countries were earlier part of the RCD (Regional Cooperation for Development), established in 1964.

In 1992, ECO expanded to include Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Afghanistan also became a member later.

The ECO region is located in neighbourhood of China, Europe, Russia and Gulf States. It comprises 6.3% of world population. It contributes more than 2% to global trade with around 3% share in global GDP. The region is rich in fossil fuel and mineral resources. The intra-region trade is 8%. Main trading partners of the region are EU, China and the U.S.

Pakistan hosted the 13th ECO Summit in Islamabad in 2017, while the 14th ECO Summit was hosted by Turkey in virtual format.



## THSI hosts seminar on "Livelihood of People"



ARIJ GHAZNAVI

ISLAMABAD: The Human Security has organized an event discussing the pressing issue of "Livelihood of people: Sustainable Contributions" hosted in Serena hotel on Wednesday.

A wide array of stakeholders from housing society, builders and developers participated in this event. The event was based on the Sustainable Development Goal 11 in order to advocate the importance of sustainable

cities and communities in Pakistan.

In the event, new chairman of THSI Maj. Gen. Dr Muhammad Samrez Salik (Retd) has taken his charge officially. In addition, THSI has inaugurated the Center for Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030 in order to work with more focus and standardized manner. While giving the welcoming remarks at the event, the DG THSI Rafique Ahmed Qureshi shed light on the importance of planned cities by targeting the quantitative data showing the population

settlement problems and slums in the big cities. The Chairman THSI Maj. Gen Dr M Samrez Salik (Retd) has also underscored that shelter is one of the basic needs of human beings and in Pakistan, lack of development in rural areas has increased the population flux in the urban areas. He proposed that the developmental programs should be organized and must include the rural areas as well. During the proceedings, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs of State Mr. Ali Muhammad Khan has explicit the upcoming legislations on the sustainable accommodations for the general public.

All the speakers in the event have given several policy suggestions for the betterment of communities in Pakistan. An informal discussion continued on the dinner and the event ended with the annual celebrations of THSI via a musical performance in which two singers Shahzaman and Awais Niazi participated.

## 14 Indian parties to skip Constitution Day Function

DNA

NEW DELHI: The opposition has said that the Modi government is not adhering to the Constitution, but has been making a mockery by bypassing parliament and not evolving consensus on issues.

On the occasion of Indian Constitution Day, 14 opposition parties have decided to boycott the function after the Congress reached out to like-minded parties, which maintained that the BJP govt was not following the Constitution of the country.

The President and Prime Minister are scheduled to address the function in the central hall on today on Friday.

Congress spokesperson said, "Post Independence many all over world predicted that Indian democracy will not survive & yet here we are because of the Constitution which binds us "we the people of India"; no one should ever be allowed to dilute, weaken or fail our Constitution."

## Iran accuses UN watchdog of bowing to west

TEHRAN: Iran accused the UN's nuclear agency of bowing to pressure from its Western financiers to "discriminate" against Tehran, as strains persist ahead of new talks to revive the 2015 atomic deal.

"It's a reality. The IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) doesn't deal with Iran as it should," Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, told state television late Thursday.

He argued that organisations such as the IAEA were "under the influence of powerful countries" which "finance them and in exchange apply pressure on them".

In a phone call on Friday with EU diplomatic chief Josep Borrell, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said it would be "possible to reach a favourable agreement" if sanctions are lifted.

"We will participate in the Vienna talks in good faith and seriously," he said, while calling for "a serious and sufficient guarantee" that the United States will not leave the nuclear deal. After a mission to Tehran this week, IAEA head Rafael Grossi said his talks with Iranian officials had been "constructive" but "inconclusive".

"In terms of the substance... we were not able to make progress," Grossi told reporters in Vienna where the IAEA is based. Kamalvandi said the Islamic republic was "trying to stand up for its rights and to counter the negative image that they (the international community) are trying to fabricate about us".

Western countries "say we are seeking a nuclear weapon and that we must be prevented at all costs", he said.

"The nuclear industry is an essential industry and one to which we are committed. – APP

## More countries restrict travel over new variant

LONDON: Global authorities have reacted with alarm to a new coronavirus variant detected in South Africa, with the European Union and the United Kingdom among those tightening border controls as researchers sought to find out if the mutation was vaccine-resistant.

Hours after the UK banned flights from South Africa and neighbouring countries and asked travellers returning from there to quarantine, the World Health Organization (WHO) cautioned against hasty measures and a South African scientist labelled London's decision a symptom of "vaccine apartheid".

European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said the EU also aimed to halt air travel from the region and several other countries including India, Japan and Israel toughened curbs.

The United States top infectious disease official Anthony Fauci said no decision had been made on a possible US travel ban. The WHO said it would take weeks to determine how effective vaccines were against the variant, which was first identified this week. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Korean artists performing during "Korean Night" ceremony at Embassy of Korea. – DNA

## Indonesian envoy urges joint trade ventures

Indonesian government was also helping Pakistan to switch over to the cultivation of palm which could bring down its import bill to a substantial level

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Indonesian Ambassador Adam M Tugio Friday said that Indonesia would launch joint ventures in collaboration with local investors to ensure trade balance between his country and Pakistan.

He was addressing an International Seminar on "Sustainable Vegetable Oils: Opportunities for Increased Healthy Food & Two-way Trade", jointly organised by the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia and University of the Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) here.

He said that both countries had inked a PTA (Preferential Treatment Agreement) for the promotion of bilateral trade of agriculture commodities at reduced tariffs. He said that Indonesia imports Kinnow and mangoes in lieu of its palm oil. However, the volume of import is being enhanced to ensure balance between the imports and exports.

He further said that the Indonesian government was also helping Pakistan to switch over to the cultivation of palm which could bring down its import bill to a substantial level. However, in this connection, university of agriculture must play a proactive role and evolve new varieties of palm which

are adoptable to the local environment and could give economically better yield.

He particularly mentioned the similarities between scenic valleys of Pakistan and Indonesia and said that Indonesia has developed its tourism sector on modern scientific lines and is now ready to share its experience and expertise in this field with Pakistan.

He said that both countries should also start immediate negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to enhance their bilateral trade in the coming years.

Atif Munir Sheikh, president Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), said that edible oil is a major component of our food. "Per capita consumption of edible

oil in Pakistan is around 24 kilograms (kg) per annum", he said and added that despite of this fact we are producing a minor quantity of edible oil locally from our traditional crops like sunflower, canola and other oil seeds.

Hence we have to depend on the imported edible oil which has become a permanent burden on our meager financial resources. He further said that we are importing 90% edible oil from Indonesia with a value of 4 billion dollars per annum.

He said that our government was making strenuous efforts to enhance the domestic production of edible oil and in this connection a subsidy is being doled out on the cultivation of traditional crops. He also pointed out that cotton is a major crop after wheat in Pakistan but the current varieties have negligible quantities of oil and our main focus is on consuming this crop for yarn production.

He said that our agricultural scientists must develop new varieties of cotton which could give us a long staple of fiber with oil-enriched seeds. "If we succeed in evolving such varieties, it will not only trim our import of fine quality of cotton but also help us to reduce the overall import bill of edible oil on a sustained basis", he added.



### PTA reduces rates of mobile calls from Jan 01

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Authority has announced reducing the rates of the calls made from mobile phones. According to a statement issued by PTA, mobile termination rates on outgoing calls have been reduced from 70 paise to 50 paise per minute.

The PTA statement said that the mobile termination rate (MTR) would now be 50 paise per minute from January 1, 2022. As per the report, the reduction in the MTR was made in consultation with the telecom industry.

The PTA further said that the mobile termination rate would also be reduced to 40 paise per minute from July 2022 and after July 2023, it would be reduced to 30 paise only. – DNA