



Islamabad POST

Monday, November 29, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

Lack of law depriving people of facilities, says PM Imran Khan

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Palestine envoy thankful for Pak support

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Messi shines with 3 assists in PSG win

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Briefs

Pope pained by migrant deaths

WEB DESK
ROME: Pope Francis on Sunday said he was greatly pained by the reports of 27 deaths in the English Channel last Wednesday as well as other deaths of migrants along the Polish-Belarusian border and in the Mediterranean. In his comments to the faithful in St. Peter's Square on what is the first Sunday of Advent, the pontiff urged political and military leaders to do more to help migrants and refugees. On a trip due to start Thursday, Pope Francis will travel to Cyprus and then Greece.

Fawad vows health card for everyone

DNA
JHELUM: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry Fawad Hussain has said that country is making progress under the leadership of Imran Khan, vowing to provide health card facility to all the residents living in Punjab from Jan 1st, 2022. He was addressing a ground breaking ceremony of a trauma centre in Tobha, Jhelum on Sunday. The minister was of the view that the country was making headway under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. He said politics didn't mean doing politics of police and katchehry. Rather it means to serve the people, he added.

PM delivers same speech

DNA
LAHORE: Representative Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) Mariyum Aurangzeb, on Sunday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan is delivering same speech over the past 15 years. She added that public all across the country is devoid of basic necessities including bread, flour and gas whereas PM merely delivers the container-talks. She went on to say that the government left no clue to the Rs4 million sent in Corona Relief Funds whereas the sugar costing Rs40 million was also mishandled by the govt.

ECO states need further integration

President Arif Alvi says intra-ECO cooperation needs to be increased; calls for tapping existing potential

CENTRELINE REPORT
ASHGABAT: President Dr Arif Alvi Sunday said that despite having all elements for economic growth, the ECO region was among the least integrated regions in terms of trade and investment which necessitated unlocking of potential for an impetus to growth and development. The president, addressing the 15th Summit of the Heads of State of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Ashgabat, said the intra-regional trade among ECO members was only eight percent of their total trade. "Unlocking the potential for regional integration will provide significant impetus to growth and development in all ECO Member States... The ECO region has all the elements needed for economic integration and rapid economic growth: rich resources, enterprising people, geographical contiguity, and a common culture and heritage," he said. However, he said for historical reasons, the ECO was among the least integrated regions in terms of trade, investment, finance, infrastructure, regional value chains, labour mobility and social integration. Themed "Into the Future Together", the summit was chaired by President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and attended by heads of ECO member states and Secretary-General Ambassador Khusrav Noziri. The president congratulated President Berdimuhamedov, for assuming Chairmanship of the 15th ECO Summit and hoped that under his "wise guidance", the member countries would be able to successfully realize the objectives of this ECO Summit.

President Alvi meets his Uzbek counterpart



NEWS DESK
ASHGABAT: President Dr. Arif Alvi held a bilateral meeting with President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan on the sidelines of the 15th ECO Summit of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Ashgabat today. The talks covered the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation, with a special focus on trade and economic relations, and connectivity agenda. President Alvi underscored the significance of enhancing structured political ties, and fast-tracking trade and economic cooperation by operationalizing Uzbekistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (UPTTA). The President reaffirmed Pakistan's full support for the Trans-Afghan Railway project and assured all possible cooperation for its early realization.

World rushes to contain new variant

Several countries including Pak have announced plans to restrict travel from southern Africa

NEWS DESK
LONDON: Governments around the world rushed to contain a new, heavily mutated Covid-19 strain on Sunday, with Israel slamming its borders shut to foreign nationals and Australia reporting its first cases of the variant. The variant now known as Omicron has cast doubt on global efforts to fight the pandemic because of fears that it is highly infectious, forcing countries to reimpose measures many had hoped were a thing of the past. Scientists are racing to determine the threat posed by the heavily mutated strain - particularly whether it can evade existing vaccines. Several countries including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have also announced plans to restrict travel from southern Africa, where it was first detected. Pakistan's National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Saturday placed a complete ban on travel from six south African countries and

Netherlands, UK, Germany confirm first cases

AGENCIES
AMSTERDAM: The new coronavirus variant Omicron has been detected in 13 people who arrived in the Dutch capital Amsterdam on two flights from South Africa. They are among 61 passengers who tested positive for coronavirus. It comes as tighter restrictions come into force in the Netherlands, amid record Covid cases and concerns over the new variant. The United Kingdom, Germany and Italy have also confirmed their first two cases of the new Omicron strain of coronavirus. The Omicron variant, which scientists say has a high number of mutations, was first detected in South Africa last week. Cases have also been



ASHGABAT: President Dr. Arif Alvi meeting with President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev. - DNA

PML-N, PPP accuse each other of bribing voters

Uproar began after a viral video appears to show voters being bribed; ECP directs to arrest culprits

ABID RAZA
LAHORE: The war for votes between PML-N and PPP in Lahore's NA-133, where a by-election is due on December 5, has gone beyond the constituency to social media, where a viral video appears to show voters being bribed by party members. Both parties have blamed each other's workers for the alleged move. PML-N's Muhammad Arif registered a complaint with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) stating that the PPP is "buying off votes in the constituency". Arif alleged that the PPP is taking oath from the "bought" voters and distributing Rs2,000 per person. PML-N's Ali Pervaiz Malik also appeared on video to speak about the matter. He said he condemns the move and hopes that PPP will take notice of such ongoings and put a stop to them immediately. "This fake video, in which all the characters are masked, this attempt to launch a campaign (against PML-N), has been rejected by the people of Lahore," he said. He said in the 2018 election, Malik Pervaiz won with 90,000 votes and the "tactics" being employed by PPP come from a party who "did not even secure a tenth of the votes of PML-N". Meanwhile, PPP Punjab's secretary of information, Shahzad Cheema, noted that such videos are doing the rounds on



DNA
JHELUM: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry in reaction to a viral video of voters being allegedly bribed ahead of Lahore's NA-133 by-election, has asked whether "buying votes for Rs2,000" is how respect is accorded to the vote. His remarks, during a rally in Pind Dadan Khan, Jhelum, were in reference to the PML-N mantra "vote ko izzat do", meaning "respect the vote". The war for votes between PML-N and PPP in Lahore's NA-133, where a by-election is due on December 5, has gone beyond the constituency to social media, where a viral video appeared to show voters being bribed by party members. Both parties have blamed each other's

Sindh allows booster shot

NAZIR SIYAL
KARACHI: The government of Sindh on Sunday allowed the administration of Pfizer booster shot aimed at curtailing the spread of the new strain. Sindh Health Secretary Zulfiqar Ali Shah said that a decision in this regard has been taken by the provincial government and a notification will be issued soon, media reported. He said that all fully vaccinated individuals can avail the facility which will be provided free-of-cost by the Sindh government, adding that the decision was taken amid fears of a new Covid-19 wave in the province. Zulfiqar said that currently, Pfizer vaccine is only available at Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) and Dow University of Health Sciences' (DUHS) Ojha campus. However, he added, efforts were being made to make booster shots available in other health facilities of the province as well.

Progress on Pak-Russia gas pipeline project

The signing of legal documents will pave way for establishment of a special purpose company

STAFF REPORT
ISLAMABAD: A progress was made on the stream gas pipeline project between Pakistan and Russia as the dates for the signing of relevant agreements and documents have been finalised, citing sources. Diplomatic sources said that Russia greenlighted important matters related to the construction of a stream gas pipeline in Pakistan. The dates for the signing of relevant documents and agreements have been finalised for the stream gas pipeline project. The construction work of the project will be commenced in 2022. It was learnt that Pakistan and Russia have agreed on a dialogue draft for



making progress on the shareholders' agreement. An agreement to formally establish a company for pipeline's construction will be signed on January 31, 2022. The signing of the legal documents will pave way for the establishment of a special purpose company. Islamabad and

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Lack of law depriving people of facilities: PM

- Vows to turn Pakistan into welfare state modelled on Riyasat-e-Madina

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has maintained that elite capture of Pakistan's resources and absence of the rule of law had not only deprived the majority of the people of basic amenities but also kept the country from achieving its immense potential. "The problem was the elite capture of resources which deprived the majority of proper healthcare, education and justice... Lack of rule of law is the reason why Pakistan had not achieved its potential," the prime minister said in an exclusive online conversation with Shaykh Hamza Yusuf aired Sunday. An American Islamic scholar, Hamza Yusuf, is the president of Zaytuna College and had also authored several encyclopedia entries, academic papers, and articles on Muslim bioethics, legal theory, abortion, and many other topics. The prime minister said no society could ever achieve its potential if there was no rule of law. "Merit is also associated

Mini-budget to be as per IMF's requirements

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan has decided to announce a mini-budget in accordance with the terms and conditions agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), media reported Sunday. According to the report, the government has turned the Fourth Tax Laws Amendment Ordinance into a bill. Schedule 6 will be scrapped from the amended finance bill to end the tax exemption of Rs350 billion. Per sources, tax exemptions on mobile phones, stationery, and packaged food items are likely to be abolished, while the amendment bill would allow the government to withdraw sales tax exemptions from zero ratings in addition to exports. The target for recovery of petroleum development will be reduced from Rs600 billion to Rs356 billion. For items with excess sales tax exemption, the standard sales tax rate of 17% will apply, sources said. Sources further said that tax exemptions for certain sectors are also likely to be scrapped, while suggestions have been put forward in the bill to give the power to increase or decrease the petroleum development levy to the prime minister. - DNA

with rule of law. If you do not have meritocracy in a society, you have this elite which is spoiled, rich and which did not strive and struggle and they sit on the main positions... "Countries disintegrate because of a decadent elite. People do not decay it is the elite that decays," he remarked. The prime minister said the fundamental principle of a civilised society was the rule of law where powerful is also equally answerable to the law. The biggest problem in the developing

countries was the absence of rule of law and discriminatory laws for rich and the poor, he explained. He told the interviewer that he wanted to make Pakistan an Islamic welfare state based on the concept of state of Madina by our Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH). "We want to base this country on two principles. One it should be a welfare state and humane state which takes care of its bottom strata of society and second rule of law," he remarked. Talking about climate crisis, he said the environment should be treated as sacred. The biggest environmental disaster in the world called climate change was because human beings had deviated from basic principle of protecting the earth. Quoting a Hadith of Holy Prophet (PBUH), advising the humans to "Work for this world as if you will live forever and work for the hereafter as if you will die tomorrow", the prime minister said whatever the humans would do today would ultimately have

JI Chief hails youth as real strength

SAIFULLAH
ISLAMABAD: Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Siraj-ul-Haq has said that Jamaat-e-Islami will bring revolution with the help of vote and not against electoral reforms. Addressing the participants of the Youth March at D-Chowk, Islamabad, Amir Jamaat-e-Islami said that the youth have proved that they are the real strength of this country. Siraj-ul-Haq said that Islamic system is the guarantee of fundamental rights, prosperity, justice and fairness. Incompetent rulers have gifted the country with corruption, unemployment and inflation. If they want, the youth can enter the parliament. If they want, the youth can camp in the parliament house but Jamaat-e-Islami will bring revolution with the help of vote. He said that the youth have awakened and want an independent, sovereign Election Commission. Imran Khan was brought in by rigging the 2018 elections.



Briefs

Karachi to be made smoke-free city

KARACHI: Commissioner Karachi Muhammad Iqbal Memon Sunday said that the City Administration of Karachi Division will take all possible steps to make Karachi a smoke-free city. Tobacco Control Desk for monitoring the activities for making Smoke Free Karachi will be established in the office of Commissioner and the District Implementation and Monitoring Committees (DIMC) on tobacco control will also be formed for effective monitoring in all the districts under the supervision of deputy commissioners.

He was speaking as a chief guest after inauguration of Smoke-Free Karachi Cycling Rally, started from Empress Market and ended at Mazar e Quaid held in collaboration with the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (NHSRC), said a communiqué.

He further said that steps would be taken to make public service vehicles and restaurants smoke-free.

"Money spent on tobacco reduces households' spending on food, health, education, housing, and household durables.

In Pakistan, tobacco-consuming households spend on average 2.7% of their monthly budget on tobacco. Poor households spend 3.0% of their budget on tobacco. This is more than they spend on education (1.8%), he said.

He further said according to a report Tobacco kills over 163,600 people each year in Pakistan. Almost 31,000 of these deaths are due to exposure to secondhand smoke. — APP

PTI to emerge victorious in LG's elections

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) would emerge victorious in upcoming local bodies elections on the basis of record uplift works initiated throughout the province.

These views were expressed by the contesting candidate for the seat of Youth Councillor in upcoming local government elections for NC-33, Ghanta Ghar during the election's campaign.

Rabnawaz said that the people of Peshawar have stood with PTI which is the only party having poor friendly policies. He said PTI government has launched several schemes including Sehat Insaaf Card for those people who cannot afford their medical treatment in the hospitals.

Similarly, Ehsas Ration Program, Kisan Card, construction of Momand Dam, Peshawar-DIKhan Motorway and several other mega projects have been initiated by the present PTI government.

He said all the party workers are united in line with the vision of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. — APP

7 injured in separate road accidents at Nowshera

PESHAWAR: At least seven persons injured in separate road accidents occurred in district Nowshera, the Rescue1122 Nowshera spokesman said on Sunday.

Two persons identified as Danish and Farhan sustained critical injuries when their motorcycles collided with each other near Ghora Chowk.

A man Nasir Hussain was crossing the road sustained injuries when he was hit by a speedy car on Banda Nabi Road, tehsil Pabi.

Another mishap occurred in Kaka Sahib Road due to collision of motorcycle and a rickshaw. As a result two persons Hashmat Ullah and Gulzar Ahmed sustained injuries.

Similarly, one person each sustained injuries in road accidents that occurred at Sherin Koto stop.

The officials of Rescue1122 provided first-aid to victims on the spot while serious injured were shifted to nearby health-care centers, the spokesman said. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Nepal Tapas Adhikari presents souvenir to the First Lady Samina Alvi. — DNA

MPBC to help strengthen trade ties between Pak, Malaysia

Both countries are enjoying good bilateral relations. They have also inked Free Trade Agreement (FTA) but the trade balance is in favor of Malaysia

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Malaysia-Pakistan Business Council (MPBC) in collaboration with Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) will play a major role in minimizing trade deficit between the two countries.

Treasurer of the MPBC Mr. Muhammad Saleem Khan today had a meeting with Mr Atif Munir Sheikh President FCCI and discussed various aspects to enhance exports from Pakistan in general and from Faisalabad in particular to the Malaysia. Senior Vice President FCCI Imran Mehmood Sheikh, Dr Khuram Tariq and Muhammad Azhar Chaudhary were also present in addition to Rao Fazalur Rehman Khan Deputy Director Trade Development Authority Pakistan (TDAP) Faisalabad. Muhammad Saleem Khan said that Malaysia is importing almost all commodities

for its domestic use from abroad but despite of this fact our exports are only 239 million dollars as compared to the Malaysian exports of 1 billion dollars.

He said that both countries are enjoying good bilateral relations. They have also inked Free Trade Agreement (FTA) but the trade balance is in favor of Malaysia. He said that Pakistani embassy in Malaysia was working without trade consular. However, it was appointed last year when corona pandemic had practically closed down the entire economic activities in Malaysia.

He said that now situation is returning back to normal and textile exporters from Faisalabad must enter into this market and get maximum share of import of textile sector.

He said that already Pakistani community is enjoying 70-80 percent share of textile imports of Malaysia but in overall term China and India are far ahead of us.

He said that Faisalabad Chamber should send a trade delegation to Malaysia to explore new avenues of cooperation in addition to further enhancing textile exports to cater to the specific needs of that country.

In this connection he mentioned Hijab, wedding dresses, wedding furniture and a long chain of other products which could be exported to this brotherly country.

He said that new trade consular was also compiling data of different sectors and Malaysian importers along with various regulatory duties on imports from abroad. This data could be shared with the Faisalabad Chamber. He said that Malaysia is importing fresh meat while this country with a dominating majority of Muslims prefers Halal imports from Pakistan.

He said that if the efforts of new trade consular succeeded, we could enhance our meat exports to almost 100 percent. He further said that demand of Pakistani rice, vegetables and corn has also in-

creased manifolds while exporters could get a reasonable profit from its exports.

Earlier, Mr Atif Munir Sheikh appreciated the role of TDAP in enhancing Pakistan's exports and said that it was working to strengthen B-2-B links with the foreign importers particularly from the Muslim and brotherly countries.

He said that in addition to fabric, Faisalabad could also export textile kitchen wares and towel etc.

He also assured that FCCI will very soon send a trade delegation to the Malaysia so that our members could personally explore the new opportunities.

He also explained in details the two mega industrial estates being developed by Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development & Management Company (FIED-MC) and said that Malaysia-Pakistan Business Council should also convince Malaysian investors to invest in these industrial estates.



FAISALABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib listening the complaints of people during an open court at his office. — APP

Government urged to seek release of Aafia Siddiqui

DNA

KARACHI: Aafia Movement Pakistan leader and noted neurophysician of the country Dr Fowzia Siddiqui has said that when the so-called war on terror has already been ended and America has left Afghanistan, what is the reason of keeping Dr Aafia Siddiqui in jail and why the government of Pakistan is not seeking her immediate release.

Addressing on the occasion of public signature campaign at Five Star Chowran-

gi North Nazimabad in connection with the demand of releasing Aafia Siddiqui, Dr Fowzia said that there should be no politics on the issue of Aafia. She said politicians would find a lot of issues for their politicking and they should raise one voice for the release of the daughter of nation, Dr Aafia. She said that this is a national issue and both the government and opposition should understand it. She said protests are being held in the US and the UK against detention of Dr Aafia Siddiqui. She said if the government is powerless to seek the release of Dr Aafia

it should tell the people about its inability and the people would themselves bring Aafia back home. She said hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis have already signed the public petition for release of Aafia. They have also pledged that they are ready for a long march to demand early release of their sister Dr Aafia. On the occasion, thousands of people put their signatures on a big 'signature screen'. Dr Fowzia Siddiqui thanked the masses, political and social organisations and civil society for taking an active part in the signature campaign.

Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive to be launched

SIALKOT: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Usman Dar said on Sunday that Pakistan's biggest talent hunt sports programme "Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive" was being launched to revive sports culture in the country.

He stated this while visiting the Jinnah Stadium to review the pace of development work on High Performance Centre here. Provincial Minister for Special Education Punjab Ch. Muhammad Akhlaq, Chairman Planning and Development Board Punjab Abdullah Khan Sumbal and Deputy Commissioner Sialkot Tahir Farooq accompanied him.

During the visit, the progress of development work was inspected and instructions were issued for timely completion of gray structure of the scheme. Talking to the media, the SAPM said that High Performance Centers were built around the world to refine the talent among youth.

Usman Dar said, "We will try to produce at least four national heroes in the next two years through the Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive". In the first phase, twelve categories of different sports had been placed in 25 regions which would provide golden opportunities for new talent in Pakistan, he said. Dar said the construction work of stadium was underway at a cost of Rs 810 million while hockey stadium and football ground would be upgraded at a cost of Rs 240 million in Sialkot. The SAPM said that in the first phase "We will try to hold PSL matches".

He said that state of the art hospital was going to be built in Sialkot at a cost of 6 billion. He said the University of Applied Engineering and Emerging Technologies would be built in the city. He said the new campus of Govt College Women University (GCWU) at Aimenabad Road was in final stage.

Dar said that mega projects (sewerage, water supply, solid waste management, traffic management and upgrading of parks) were underway at a cost of Rs 17 billion in the district, which after the completion, would provide advanced municipal facilities to the citizens. Replying to a question, Dar said that Maryam Nawaz audio had also been leaked in which she admitted that she stopped funds of media houses because they were not working on their narratives. KP Info minister visits Cambridge University in England.

No one allowed to harm minorities

LAHORE: Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Sunday said that Islam is a religion of peace and Muslims believe in respecting humanity.

He warned that no one will be allowed to harm any minority group in the name of religion in Pakistan.

Addressing a press conference at the Punjab Institute of Quran and Seerat Studies here, he said that the Interfaith Harmony Council and Muttahida Ulema Board (MUB) held a meeting at the centre on Sunday in which all members expressed their satisfaction over the religious freedom in Pakistan.

Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi said that whenever minority communities faced some issue, the MUB always tried to solve it in consultation with all stakeholders, adding that around 127 cases of alleged forcible marriages and conversion of religion, etc., were presented before the MUB in 2020 and all of those were resolved amicably. He said that Islam strictly prohibits forced marriages and forced conversions, adding no Muslim could think of going against the teachings of Islam. He said there was no concept of forced marriages or conversion in our religion.

Ashrafi said that a 16-member committee including Sikh, Hindu and Christian members had been formed under his supervision to settle the interfaith violence issues and e will also meet leaders of all religions to settle their issues related to majority community across Pakistan". He said that on December 4, the first official meeting of the committee would be held in Lahore. He said that at the MUB platform, 113 cases of minority communities were resolve during the last years. — APP

Prizes distributed among 64 cops

FAISALABAD: City Police Officer (CPO) Dr Abid Khan Sunday distributed cash prizes and commendation certificates among 64 police officials of the district.

These certificates and prizes were awarded in recognition of their performance in controlling crimes in Faisalabad.

Among the recipients included CPO Reader Hajji Umar, SHO Batala Colony Ayub Sahi, SHO People's Colony Rae Aftab Waseem, SHO Millat Town Rizwan Shaukat, Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Rana Najamul Hasan Khan, etc., a spokesman for the Police Department said. — APP

Pakistan Post launches a variety of new services

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Post has launched a variety of new special mail and financial services which were running in competition with private courier services.

According to Pakistan Post, the hallmarks of these premier postal services were cheaper rates, high efficiency and widest network etc.

Pakistan Post having country wide network where others simply cannot reach provides efficient, cost effective, secures products and services to the people and organizations.

The postal service was also offering special package for bulk mailers for delivery of utility bills, mails, delivery of packages and parcels and urgent mail services. Urgent Mail Service (UMS) a fast and reliable delivery network covers 214 destination of the country.

All bulk customers including commercial organizations, institutions, and multinational companies can avail pick up and credit facility by filling up a registration form. After registration, express Post Pick Up couriers will daily visit offices of registered customers daily according to a pre-arranged schedule.

The Emergency on Call Pick up Facility was also available for registered customers. — APP

FWCCI to invite Indonesian businesswomen

She said that worthy Ambassador told that that Indonesia has emerged from a natural beauty to a growing economy of ASEAN region. She said that females of Indonesia are very pro-active and are contributing a key role in the promotion of tourism of Indonesia

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Leading female entrepreneurs of Indonesia would be convinced to visit and sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FWCCI) for the promotion of bilateral relations between the working women entrepreneurs of the two countries.

This was disclosed by Mrs. Nighat Shahid, President FWCCI after attending a dinner with H.E Adam

Mulawarmn Tugio, Ambassador of Indonesia here. She said that worthy Ambassador told that that Indonesia has emerged from a natural beauty to a growing economy of ASEAN region. She said that females of Indonesia are very pro-active and are contributing a key role in the promotion of tourism of Indonesia.

She said that it is a sector where Pakistan lacks and we must put our knowledge and experience to involve Pakistani women in the promotion of tourism. She said that worthy Ambassador has in-



visited office bearers of FWCCI to visit Islamabad for a detailed dis-

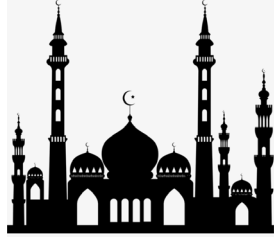
ussion on this topic which could help Pakistan economy for further growth. She said that in modern Indonesia, women are also on the fore-front and being a Muslim country we must understand their perception and promote it in Pakistan for mainstreaming of our female population.

She said that worthy Ambassador asked the office bearers to prepare a comprehensive proposal on the sectors where we could enhance cooperation with Indonesia with the specific approach of their female entrepreneurs.

She said that H.E the Ambassador of Indonesia assured her for cooperation in promoting the women entrepreneurship between both the countries and said that visit of women delegations from Indonesia will be made possible to visit FWCCI as and when planned to Pakistan.

She said that the worthy Ambassador also agreed with the proposal for joint ventures and technology transfer for women led projects and also to organize single country exhibition on reciprocal basis in both the countries.

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

- Fajr..... 05:24 am
- Zohr..... 11:56 am
- Asr..... 03:22 pm
- Maghrib..... 05:00 pm
- Isha..... 06:27 pm



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

- Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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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



(Clockwise: First Lady Samina Alvi posing for picture with wife of Ambassador of Kazakhstan and embassy staff; Ambassadors of Indonesia, Morocco, Bangladesh and Editor Islamabad POST posing for picture; Defence Adviser of Bangladesh presents souvenir to Senator Faisal Javed and people buy drinks from the Murree Brewery stall. – DNA Photos)

IIU holds appreciation ceremony for high achievers

The ceremony was attended by 07 faculty members included in the evaluation sheet of the top 02 percent scientists of the world prepared by Stanford University California for year 2021

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An appreciation ceremony in honor of the high achievers of the year of International Islamic University (IIU) was held at Faisal Masjid Campus where H.E. Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi awarded shields and certificates to the achievers. The ceremony was attended by 07 faculty members included in the evaluation sheet of the top 02 percent scientists of the world prepared by Stanford University California for year 2021. These 7 IIUI faculty members included 6 from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics including Dr. Rahmat Elahi, Dr. Tariq

Javed, Dr. Muhammad Sajid, Dr. Ahmed Zeeshan, Dr. Tahir Mehmood and Dr. Nasir Ali. The seventh Faculty member was Dr. Abdul Rashid, Director General, International Institute of Islamic Economics (IIIE). It was also attended by Hassan Ali Kasi, a student of Islamic Studies at IIUI who won world recitation competition. He was awarded shield and certificate by IIUI President. The ceremony was also joined by DG Shariah Academy, Prof. Dr. Farkhanda Zia who was awarded a shield for serving as Vice President Female Campus. The team of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) that worked for the launch of the portal of the Directorate of

Distance Learning (DDL) was also awarded an appreciation shield in recognition of its untiring efforts. Speaking on the occasion, IIUI President said today is the day to honour the hard work, dedication and achievements of our officials. He said that we will keep honouring our best officials, alumni and students who will bring fame to this institution. Dr. Hathal said that future of IIUI is bright. "I am optimistic that coming years of the university will be all about its improved academic excellence, best research and its active participation on international forums" he said. Discussing the improvements, IIUI President said that IIUI management

believes in quality assurance, trained human resource and quality research. He said that in coming months, professional training of the faculty for preparation of education programs and curriculum shall be initiated in pursuit of equipping our academic side according to contemporary requirements. He urged the faculty members that they have chosen the sacred profession and they must teach with fairness, passion and dedication. Dr Hathal also announced that a comprehensive reward policy is also being prepared under which prizes would be given to the 3 best programs, best researcher, best student, best teachers and best faculty of

the university for the year. IIUI President also called for disseminating positivity and maintained that negativity and pessimism ultimately lead towards disappointment. He opined that hard work never goes unpaid and we must also keep asking Allah to guide us in our actions. Prof. Dr. N.B. Jumani, Vice President, Administration and Finance said on the occasion that Worthy President has set another vital example of encouraging the hard work and achievement. He said such events help in motivating the officials to perform best without any sense of deprivation. Dr. Jumani said the university has been put on the track of progress and success and

this ceremony is an omen and reflection of the reforms and vision of worthy IIUI President. Congratulating the achievers, VP (A & F) also thanked IIUI President for acknowledging the hard work and efforts of his ODL team. Earlier, Prof. Dr. Ayaz Afsar, Vice President, Academics in his welcome address thanked IIUI President for honoring the high achievers. He said the award receivers are the true asset of IIUI who brought fame to their institution. He added that the gathering is arranged to celebrate success of our hard working colleagues. He vowed that such encouraging activities shall continue to motivate the IIUI community.

E-commerce to create opportunities for women

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan, Adam Mulawarman Tugio on Sunday said that in the current era of e-commerce, there are business opportunities for Pakistani women in markets around the world, including Indonesia. "The volume of e-commerce market in Indonesia would reach at US\$50 billion by the year 2025, which could be fully utilized by Pakistani businesswomen, the Indonesian ambassador told APP, while he was along his spouse Mrs Irina Tungio in the annual charity bazaar held by

the Pakistan Foreign Office Women Association. The ambassador said that Pakistani women specialize in handicrafts and other skills and their art and skills are in demand all over the world including Indonesia. He said that Pakistan and Indonesia are the largest countries in the world with a young population with young women who can increase their business activities in e-commerce and

accelerate economic activities in both the regions. The ambassador said that "we would extend full cooperation for the furtherance of business relations between the business women of both the countries, which would also help in the economic empowerment of women. Meanwhile the spouse of Indonesian Ambassador, Mrs Irina Tungio said that in order to bring Pakistani businesswomen and Indonesian women closer, "we need more work in the area of common interest."

She said Indonesian and Pakistani women are very skilled in handicrafts and they can strengthen the working relationship by bringing this art to each other's countries. She said that the traditional Indonesian 'Batik' is very popular in Pakistan and there is a lot of work to be done on its promotion. Mrs Irina Tungio said that by promoting 'Batik' and other common garments and food, new avenues of cooperation could be paved between the two countries. She said the historical, religious and cultural ties between the two countries could help bring business women of the two countries closer together.

World AIDS day to be marked on December 1

ISLAMABAD: The World AIDS day will be marked on Wednesday (Dec 1) across the globe including Pakistan to honor AIDS victims. It also focuses on issues surrounding HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). A simple red ribbon is one of the most widely recognized symbols of HIV and AIDS. World AIDS Day is the focal point of the World AIDS Campaign, which is active all

year round. On December 1, there are many health education campaigns that promote the day. Anti-discrimination activities are also launched on or around this date. Many people hold events on World AIDS Day to remember people died of AIDS-related conditions. One example is an AIDS Memorial Quilt project, which allows friends and family members of a deceased AIDS sufferer to construct quilt

panels, which are then exhibited throughout the United States. AIDS stands for "acquired immune deficiency syndrome" or "acquired immunodeficiency syndrome" and denotes a condition, which results from the damage done by HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) to the immune system. The condition was first identified in 1981 and the name "AIDS" was first introduced on July 27, 1982. – DNA

Auto rickshaw root cause of air pollution

RAWALPINDI: Smoke-emitting vehicles in Rawalpindi are causing serious air pollution that is detrimental to the health of the citizens. These vehicles are running on the roads unchecked as the authorities concerned have failed to protect the environment. Most of the public transport drivers besides emitting dark smoke from their unmaintained vehicles were also found demonstrating their racing skills, in presence of traffic police wardens. – APP

Pakistan keen to learn from best CPA practices: Shahzad

ISLAMABAD: Leader of Pakistan Senator said that Pakistan development of strong from the best practices Parliamentary Association. The leader of the said this in a CPA Deputy General Jarvis Matthei on the other day, heading a six-member Senate delegation. The other members of the delegation included Senator Kauda Babar, Senator Fawzia Arshad, Senator Zarqa Suhwardy, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri and Senator Danesh Kumar. The two sides discussed prospects of enhancing co-operation and capacity building. Dr. Shahzad emphasised that they would very much appreciate CPA's technical assistance in the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Senate of Pakistan. The delegation conveyed Pakistan's efforts and Prime Minister Imran Khan's drive on climate change. They also urged CPA to work with Pakistan on issues related to gender equality, woman empowerment and mental health issues. CPA Deputy Secretary-General Jarvis Matiya lauded Prime Minister Imran Khan's 10 billion Tree Tsunami Project and termed it a commendable success story. The CPA dignitaries were extended an invitation to visit Pakistan which they accepted. Jarvis offered Pakistani delegation, CPA online academy courses for parliamentarians and sharing of CPA strategic plan for 2022. – APP

APHC concerned over detainees' plight

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has expressed concern over the plight of illegally detained Hurriyat leaders and activists languishing in notorious jails in India and the territory, In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The APHC spokesman in a statement issued in Srinagar said that the congestion and non-availability of basic amenities as

Spices' export increase 18%

DNA ISLAMABAD: The exports of spices from the country witnessed an increase of 18.83 percent during the first four months of financial year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. Pakistan exported spices worth US \$31.391 million during July-October (2021-22) as compared to the exports of US \$26.417 million during July- October (2020-21), showing growth of 18.83 percent, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). In terms of quantity, the exports of spice also rose by 26.01 percent as the country exported 8,653 metric ton of spices during the period under review as compared to the exports of 6,867 metric ton during last fiscal year. Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the spices exports also increased by 26.29 percent during the month of October 2021 as compared to the same month of last year. The spices exports in October 2021 were recorded at \$8.228 million against the exports of US \$6.515 million in October 2020, the PBS data revealed.

Students face trouble to cross Murree Road

RAWALPINDI: The students of the garrison city of Rawalpindi on Sunday demanded the City Traffic Police (CTP) to ensure smooth traffic management during peak school timings along Murree Road as haphazard and uncontrolled vehicular traffic was increasing accidents risk. The city embraced a swath of vehicles entering into the metropolis to reach the federal capital for education, business, employment and recreation purposes on daily basis that was putting unprecedented pressure on the only major artery passing through the city and the most frequently used thoroughfare to travel between the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. – APP

Briefs

Lok Virsa to organize 'Silver Linings'

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (NIFTH) -Lok Virsa would organize two-week long solo exhibition titled "Silver Linings" by Arif Mahmood from December 6. The Karachi-born artist has made two more additions to his poetic series of photographs - Silver Linings. The artist has been collecting photos of shrines and mosques since the beginning of his career as a photo-journalist. In Silver Linings, he explores the limitlessness of the Sufi experience. This compilation consists of his work from 1988 to 2020. Arif Mahmood's Silver Linings is an introspective journey that he took after the death of his mother, who was a seasoned traveller of the mystical path. The exhibition would be held at NIFT Art Gallery. COVID-19 SOPs will be followed, masks mandatory. - APP

PNCA announces National contest

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), Visual Arts Division in collaboration with Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) and National Ozone Unit (NOU) for Asia Pacific Regional Ozone2 climate Art would organize national contest. The participants can upload their work online by filling out the form on the website: www.ozone2climate.org. The eligibility criteria for an individual or group of participants of the age limit 16 to 30 years. Winners will be given cash prizes. - APP

"Beauty Alt Atrocity" attracting people

ISLAMABAD: A solo exhibition titled "Beauty Alt Atrocity" is in full swing amid attracting large number of people at Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) which was started on November 22 and will continue till November 30. In her works Ayisha Arshad Shah Nawaz explores the innumerable sufferings and miseries which are caused in the process of creating something fantastical and worthy, the sacrifice every individual makes to achieve the desired on a very personal level as well as a societal level.

Ayisha Arshad Shah Nawaz is a Canadian-Pakistani artist born in Lahore, Pakistan, in 1975. A graduate of the prestigious National College of Art, her work has been exhibited in six countries spanning three continents.

The displayed artworks have been privately built up and are so complex, diverse, and somehow both entirely contemporary and yet faithfully traditional, that it boggles the mind. The exhibition was organized by Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), Visual Arts Division, featuring more than 25 artworks, including abstract art as well as calligraphy.

In her displays, Ayisha has highlighted the bitter experiences of her life in captivating colors, which seem to be very beautiful, but in each piece of art, there was a full-blown story. Ayisha has shown her mesmerizing paintings Nationally and Internationally on numerous platforms. She has presented her works as part of an EU art-exchange program with Canada. Her work was also shown in the 'Vialful' exhibit.

Ayisha Arshad Shah Nawaz was one of ten overseas Canadians selected by the Contemporary Art Galleries Association (Association des Galeries d'art Contemporain) to showcase their work during the Millennium Fair in Montreal. She was among a handful of artists from around the globe invited by the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs to exhibit their work. - APP

CAS attends all Pak bilingual declamation contest-2021

The Air Chief lauded talented youth from premier academic institutions of Pakistan who participated in the contest. The chief guest emphasized the significance of co-curricular activities for the wholesome grooming of the students

DNA

ISLAMABAD: All Pakistan Bilingual Declamation Contest-2021 was held at PAF Academy Asghar Khan, Risalpur. Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force was the chief guest on the occasion. The Air Chief lauded talented youth from premier academic institutions of Pakistan who participated in the contest. The chief guest emphasized the significance of co-curricular activities for the wholesome grooming of the students. First prize in English speech was awarded to Pre Cadet Muhammad Ali of PAF College Sargodha, while the first prize in Urdu speech was won by Gentleman Cadet Usaid Usmani of Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul. The coveted trophy of All Pakistan Bilingual Declamation Contest-2021 was won by the team of Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul. The declamation contest was followed by a highly entertaining Variety Show presented by the Academy Dramatics Club. All Pakistan Bilingual Declamation Contest



has been a regular feature in the academic training calendar of PAF Academy, Asghar Khan since 1974. It has over the

years become a prestigious event for leading universities, colleges, and institutions from all over the country.

The event was attended by a large number of members of participating institutions as well as high ranking officials of PAF.

Tanzara Gallery solo exhibition 'Mauzu-e-Sukhan'

ISLAMABAD: Tanzara Art Gallery solo exhibition titled 'Mauzu-e-Sukhan' interpreting Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Maulana Rumi poetry attracting a large number of people. The artwork of talented artist Shah Abdullah Alamee was displayed, said Noshi Qadir an official of Tanzara Art Gallery. She said Abdullah's painting corroborates that Islamic tradition generates the beauty of the written word above all other forms of embellishment, adding that Taking Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Rumi's poetry as inspiration, he expresses his views interpretation of the written word. His work exudes a quiet grandeur whilst the smooth and elongated calligraphic strokes flow into strong visual compositions.

The use of gold leaf along with Siyah Mashq on these vast surfaces creates an atmosphere of ease and calm bringing about a meditative experience. In this exhibition, Faiz and Rumi's profound and inspirational messages have been translated through the artists' sensibility to create glorious compositions in Siyah Mashq, a style of Persian calligraphy that was originally used by calligraphers many years ago in Iran as a tool of practice. Siyah means "rough" and Mashq means "practice". Shah Abdullah hails from Quetta and now lives and practices in Lahore.

He graduated in Fine Arts from the National College of Arts (NCA) in 2012 and was awarded the prestigious Haji Shareef Award. Abdullah has exhibited at various national as well as international exhibitions. He has served as visiting faculty at the School of Textile and Design, University of Management and Technology Lahore, and taught Persian miniature at Hast-o-Nest Lahore. Presently he teaches calligraphy, drawing, and miniature at Faiz Foundation, Lahore.

The exhibition will continue until December 15. - APP



'Indians contact with Arabia, goes back to ancient times'

NIHCR Webinar on Discourse of History on Indo-Pak History from Antiquity to Modernity IV: Indians and the Arabs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The history of Indians contact with Arabia, goes back to ancient times, long before the rise of Islam or the Muslim conquest of South Asia, said Prof Emeritus Aslam Syed while responding to a question at a Webinar on Saturday. Arab traders used to take south, middle and northern routes of the subcontinent to reach India. A professor of Berkeley University, who was busy in archeological excavations of Harappa, found a jar full of Lebanese olive oil. Later, the evidence shows that South Asia had its trade base at Alexandria; the famous ancient city of Syria, was a brisk center of Indian trade, said Prof Syed in reply to a question on Discourse of History on Indo-Pak History from Antiquity to Modernity IV: Indians and the Arabs here.

The guest speaker Prof Emeritus Aslam Syed has been serving the Center for Religious Studies, Ruhr Universität, Bochum, Germany. He remained Chairman, Department of History, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad and also served the NIHCR as its Director. Prof Syed revealed that archaeological excavations in different Arab countries have established some identical elements in the cultural life of the Arabs and South Asia in general and India in particular. It is now well established fact that Arab navigational interests brought South Asia and Arabia closer.

The Webinar, arranged online by the National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research (NIHCR), Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, was attended by over 700 participants ranging from students, teachers and researchers to have greater insights into the valuable views of the guest speaker. Replying a question, the guest speaker said that the material for

India from the beginning of the 8th century, which solidified the influence of Islam leading to tangible political and socio-cultural impacts in the region.

The NIHCR Director Dr Sajid Mahmood Awan was of the view that the history of India furnishes an amazing picture of the syntheses of many divergent cultural trends which were gradually transformed by a process of mutual adjustment and assimilation. Supplementing Dr Awan's observation, Prof Syed said that Islam played a significant role by contributing to India's multi-cultural and multi-religious ethos, embedding the subcontinent in the Arab-Islamic maritime civilization, stretching from southern Africa to China, particularly in connecting Africa as well as the great Turkic empires of Central Asia. It offers a pertinent example of the interaction of human minds and the effects of cultural and civilizational contacts on indigenous customs, religion, literature and arts, he said.

It was the 23rd consecutive session on the Discourse of History, a brainchild of the NIHCR Director Dr Sajid Mahmood Awan. This activity inculcates interest to learn more and more about history not only among students, scholars and historians as well as among ordinary people belonging to any field of life to know about nations' ways of running their States in a journey from antiquity to modernity.



building vessels was imported from India. The Arabs discovered the Far East and acted as the commercial link between East and West. They sailed the Indian Ocean and into the Pacific Ocean and they reached China, he said. Responding to a question, Prof Syed said that Muslims presence was manifest in the coastal regions of Southern India from the earliest days of Islam, as evidenced by the establishment of Arab trading settlements, with minor political impact prior to the conquests in Northern

Pakistan records 303 covid infections, five deaths in a day

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Coronavirus has claimed five more lives in Pakistan during the last 24 hours, taking the death toll to 28,709. According to the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC), 303 more people were infected with the virus.

A total of 36,979 samples were tested in the last 24 hours, out of which 303 turned out to be positive, showing an infection rate of 0.81 per cent.

At present, 946 critical patients have been admitted to hospitals across the country, the NCOC said. Yesterday, Federal Planning Minister Asad Umar had announced that the National Command and Operation Centre decided to place the ban on seven countries amid fears of new Covid variant Omicron spreading more speedily than ever, and he stressed the urgency to vaccinate against the virus for everyone above 12 years of age. The emergence of a new variant makes it even more urgent to vaccinate all eligible citizens 12 years and older, Asad Umar had said in a tweet.

Taking to Twitter following the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) decision to put back in place the travel restrictions, the federal minister had stressed how the new variant is causing ripples of worry globally. "Based on the emergence of the new covid variant, notification has been issued to restrict travel from 6 south African countries and Hong Kong.



ISLAMABAD: A view of Sri Lanka stall at the Foreign Office Women Association annual charity bazaar. - DNA

Experts urge to appreciate Pak work on climate

"Pakistan's pavilion remained a happening place throughout the summit though we had only an 8 member delegation from our foreign office and ministry of climate change

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The civil society representatives and experts who participated in the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) of the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) on Saturday appreciated Pakistan's performance at COP26 and refuted the allegations leveled by a parliamentarian a day before.

They have asked the prime minister for a probe as to why a misleading propaganda was initiated by a parliamentarian at the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) meeting, an irrelevant forum for such matters.

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, adap-

tation committee, and technology executive committee.

Pakistan will be chairing the G77+China group, and the Asia-Pacific Group next year (COP27). Special Assistant to Prime Minister Malik Amin Aslam said: "Pakistan's pavilion remained a happening place throughout the summit though we had only an 8 member delegation from our foreign office and ministry of climate change.

The delegation was approved by the prime minister and we were not able to adjust any parliamentarian in the delegation for conference privileges."

Amin alleged: "Perhaps that is the only bone of contention for the wrong propaganda against the successful mission." Pakistan was elected to eight committees based on the performance while declared forest champion along with two other countries, he said. Amin told that Pakistan was also declared nature's leader along with three other countries. "We are trying to translate the Prime Minister's vision of climate action that has been appreciated by the world leaders," the SAPM said.



NBF offering 50% discount on all general books

ISLAMABAD: National Book Foundation (NBF) is offering 50 percent discount on all general books published by the Foundation.

NBF aims to encourage the proposition of creativity, literacy and to enhance the culture of writing and reading. NBF is working with a mission to ignite a literacy cultural renaissance by encouraging all stakeholders of society across the country as well as in foreign countries.

NBF Managing Director Dr Raja Mazhar Hameed said the foundation believes in creativity leading to premier quality academic and scholastic resources to masses pertaining to fiction, non-fiction, applied sciences and pure sciences educational domains, and to disseminate effective professional educational and literary content within the country and across the globe.

He said that NBF has a vision of instilling the passion of reading, learning and writing in the hearts of every segment of the society is synonymous with instilling the foundations of progress and excellence in our country. - APP

1.5 mn people benefit from 'Langar Khanas'

ISLAMABAD: The government has expanded the "Ehsaas Koi Bhooka Na Soy (EK-BNS)" program across the country and deployed some 24 food trucks in various cities to facilitate around 1.5 million people during the last month. Talking to APP, focal person Panagah's Naseem ur Rehman said "Ehsaas Koye Bhooka Na Soy" (EK-BNS) was a new policy initiative of the federal government to eliminate hunger and malnutrition in the country.

"The initiative is an extension of Ehsaas Langar Policy and aims to distribute cooked meal at designated delivery points to people in need especially those at risk of or experiencing hunger," Rehman said.

Meals, he said were delivered free of charge through food truck arrangements, where many of the EK-BNS recipients were hailing from the labor class including elderly, differently-abled, poor workers, daily wage earners, women, and children who lacked access to Ehsaas Langar sites in industrial zones and bus stations.

This program has been designed in a public-private partnership model whereby Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal was responsible for the operations of the food trucks and Saylani Welfare International Trust had the task to ensure the provision of meals.

To a query, he informed that around 210,000 passengers and homeless people had benefited from Panagahs (Shelter Homes) during the last year. - APP

Islamabad Taste Festival to start from Dec 3

ISLAMABAD: A three-day "Islamabad Taste Festival" will be held at Jinnah Convention Center from December 3, which will include food, entertainment, music, and fun. The three-day festival will feature Capital City's best restaurants, well-known food brands, and stalls.

Renowned singers including Aima Baig, Surj RDB, Asim Azhar, and others would also perform live at the festival. National and international cuisines will be displayed at various stalls. - APP

Theatre Wallay to organize an evening of plays Monday

ISLAMABAD: Theatre Wallay would organize 'Savage Love', an evening of plays by renowned American playwrights Tennessee Williams and Sam Shepard on November 29.

The play featuring 'Savage Love' by Sam Shepard and Joseph Chaikin, 'Talk to Me Like the Rain' and 'Let Me Listen' by Tennessee Williams, 'The Lady of Larkspur Lotion' by Tennessee Williams. The plays will be followed by an interactive session with cast and crew. The play would be presented at The Farm (Bani Gala). - APP

Abduction

A 14-year old boy named Asmaad Ali was detained by the Indian army for accidentally straying across the Line of Control (LoC). This is just one instance of the many in which innocent civilians are caught between the crossfire of a dispute that has remained unresolved for decades. With India's illegal siege of Kashmir, more people are at risk of being subjected to arbitrary violence that is justified through faulty claims of the perpetuation of crime. It is vital that our government investigates the matter and stresses the safe return of the boy.

According to the authorities, the disappearance of Asmaad was made public knowledge after an Indian wire service revealed that the security forces had him under detention. Even his parents were not aware of this fact and when told that he was taken because he accidentally crossed the unmarked border between India and Pakistan, they immediately called public attention to his disappearance. They clearly and rightfully pointed out that the circumstances in Kashmir have become so dire that even children are not safe from the preying hands of occupational forces. The scale of the human cost being borne by the Kashmiris is unfathomable and somehow, all stakeholders—including the media—seem to forget this fact while being absorbed in the day-to-day discourse of who rightfully 'owns' Kashmir. The only rightful claim is that of the people that are either being massacred, tortured, discriminated against, neglected or suppressed in every way possible.

It is absolutely vital that we engage with India on this front and come to a conclusive decision about how to handle the frequent abductions and disappearances over unknown crimes. The international community must also lend its ear and eyes to this issue. There is no graver case of human rights violation than that of Kashmir and it is imperative that India is called out for all the wrong being carried out. While we work to ensure the safe return of an innocent 14-year-old, we must develop a framework to prevent this from happening again in the future.

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Digital census

THE 7th Population Census will be held in the next calendar year. The government has moved a summary before the Council of Common Interests (CCI) for approval for the holding of the census, with details of foolproof security of personnel of armed forces. A census is always hugely consequential—it can redefine constituencies, demographics and limitations, thus having a big impact on elections and politics. In fact, the 2017 census raised a lot of contentions from different political parties, particularly the PPP which used the excuse of the census to delay local elections. The results of the census also has a large impact on the construction of policies, research initiatives and funds allocation.

Thus, it is essential for the functioning of the country—and for the next democratic process to proceed smoothly—that the census should be conducted as transparently and fairly as possible. While the government works on this, it is also important to back up the digital experiment with the regular paper trail since this is the first time. Training of staff and a whole host of other issues could lead to more errors in the count, which is why the implementation of digital setups is generally given more time.

This task is made more formidable considering this is the first time the census will be conducted digitally. The government has not had a good record with keeping up to date with technological advancements in this regard—it must ensure it has the best resources and experts on hand to help with this gigantic project. The government must also look to the 2017 census to make sure it does not repeat the mistakes made then. On this occasion, the census should be a collaborative project. To ensure credibility and ownership of the entire census process, provinces must be involved from the start to the end and from planning to the compilation of census results.

Testing the waters: Russia explores Gulf security

James Dorsey

Russia sees the architecture as enabling the creation of a “counter-terrorism coalition (of) all stakeholders” that would be the motor for resolving conflicts across the region and promoting mutual security guarantees. The plan would further involve the removal of the “permanent deployment of troops of extra-regional states in the territories...

RUSSIA hopes to blow new life into a proposal for a multilateral security architecture in the Gulf, with the tacit approval of the Biden administration. If successful, the initiative would help stabilise the region, cement regional efforts to reduce tensions, and potentially prevent war-ravaged Yemen from emerging as an Afghanistan on the southern border of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf of Aden and at the mouth of the Red Sea.

For now, Vitaly Naumkin, a prominent scholar, academic advisor of the foreign and justice ministries, and head of the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences, is testing the waters, according to Newsweek, which first reported the move. Last week, he invited former officials, scholars, and journalists from feuding Middle Eastern nations to a closed-door meeting in Moscow to discuss the region's multiple disputes and conflicts and ways of preventing them from spinning out of control. Mr. Naumkin, who is believed to be close to Russian President Vladimir Putin, co-authored the plan first put forward in 2004. The Russian foreign ministry pub-

lished a fine-tuned version in 2019.

Russia appears to have timed the revival of its proposal to begin creating a framework to deal with Houthi rebels, seemingly gaining the upper hand against Saudi Arabia in Yemen's seven-year-long devastating war. The Iranian-backed rebels appear to be closer to capturing the oil and gas-rich province of Marib after two years of some of the bloodiest fighting in the war. The conquest would pave the way for a Houthi takeover of neighbouring Shabwa, another energy-rich region. It would put the rebels in control of all northern Yemen. The military advances would significantly enhance the Houthi negotiating position in talks to end the war. They also raise the spectre of splitting Yemen into the north controlled by the Houthis and the south dependent on Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

“The battle for Marib could be a final stand for the possibility of a unified Yemen,” said Yemeni writer and human rights activist Nabil Hetari. A self-declared independent North Yemen would potentially resemble an Afghanistan sitting on one of the world's critical chokepoints for the flow of oil and gas. North Yemen would be governed by a nationalist Islamist group that presides over one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, struggles to win international recognition, restore public services, and stabilise a war-ravaged economy while an Al-Qaeda franchise operates in the south. The Russian initiative also appears geared to take advantage of efforts by Middle Eastern rivals Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Turkey, and Iran to reduce regional tensions, get a grip on their differences, and ensure that they do not spin out of control.

Russia seems to be exploiting what some describe as paused and others as stalled talks between Saudi Arabia and Iran mediated by Iraq. Iraqi officials insisted that the talks are on hold until a new Iraqi government has been formed following last month's elections. The discussions focused at least partially on forging agreement on ways to end the Yemen war.

Mr. Naumkin suggested that the Russian initiative offers an opportunity to carve the Middle East out as a region of cooperation as well as competition with the United States in contrast to southeastern Europe and Ukraine, where US-Russian tension is on the rise.

In the Middle East, Russia and the United States “have one common threat, the threat of war. Nei-

ther the United States nor Russia is interested in having this war,” Mr. Naumkin told Newsweek. A State Department spokesperson would not rule out cooperation. “We remain prepared to cooperate with Russia in areas in which the two sides have common interests while opposing Russian policies that go against US interests,” the spokesperson said.

The Russian proposal calls for integrating the US defense umbrella in the Gulf into a collective security structure that would include Russia, China, Europe, and India alongside the United States. The structure would include, not exclude Iran, and would have to extend to Israel and Turkey. UAE efforts to return Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to the Arab, if not the international fold, although not driven by the Russian initiative, would facilitate it if all other things were equal.

Inspired by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the proposal suggests that the new architecture would be launched at an international conference on security and cooperation in the Gulf.

Russia sees the architecture as enabling the creation of a “counter-terrorism coalition (of) all stakeholders” that would be the motor for resolving conflicts across the region and promoting mutual security guarantees. The plan would further involve the removal of the “permanent deployment of troops of extra-regional states in the territories of states of the Gulf,” a reference to US, British, and French forces and bases in various Gulf states and elsewhere in the Middle East. It calls for a “universal and comprehensive” security system that would take into account “the interests of all regional and other parties involved, in all spheres of security, including its military, economic and energy dimensions.”

In Mr. Naumkin's reading, Middle Eastern rivals “are fed up with what's going on” and “afraid of possible war.” Negotiations are their only remaining option. That seems to drive men like UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed, his Saudi counterpart Mohammed bin Salman, Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and Iranian leader Ebrahim Raisi to reach out to one another in a recent flurry of activity. “These are talks between autocrats keen to protect their own grip on power and boost their economies; not peace in our time, only within our borders,” cautioned The Economist.

Turkey turns the page in its dealings with UAE

Yasar Yakis

Turkey followed this policy for almost a century, and remained equidistant to all Arab countries and Israel. Thanks to this balanced policy, Turkey was able to keep open the channels of communications with both. Arab countries consider inter-Arab...

TURKISH President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has finally reached the conclusion that confrontation with the UAE does not bring him any advantage. The roots of the tension between the two countries go back to Turkey's strong support for the Muslim Brotherhood. When the Gulf Cooperation Council members, with the exception of Qatar, decided to oppose the extremist movement, Turkey's relations with the UAE began to sour. Turkey unnecessarily sided with Qatar in the conflict between Doha and the remaining GCC countries. This was a major deviation from Turkey's traditional policy toward the Arab countries, which dates back to 1930s. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish republic, instructed Numan Menemencioglu, then foreign ministry undersecretary, that

Turkey should strengthen its relations with the Arab countries with which it has strong cultural and social ties, but should avoid siding with some against others.

Turkey followed this policy for almost a century, and remained equidistant to all Arab countries and Israel. Thanks to this balanced policy, Turkey was able to keep open the channels of communications with both. Arab countries consider inter-Arab conflicts a family affair and do not like non-Arab countries to interfere. They may quarrel from time to time, but eventually reconcile. This is what is happening now in the dispute between Qatar and other GCC countries. Turkey made a similar mistake when the UAE decided to establish diplomatic ties with Israel. Ankara's response was all the more inconsistent, because it maintained diplomatic relations with both the UAE and Israel, and opposed the establishment of diplomatic relations between two third countries. Turkey's relations with the UAE worsened after Ankara claimed the UAE had financially supported the failed military coup in July, 2016. Pro-government media published full-page reports claiming that the UAE transferred funds to Turkey to prepare the coup. As evidence for a UAE role, some Turkish media outlets said that it took 16 hours for the UAE to condemn the military coup and confirm support for Erdogan.

Sedat Peker, a leading figure in Turkey's criminal underworld, became the subject of lively debate in the country's media for months. After visiting several countries, he has decided to settle down in Dubai and has been posting videos exposing the “dirty linen” of Turkish governments, past and present. UAE authorities have apparently warned him against posting such videos.

Now Peker posts tweets that are equally detrimental to the reputation of politicians of the ruling AKP. This subject was probably not officially raised in the bilateral talks. However, we may presume that it may have been thoroughly

discussed at the level of security departments of both countries. Peker's subsequent messaging will reveal whether a bargain has been struck on this subject. The Libyan crisis has added to tensions between Turkey and the UAE. Until recently the two were on opposite sides in this conflict. We will have to wait and see how the situation will evolve after the Ankara-Abu Dhabi thaw and the Libyan elections scheduled for Dec. 24.

Turkey is the only country that cooperates with the UN-supported Government of National Accord based in Tripoli. Despite this legitimacy, the GNA is dominated by Muslim Brotherhood-inclined MPs, while the international community, including Russia, the UAE and Egypt, is uneasy with the influence of the extremist group. Fortunately, an agreement has been worked out under the UN auspices to organize elections that will involve as many political stakeholders as possible. The Libyan government openly invited “all foreign military forces” to withdraw from the Libyan soil. Turkey ignored this, saying that its military presence in Libya, unlike all others, stems from an invitation of the UN-backed government.

Ten cooperation agreements were signed during last week's visit to Ankara by the UAE Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. A \$10 billion fund has been put aside by the UAE for investment in Turkey, a major boost for Turkey's crisis-ridden economy. Erdogan will be happy because Turkey is preparing for elections and the \$10 billion injection will provide temporary relief from the country's financial woes.

The UAE funds to be invested in Turkey will serve the interests of both countries. UAE companies have a reputation of investing in well-assessed projects, but their Turkish counterparts are not in a strong negotiating position. The importance of the visit is that a new page may be turned in the relations of the friendly peoples of these two countries.

— Courtesy: Arab News

It is high time we start preparing for pandemics

Gordon Brown

The special World Health Assembly summit offers us a unique opportunity to address these gaps by serving as a launchpad for a process that will urgently develop a legally binding international agreement under the auspices of the WHO Constitution. They can build on important reports – the G20 report...

FIVE million lives worldwide have already been lost to COVID-19, and the World Health Organization Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (WHO/ACTA) grimly predict five million more lives will be lost to the disease in months to come. Alarmingly also, COVID-19 cases will swell from the 260 million confirmed so far to 460 million by the end of 2022. The damage from COVID-19 has been so catastrophic that, when the World Health Assembly (WHA) meets in a special session, starting November 29, its task is nothing less than preventing such a tragedy from re-occurring. The damage from COVID-19 has been so ruinous that we now need an internationally binding agreement to prevent future outbreaks from ever becoming pandemics again.

In the words of WHO Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, a new agreement should be underpinned by a high-level commitment to health for all grounded in equity and solidarity between nations. Not only should all people have fair access to what they need for their health, irrespective of their wealth or their income, but the international community should ensure the equitable use and distribution of available medical resources. For that to happen, we need a fully functioning global surveillance system, the fast-tracking and sharing of support in emergencies and predictable finance. Nothing illustrates the need for this more clearly than our collective failure, as an international community, to meet our promise to secure the equitable distribution of vaccines. For while, thanks to brilliant science and strong manufacturing performance, we will have produced 12 billion vaccine doses by Christmas – enough to vaccinate every adult in the world – 95 percent of adults still remain unprotected in low-income countries. This is perhaps the greatest public policy failure of our times.

The WHO's internationally agreed adult vaccination target for every country – 40 percent by December – is set to be missed by 82 countries. On current trends, it will take until Easter at least to get close to the 40 percent, and even then, dozens of countries may miss out. In fact, since June's G7 meeting, where leaders pledged the whole world would be vaccinated by 2022, the gap between the vaccine haves and the vaccine have-nots has widened rather than diminished. In high-income countries, vaccination rates have risen from 40 percent in June to 60-70 percent now, but they have moved at a glacial pace in low-income countries – from 1 percent to less than 5 percent. Indeed, six adults are receiving their booster shots in middle- and high-income countries for every one adult now being inoculated each day in a low-income country and 90 percent of African health workers remain unprotected.

Although important regional initiatives like the Africa Union's vaccine purchasing facility AVAT, have taken steps to address the inequity gap by purchasing 400 million single-shot vaccines from Johnson & Johnson and another 110 million doses from Moderna – 50 million coming between December and March – it is still not enough to meet the needs of a continent of 1.3 billion people. This inequality is simply explained: 89 percent of all vaccines have been

bought by the G20, the world's richest countries, and today they retain control of 71 percent of future deliveries. Promises from the Global North to gift vaccines to the Global South have fallen short: only 22 percent of the donations promised by America have been sent. Europe, the UK and Canada have performed considerably worse and have despatched only 15, 10 and 5 percent respectively.

COVAX, the global vaccine distribution agency, which had hoped to send out two billion vaccines by December, now expects to deliver just two-thirds of that number. Such is the scale of the stockpiling of vaccines in the richest countries that health data research group, Airfinity, estimate that by the close of 2021, 100 million unused doses in the G20 stockpile will pass their “use by” dates and be wasted.

For G20 countries, to have and to hoard life-saving vaccines and deny them to the poorest countries, is morally indefensible. To allow tens of millions of doses to go to waste is an act of medical and social vandalism that may never be forgotten or forgiven. An urgent, ongoing, month-by-month delivery plan and airlifting of vaccines, coordinated by the G20 countries, is now needed to put the unused capacity to use where vaccines are most needed.

But the vaccine inequities show why more fundamental changes are needed in the international architecture of health decision-making. Of course, few international organisations have been given the freedom and independence to make binding decisions that national governments are obliged to follow. The discretion available to the Appeal Court of the World Trade Organization and to the International Criminal Court, whose decisions are final, are areas where an international organisation can overrule nation-states and because of that, they are under assault from a coalition of anti-internationalists. While there is a global health treaty focused on reducing the demand and supply of tobacco, and a 2011 agreement to ensure the WHO can commandeer supplies of flu vaccine when needed, the binding worldwide agreement that has been called for to enable world health authorities to do more to prevent, detect, prepare for and control a pandemic still eludes us.

The special World Health Assembly summit offers us a unique opportunity to address these gaps by serving as a launchpad for a process that will urgently develop a legally binding international agreement under the auspices of the WHO Constitution. They can build on important reports – the G20 report of Larry Summers, Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the Mario Monti report to the European region of the WHO and, the recommendations of the WHO review led by former Liberian President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark. First, our global health leaders must have more authority to develop and upgrade health surveillance.

Second, we need to build on the pioneering work of ACTA and COVAX to ensure equitable manufacturing and distribution of PPE, tests, treatments and vaccines so that all countries can detect, respond, treat and protect against current and future pandemics.

Third, we need a global pandemic preparedness board. But all this will work only if we devise a sustainable financing mechanism to address the glaring global inequalities in health provisions across the world. Too often, in times of global crises – even those where we face life and death decisions – we are reduced to passing round the begging bowl or convening “pledging” conferences in a way that is more reminiscent of organising a whip-round at a charity fundraiser.

Ideally, pandemic preparedness needs to be financed by a burden-sharing formula where the costs are shared between the countries with the greatest capacity to pay. Even now, just less than 20 percent of the WHO's budget is covered in this way. The eradication of smallpox in the 1960s and 1970s made history not least because the final push to eliminate the disease was initiated by a burden-sharing agreement under which the richest countries shared the costs.

Considering the trillions of dollars of trade lost due to COVID-19, the \$10bn a year budget for pandemic prevention and preparedness, deemed necessary by the G20's high-level independent panel, would offer one of the greatest returns on investment in history. But we must act now – and next week's World Health Assembly is the place to start – if we are to be prepared for all future eventualities.

— Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Briefs

ECO states need further integration

FROM PAGE 01
He also thanked President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Secretary-General Noziri for successfully organizing all events of the 14th Summit during challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The president viewed that in order to stay competitive, national and regional economies would have to move towards greater physical and virtual integration. "Such integration is imperative for the ECO region. The theme you have chosen for this Summit - "Into the Future Together" - is thus most apt and timely." The president called for ensuring the implementation of ECO Vision 2025, and the Islamabad Declaration, a free or preferential trade arrangement; strengthening of regional institutions such as the ECO Trade and Development Bank (ETDB) and operationalization of the ECO Reinsurance Company (ERC). President Alvi, who reached the Turkmen capital Saturday, called advancing the transport corridors planned by the ECO under the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA). He also welcomed the operationalization of the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) road corridor.

PML-N, PPP accuse each other...

FROM PAGE 01
social media, saying that "the clips are being made to go viral by both parties". He claimed his party had not issued directives to anyone to give any entity any money. "If this has occurred at any level, the PPP strongly condemns the act," he said. Cheema said that the videos are a "ploy" to ruin the election. Meanwhile, PTI Senator Ejaz Chaudhary also shared a video on Twitter, with the caption stating: "The true face of the PML-N has been exposed." According to Chaudhary, in the video, women voters are being paid for their votes and an oath is being obtained from them. "This is why they are against EVMs (electronic voting machines)," he wrote. The Election Commission of Pakistan took notice of the viral video allegedly showing voters being bribed. Electoral authority directs authorities to conduct forensic, arrest suspects for allegedly bribing voters.

Fawad slams PML-N over viral videos

FROM PAGE 01
workers for the alleged move. "Is buying votes for Rs2,000 respecting the vote?" Chaudhary asked. He accused PML-N of contesting the elections with the lure of money. "PML-N won the 1990 general election of 1990 through rigging", the minister added. He said that the PTI is currently focusing its energies on the local government elections. "We are not worried about the next general elections. Currently [our] focus is on the local government elections," Chaudhary said. He said that the PTI will complete the current tenure and claim victory in the next general election as well. The information minister went on to say that PML-N and PPP "become the most panicky" whenever there's talk of introducing electronic voting machines.

Progress on Pak-Russia..

FROM PAGE 01
Moscow will sign the stream gas pipeline project's shareholders' agreement on February 15, said sources. Moreover, Pakistan and Russia have also made an agreement regarding the provision of facilities for the construction of the stream gas pipeline. The relevant agreement regarding the facilities will also be signed on February 15. The project aims to construct a 1,100-kilometre-long stream gas pipeline at the cost of \$2.5 billion to \$3 billion that will enable the supply of 12.6 billion cubic meters of gas. In July, Pakistan and Russia had signed an agreement for the construction of a 1,100-kilometre-long stream gas pipeline from Karachi to Lahore which will be completed by 2023.



ISLAMABAD: President Small Chamber and Industry Zahid Qureshi presenting trophy to winning team of cricket tournament organized by Small Chamber and Industry. - DNA

Shaheen shines as Pak reduce Bangladesh to 39-4 on day 3

But Pakistan struck back in spectacular fashion with Shaheen Afridi dismissing Shadman Islam (one), Najmul Hossain (zero) and Saif Hasan (18) to finish the day at 3-6 and reduce Bangladesh to 39-4 at stumps

SPORT DESK

CHITTAGONG: Bangladesh's Taijul Islam claimed his ninth five-wicket haul while Abid Ali hit a century for Pakistan as the first Test remained delicately poised in Chittagong on Sunday. The hosts bowled out Pakistan for 286 at the stroke of tea on the third day to take a 44-run lead into the second innings thanks to the mesmerising bowling of Taijul, who finished with 7-116. But Pakistan struck back in spectacular fashion with Shaheen Afridi dismissing Shadman Islam (one), Najmul Hossain (zero) and Saif Hasan (18)

to finish the day at 3-6 and reduce Bangladesh to 39-4 at stumps. Hasan Ali also scalped the wicket of captain Mominul Haque for a duck to rob the hosts of their advantage. Mushfiqur Rahim remained unbeaten on 12 alongside debutant Yasir Ali, 8 not out. Ali earlier made 133 off 282 balls, holding one end for Pakistan for a long stretch after Taijul's early strike of two wickets in two balls in the day's first over. Faheem Ashraf added 38 late in the innings to keep Pakistan in contention before he was last man dismissed. Pakistan, who resumed on 145-0 and looked poised for



a big total, suffered an early setback when Taijul trapped debutant Abdullah Shafique leg-before on his fifth ball. Shafique left without adding to his overnight 52, and Taijul took Azhar Ali for a duck in the very next ball when the delivery hit him on the foot. Azhar was initially given not out but the decision was reversed on review. Babar Azam saw off the hat-trick ball in Taijul's next over but did not survive long. Mehidy uprooted his off-stump with a straight delivery after the Pakistan skipper made only 10 runs. Taijul grabbed his third wicket when he beat Fawad Alam with spin to

remove the batsman for eight. Bangladesh sought a review after the umpire turned down a confident caught-behind appeal. The replay indicated the ball took a feather touch on Alam's glove, ending his brief stay at the crease. Ali, who struck 12 fours and two sixes, was also lucky to survive after he was dropped at slip by Najmul Hossain off Taijul at 113. He was dropped again by Yasir Ali at forward short leg on 133 but it did not cost Bangladesh much, with Taijul taking him leg before two balls later. Pakistan had by then lost Mohammad Rizwan to Ebadot Hossain, who bowled 2-47.



ASHGABAT: President Dr. Arif Alvi meeting with President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan, at Ashgabat. - DNA

Emma Raducanu makes a winning return to Britain

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: London's Royal Albert Hall provided a fitting stage on Sunday for teenage tennis sensation Emma Raducanu's first appearance on a British court since her astonishing U.S. Open triumph. Playing 79 days after an extraordinary run in New York culminated in victory over Canada's Leylah Fernandez and being crowned Britain's new tennis queen, the 19-year-old enjoyed a belated homecoming at the Victorian concert hall. The stakes were far lower for her exhibition match against Romanian Elena-Gabriela Ruse than when, as a qualifier ranked 150th in the world, she became Britain's first female Grand Slam champion for 44 years in September. But, with respect to the former big names appearing at this week's Champions Tennis event, the crowd had only come to see Raducanu, who has risen from obscurity to become one of the world's most marketable athletes. It was her first match on home soil since July when her dream Wimbledon debut ended in a fourth round retirement against Australian Ajla Tomljanovic because of breathing difficulties. There was no such drama this time in a light-hearted hit-around with her friend and practice partner Ruse, ranked 85th in the world. The pair delighted spectators in the 150-year-old venue with some engaging rallies and jokes, with one young fan yelling "Emma will you marry me". Later Ruse handed her racket to a ballboy who rallied with Raducanu and even won a point with some nifty network. Ruse avoided gatecrashing Raducanu's party and the home favourite produced some sparkling winners to triumph 6-3 7-6. The serious business starts again now for Raducanu and new coach Torben Beltz as she prepares for the looming Australian where she will have a lot to live up to.

President Alvi meets his Uzbek counterpart

FROM PAGE 01
President Alvi underscored the importance of the urgent need for immediate provision of humanitarian and economic assistance for Afghanistan to avert economic collapse in the country. He stressed the de-freezing of Afghanistan's financial assets as a priority step in this respect. Both leaders agreed to work closely towards strengthening of bilateral relations and enhancing cooperation in regional and international fora. The President reiterated invitation to President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to visit Pakistan at the earliest convenience.

World rushes to contain new variant

FROM PAGE 01
Hong Kong in the wake of the discovery of the new variant. The notification said travel had been restricted from South Africa, Lesotho, Eswatini, Mozambique, Botswana and Namibia as well as Hong Kong. Also read: Pakistan bans travel from 6 countries, Hong Kong amid concern over new Covid variant. These countries, the NCOC added, had been placed in category C - which includes nations from where people face restrictions and can only travel to Pakistan under specific NCOC guidelines - consequent to the emergence of the Omicron strain in South Africa and its spread to adjoining regions. The strictest announcement, however, came from Israel, which said on Sunday it would close its borders to all foreigners in a bid to curb the spread of the variant - just four weeks after reopening to tourists after a prolonged closure due to Covid-19.

Netherlands, UK, Germany confirm...

FROM PAGE 01
reported in travellers in Belgium, Israel and Hong Kong. The mutations in Omicron, also known as B.1.1.529, could help the virus evade the body's immune response and make it more transmissible, according to scientists. It could take weeks to know if current vaccines are less effective against it. Omicron was first reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) by South Africa on Wednesday, and early evidence suggests it has a higher re-infection risk. It has been categorised by the WHO as a "variant of concern".

Lack of law depriving...

FROM PAGE 01
an impact on the future generations. He said the Hadith had completely encompassed everything about environment and how one should be living on earth, the prime minister said. He said one would have to pursue a humane life if he or she wanted to get close to the Allah Almighty. Imran Khan said the leadership that came up through the political system was just too divorced from faith so they came in for power and compromised for staying in power and gain personal benefits. "I find every few politicians coming with the specific objectives of looking after humanity. In most of the developing world they come in power for self-interest and for making money." Unfortunately there were very few Mandelas who came in for a noble cause. Our great leader Jinnah who was founder of Pakistan, was someone who came for a great cause, Imran noted. He viewed that the politicians were looked down upon because they say they claimed to help the people but contrarily, they helped themselves, he added. The prime minister said he came into politics because of his faith. "I had everything. I was already a big name in the country as a sports star and I had enough money. So for me struggling for 20 years to become the prime minister made no sense. The only reason was I believed that I had a responsibility towards society because I was given more than others," he added.

Messi in assist mode as PSG beat 10-man St Etienne

PSG made the most of Timothee Kolodziejczak's red card on the stroke of halftime as Messi fed Marquinhos for two headed goals and Angel Di Maria struck to seal a clinical turnaround after Les Verts had opened the scoring through Denis Bouanga

SPORTS DESK

ST ETIENNE: Lionel Messi set up all three goals as Paris St Germain stretched their Ligue 1 lead to 14 points with a 3-1 comeback win at 10-man St Etienne as Neymar sustained a possible ankle injury and was taken off on a stretcher on Sunday. PSG made the most of Timothee Kolodziejczak's red card on the stroke of halftime as Messi fed Marquinhos for two headed goals and Angel Di Maria struck to seal a clinical turnaround after Les Verts had opened the scoring through Denis Bouanga. The result put the capital side on 40 points from 15 games, with third-placed Rennes having a chance to leapfrog Nice into second when they travel to Lorient later on Sunday. St Etienne, who mounted on a decent challenge despite being a man down as snow fell on the Geoffroy Guichard stadium, are now bottom of the standings with 12 points. The game marked Sergio Ramos's debut for PSG, almost five months after joining from Real Madrid as a free agent,



and the Spaniard started in central defence alongside Marquinhos. St Etienne pressed high and PSG looked to hit them on the break, with Neymar finding the back of the net early on only for the Brazilian's goal to be ruled out for offside. The hosts went ahead after 24 minutes when Kolodziejczak, set up by a superb Wahbi Khazri through pass, shot straight at goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma but Bouanga followed up and fired home from point-blank range. The momentum, however, swung towards PSG in a couple of minutes on the stroke of halftime. Kolodziejczak was harshly shown a straight red card for bringing down Kylian Mbappe as the France striker charged towards goal and Marquinhos headed home Messi's perfectly-executed free kick. Messi was at it again 11 minutes from time, whipping a fine pass behind the back of the defence for Di Maria, who finished with a curled effort into the far corner of the net. Marquinhos headed home again from Messi's cross in the last minute, three minutes after Neymar was carried off after twisting his ankle.

Briefs

\$4.2bln deposit reflects strong Pak-SA ties

ISLAMABAD: Finance Ministry said here on Sunday that the cash deposit and oil on deferred payment facility in these tough times speaks of the strong brotherly relationship between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Referring to a news item titled "Cabinet approves \$4.2b Saudi loan package" published in a section of press, the ministry said in a statement that the interest rate for cash deposits would be 4 percent whereas that of the oil facility would be 3.8 percent.

Since the above is demand deposit, the right to call deposits is with depositor, the ministry said adding every deposit usually have this clause.

Lastly, it added, in every Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) there is dispute resolution clause, which refer to territorial laws applicable. This does not mean that the stated country's sovereignty is compromised. "We are grateful to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for helping us once again in our hour of need," it concluded. — APP

Israel closes borders to all foreigners over Omicron

JERUSALEM: Israel on Sunday decided to close its borders to foreign tourists and re-authorise a controversial cellphone tracking programme in a bid to stem the spread of the new Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

"The entry of foreign nationals into Israel is banned except for cases approved by a special committee," Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's office said in a statement, adding that the measure would take effect on Sunday evening.

Israeli citizens will be required to present a negative PCR test and quarantine themselves for three days if they have been vaccinated against the coronavirus and seven days if they have not. It was only four weeks ago that Israel reopened its borders to foreign tourists after a prolonged closure due to Covid.

The measure were decided by a cabinet committee tasked with overseeing Israel's Covid response.

Bennett's government has also re-activated a controversial programme initiated under his predecessor Benjamin Netanyahu early in the pandemic that allows the powerful Shin Bet internal security agency to track cellphones as a viral containment measure. — APP

Pakistan Navy Flotilla visits Oman, Bahrain

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy flotilla Thursday comprising Pakistan Navy Ships DE-HSHAT, SV BEHRE-MASAH and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) Ship HINGOL visited port Mina Salman of Bahrain and Port Sultan Qaboos of Oman.

On arrival at Bahrain, PN ships were received by senior National representatives of Pakistan, said a Pakistan Navy media release here received.

The Mission Commander along with Commanding Officers called on Chief of Bahrain Naval Forces Rear Admiral Mohamed Yousaf Mohamed, Deputy Commander Royal Bahrain Coast Guard Commodore Jasim Mohamed Al Ghatam, Commander Combined Maritime Forces Vice Admiral Brad Cooper USN and Deputy Commander CMF Commodore Edward Ahlgren. During the meetings, matters of mutual interests and cooperation in maritime domain were discussed and further collaboration in various domains were reaffirmed.

On completion of port visit, PN ships conducted bilateral exercise with Royal Bahrain Navy Ship RBNS AL AREEN aimed at further enhancing interoperability between the two navies. — APP

Foreign missions take huge interest in PFWO bazaar

The Indonesian, Palestine and other embassies Joins PFWO Charity Bazaar; the First Lady, Mrs. Samina Alvi also visited the Indonesian and other stalls and admired the beautiful and rich culture of respective countries

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFWO) held its annual charity bazaar on Saturday, providing diplomats a platform to raise funds for the underprivileged divisions of their community.

The event was inaugurated by the First Lady Mrs. Samina Alvi, spouse of the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan who was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The First Lady addressed in her remarks that caring and helping others made better human beings, she appreciated and encouraged the joint efforts of the diplomatic corps for a noble cause.

The First Lady, Mrs. Samina Alvi also visited the Indonesian Stall and admired the beautiful and rich culture of Indonesia. Through this Bazaar, better perception and understanding of the Indonesian culture had been significantly enhanced.

In the Indonesian Stall, where traditional arts, famous Batik dresses, bags, artificial jewelry, felt crafts, as well as traditional dishes of Indonesian cuisine, were presented which fascinated a large number of visitors. The guests were attracted by the culture, traditions, and customs of the Indonesian people and were happy to try the national dishes. Indonesian stall attracted five local TV stations and interviewed Ambassador Tugio and Madame.

More than 30 countries participated in the annual charity bazaar, which includes Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Palestine, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Bangladesh, China, Qatar, Ukraine, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and many other countries.

The children of diplomatic staffers were dressed in traditional outfits took the stage in a Parade of the Nations and presented tableaux while waving national flags of their countries. The children from Indonesia also performed The Sojojo dance, which is a traditional dance that originated from the Papua region. The dancers used traditional costumes made of roots and leaves. The synchronous movement made this dance exciting to watch.

The President of Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association, Ms. Mehwish Sohil highlighted, "The support of the diplomatic community in raising the fund in this event is highly appreciated. I extend my gratitude to all the participants for participating and presenting their traditional food, traditional products, and cultural dances." People from all walks of life participated in the day-long event, making it a massive success.

The inclusive participation of diplomatic corps based in Islamabad with their colorful stalls turned the venue into cultural festivities.



Azerbaijan envoy Khazar Farhadov presents souvenir to First Lady



Indonesian ambassador and his wife welcome the First Lady



First Lady at the Palestine stall



Ambassador of Indonesia and embassy staff at the stall



People throng to Indonesia stall



Indonesia stall



Turkish ambassador, CEO Serena Hotels, Editor Islamabad POST at Azerbaijan stall

The Ambassador of Japan said, "The Indonesian food is very delicious", the spouse of the Japanese Ambassador said, "She loves Sate Ayam and she was looking to have Sesame Ball sweet but unfortunately it was all sold out." The charity event brought together a variety of cultures and became a commendable opportunity to promote harmony and fraternity among the countries. All funds raised in the bazaar will be donated by the Women's Association of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan (PFWO) for charitable insurances.

Meanwhile, The Embassy of the State of Palestine in Islamabad also partic-

ipated in the annual charity Bazaar held by the Pakistani Foreign Ministry in cooperation with the Association of Ambassadors wives with a heritage exhibition that included Palestinian embroideries and traditional folk wear for men and women, paintings, seashell artwork, figurines, pictures resembling the Palestinian blessings that good has bestowed upon us such as the Holy Mosque of Al-Aqsa, Jerusalem, pictures of Palestinian cities as well as an exhibition of the Palestinian cuisine that mainly incorporates olive oil, olives, thyme and other Palestinian ingredients that symbolize the Palestinian reality and our peoples' resilience against the Israeli occupation and its continuous atrocities. A Dabke show was also held by the Palestinian students in the universities of Pakistan.

This participation was aimed at increasing the awareness about Palestine's heritage that the Israeli occupation is trying to steal and erase the identity of, and also to donate the profits of the Bazaar to the charity. Pakistan's first lady, Mrs. Thamina, the wife of his excellency President Aref Alawi, accompanied by the wife of his Excellency the Foreign Affairs Minister, and the wife of the Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister, the general

supervisor of the charity bazaar in the Palestinian pavilion, which was visited by people who attended the bazaar and showed interest and admiration for it. On this occasion, I extend my gratitude, thanks and appreciation to the General union of Palestinian students and our dear students, our dear community and the staff of our embassy for their work as a team, and I avail myself this opportunity to express gratitude to the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Association of Ambassadors' wives on the success of this charitable bazaar.

(Detailed coverage in the coming issue of Centreline magazine)

UK to enforce new Covid rules from Tuesday

The govt controversially dropped the masks mandate in July for England, after a prior lockdown

AGENCIES

LONDON: Britain's government on Sunday defended the pace and scale of its response to the new Omicron strain of Covid-19 against criticism that it is again falling behind the curve.

Health Secretary Sajid Javid said mandatory mask-wearing would return to shops and public transport in England on Tuesday, but told families to plan for Christmas "as normal", despite new rules to combat the Omicron variant. Also effective Tuesday, the government's website is instructing all passengers entering the UK to take a PCR test for Covid-19 two days after their arrival, and to self-isolate until the receive a negative result.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson had announced the tougher measures at a hastily arranged news conference on Saturday, but did not specify when they would take effect. Johnson was widely criticised for his travel and quarantine policy earlier in the pandemic, when he kept borders open to foreign travellers even as infection rates, yielding Britain one of the world's worst per-capita death tolls from Covid. The government controversially dropped the masks mandate in July for England, after a prior lockdown, while the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland kept it in place. All four UK nations are expected to adopt the same PCR rule, after England again diverged in July by requiring only a simple lateral flow test for incoming passengers on flights, ships and trains.

Travel from 10 countries in southern Africa is now banned because of Omicron, but Javid conceded that hundreds of passengers had arrived on flights from South Africa on Friday without being tested. But he told BBC television: "I think the speed at which we acted at could not have been any faster." Javid added that the government was "nowhere near" reintroducing social distancing rules and work-from-home guidance, which were also controversially discarded in England earlier this year against the advice of scientists.

He said it was too early to judge the effectiveness of existing vaccines against Omicron, as drugs manufacturers rush to research new treatments against the emergent strain.

Iran nuclear talks: US 'prepared to use options' if diplomacy fails

Iran announced yet more advances in its uranium enrichment, which reduces the amount of time Tehran would need to develop a nuclear weapon

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: The US and its allies restart Iran nuclear talks on Monday unsure how Tehran's new government will approach negotiations, not optimistic about the prospects ahead and emphasizing that if diplomacy fails, the US is "prepared to use other options." The parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action will reconvene in Vienna after almost six months to discuss a mutual return to the deal by both the US and Iran, but the hiatus has given time for new obstacles to take root.

On Friday, Iran announced yet more advances in its uranium enrichment, which reduces the amount of time Tehran would need to develop a nuclear weapon, if it chooses to, an announcement clearly meant to give Iran leverage when it arrives in Vienna for talks.

Other parties to the agreement - including Germany, the UK, Britain, France, China and Russia - are coming into the talks calling for negotiations to pick up where they left off.

European sources tell CNN they expect the Iranians to treat the meeting as "round one." US officials have expressed similar concerns. The recently elected hardline government in Tehran will send a new set of negotiators to Vienna who have been emphasizing the need for complete US sanctions relief,

not compliance with the deal, while US officials have said they have absolutely no plans to offer Iran incentives to talk.

And senior US officials have repeatedly warned that if advances in Iran's nuclear program and enrichment capability continue unabated, they could render the benefits of the JCPOA moot - a development that would force the US to pursue other options.

"We are still hopeful that diplomacy can find a way," Brett McGurk, the National Security Council's coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa, told the Manama Dialogue organized by the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "But if it cannot find a way, we are prepared to use other options."

"There is no question, we are not going to allow Iran to get a nuclear weapon, period," McGurk said. "And when it came to military force for behavior change, that is a pretty fuzzy objective for a military force. When it comes to military force to prevent a country from obtaining a nuclear weapon, that is a very achievable objective."

US Special Envoy for Iran Rob Malley said in a tweet after a November 18 meeting with Middle Eastern allies and European parties to the deal that Iran could choose one of two paths: "continued nuclear escalation & crisis, or mutual return to the JCPOA, creating opportunities for regional economic & diplomatic

ties."

"Time to choose is short," Malley wrote. Sources familiar with preparations for the talks say that the parties were closely watching International Atomic Energy Agency director Rafael Grossi's visit to Tehran last week, seeing it as an indication of Iran's approach to the talks in Vienna, those sources said. Grossi told the IAEA board afterward that the talks were "inconclusive."

One of the contentious issues remaining is that Iran is refusing inspectors from the IAEA monitoring access to the Karaj centrifuge production facility, which reports suggest has resumed operations.

"This is seriously affecting the [IAEA's] ability to restore continuity of knowledge at the [Karaj] workshop, which has been widely recognized as essential in relation to a return to the JCPOA," Grossi told a Board of Governors meeting on Wednesday.

The Arms Control Association noted that Iran's refusal to allow the IAEA to install new cameras or confirm that production hasn't restarted could undermine attempts to revitalize the JCPOA and its strict verification regime if it isn't possibly to fully complete records of Iran's nuclear program.

Tehran's refusal to grant access to Karaj also drives speculation and concern about what, exactly, Iran is doing, the ACA said.

SC orders to speed up Nasla Tower demolition

A three-member larger bench, headed by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed, heard important cases at the Supreme Court Karachi Registry

KARACHI: The Supreme Court (SC) has ordered the Karachi commissioner to double the number of labourers and demolish the Nasla Tower within one week.

A three-member larger bench, headed by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmed, heard important cases at the Supreme Court Karachi Registry, media reported.

In its written orders, the apex court directed the commissioner to double the number of labourers from 200 to 400 to demolish the Nasla Tower within a week and set a time-frame of 20 days to demolish Tejori Heights.

Earlier, Chairman of Association of Builders and Developers ABAD, Mohsin Shaikhani, asked holding the relevant government departments accountable as the entire building was not constructed in a day. Chairman of Association of Builders and Developers ABAD, Mohsin Shaikhani said that the chief minister and chief secretary of Sindh should be held responsible for the state of affairs and urged them to sit with them and collectively take steps for improvement of Karachi. Earlier, on Friday, Sindh Information Minister Saeed Ghani had demanded that those who were responsible for issuing construction permits for the Nasla Tower building should be held responsible and punished. — APP