



Islamabad POST

Thursday, December 02, 2021

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EU urges member countries to consider mandatory Covid jobs

Detailed News On Page-08

PDM session summoned on December 6

Detailed News On Page-01



Shaheen moves up to No. 5 in Test rankings

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

NATO must not expand eastward

DNA

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that Moscow would seek Western guarantees precluding any further NATO expansion and deployment of its weapons near his country's borders, a stern demand that comes amid fears of a Russian invasion of Ukraine. "In a dialogue with the United States and its allies, we will insist on working out specific agreements that would exclude any further NATO moves eastward and the deployment of weapons systems that threaten us in close vicinity to Russian territory," Putin said.

Blinken warns Russia

DNA

WASHINGTON: Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned Russia to stand down on its efforts to destabilize Ukraine and said there would be "severe consequences" for any Russian military action. "We don't know whether President Putin has made the decision to invade" Ukraine, Blinken said in remarks at the end of a North Atlantic Treaty Alliance meeting in Latvia. "We do know that he's putting in place the capacity to do so on short order, should he so decide. So despite uncertainty about intention, and timing, we must prepare for all contingencies while working to see to it that Russia reverses course."

PML-N does not want vote theft

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said that PML-N does not want the election to be stolen and the vote to be respected. Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in his address said that the election of PML-N was stolen and incompetent rulers were imposed on the people, Pakistan will not be able to develop unless the opinion of the people is respected in Pakistan. He said that PML-N does not talk about power but about solution of people's problems.

Smuggling a bane; needs to be plugged

PM Imran Khan says, emergency measures must be taken to control smuggling of wheat, urea, sugar, flour, petrol and money-laundering

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that heavy damage is inflicted on economy of the country due to smuggling of food commodities due to price differential. He added that smuggling creates artificial shortage of commodities and ultimately results in price hike. The Prime Minister directed that all stakeholders should undertake emergency measures and bring-out-of-the-box solutions to control smuggling of essential commodities. He emphasized that the objective is to provide relief to the common man against price hike. The meeting was informed that FIA has undertaken extensive investigations against illegal money laundering and holding of US dollars. It was apprised that manpower is being increased at border crossings to check goods and to ensure that each

PM directs to expedite work on CPEC projects

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chaired a high level meeting to review progress on CPEC projects on Wednesday. The Prime Minister emphasized that timelines specified for completion of CPEC projects should be adhered to. He said that Government of Pakistan is fully committed to provisions of CPEC agreements. The Prime Minister stated that China has been a time-tested friend of Pakistan and that the Government accords high priority to implementation and operationalization of CPEC projects.

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'PML-N, PPP have no agenda or program'

The minister says that merely criticism does not bring you success

SHUJAAT HAMZA



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Wednesday has said that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) have no agenda or program. In a post on social-networking website Twitter, the minister said that merely criticism does not bring you success as there should

PDM to decide strategy on Dec 6

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Jamiat-ulma-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has summoned a session of the opposition alliance Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) on December 6 (Monday). According to PDM spokesperson Hafiz Hamdullah, the Pakistan Democratic Movement will hold a summit on December 6 where the central leaders of

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CAIRO: Lt Gen Shaheen Mazhar, First Corp Commander calls on Chief of Staff of Egyptian Armed Forces during EDEX which is being held in Cairo from 29 November till 2 December. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office held a briefing for the Islamabad-based OIC Heads of Mission on the proposed Extraordinary Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (OIC-CFM) of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on the situation in Afghanistan. - DNA

Punjab: LG elections through EVMs

DNA



LAHORE: Punjab government on Wednesday decided to hold local body elections through electronic voting machines. According to sources, the government has taken a big decision that the election on electronic voting machines in Punjab will be included in the Local Bodies Act. Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar has approved the inclusion of clause on EVM machine in the Local Bodies Act, while the federal government has enacted a law and the Punjab government will also make EVM a part of the Local Bodies Act.

COAS visits Azad AK Regimental Centre

RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa visited the Azad Kashmir (AK) Regimental Centre Mansar Camp, the military's media wing said. "The COAS laid floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada and offered Fateha," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Wednesday. The statement added that Gen Qamar formally installed Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali, Commander Quetta Corps as Colonel Commandant of AK Regiment. Addressing the participants, the ISPR said: Gen Qamar praised Azad Kashmir Regiment for its glorious history, professional excellence, outstanding operational performance and war worthiness. On September 4, the army chief met AJK Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi and assured him of the army's full support and commitment to the Kashmir cause and its people. During the meeting, the situation in IIOJK including continued Indian unilateralism and situation along the Line of Control was discussed.

OIC envoys briefed on proposed summit

Foreign Secretary apprised the envoys of situation in Afghanistan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood held a briefing for the Islamabad-based OIC Heads of Mission on the proposed Extraordinary Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (OIC-CFM) of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on the situation in Afghanistan. The Foreign Secretary informed that on 29 November, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - in its capacity as the Chair of the Summit of the OIC - took the initiative to propose the convening of an Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, relating to the situation in Afghanistan. Pakistan welcomed this initiative and offered to host the CFM in Islamabad on 17 December 2021. The Foreign Secretary underscored that this Extraordinary Session was aimed at addressing the serious and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. He highlighted that according to the United Nations (UN), 60% of Afghanistan's 38 million

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan elected G77 chair

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, which was elected chair of the Group of 77 countries on Tuesday, has demanded debt restructuring and allocation of more resources for developing nations to rejuvenate the global economy. The bloc, known as G77 plus China, is a loose alliance of developing countries established on June 15, 1964. The group derives its name from the 77 original signatories, although it now has 134 members. Pakistan is a founding member and Tuesday's election was held by acclamation. Addressing the group's 45th annual meeting at the United Nation's headquarters in New York, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi urged developing nations to promote a common development agenda to return to the path of sustained and sustainable growth.

Continued on Page 06

Contempt case can be made if funds withheld

Former ECP secretary says no institution can withhold ECP's funds

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) secretary Kanwar Dilshad has said that Election Commission can launch a contempt case if any institution is authorized to withhold ECP's funds. He said that no institution has such authority to withhold ECP's funds. "The ECP is a constitutional institution and enjoys the same protocols and powers as the Supreme Court," said Dilshad, adding that it would obtain the funds from the Ministry of Finance under Article 222 of the Constitution. He expressed these views while talking on local private channel. Dilshad views

appeared as defence to what Federal Minister Fawad Chaudhary had said on Tuesday that the ECP would get funds from the government to hold the next polls only if it holds the elections via EVMs. Dilshad served as ECP federal secretary from July 2004 to December, 2009. Currently, he is associated with a think tank working on awareness about electoral laws and is associated with the United Nations. Dilshad was of the view that ECP under Article 222 of the Constitution of Pakistan (electoral laws) can reject any amendments to the Election Laws 2017 even if they are passed by a joint session of Parliament and all provincial assemblies, if they are against the provisions of the Constitution of Pakistan.

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Taliban seeks urgent unfreezing of reserves

"The overall talks remained successful and the parties agreed to continue holding such meetings," Taliban spokesperson said



CENTRELINE REPORT

DOHA: A delegation of US officials led by Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West called on a Taliban delegation led by Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, in Doha, Qatar. A statement issued by spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Abdul Qahar Balkhi, said that Afghan FM Muttaqi exchanged views about

Afghanistan economic crisis one of worst in history: UN

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: The UN has forecast that Afghanistan's gross domestic product will contract 20 per cent within a year following the Taliban's takeover of the country, representing one of the worst economic meltdowns in history. "[It's] an economic contraction that we've never seen before, ever," said Abdallah Al Dardari, the UN Development Programme's Afghanistan head and a former deputy prime minister of Syria. "I'm political, economic, health, education, security and humanitarian issues, including discussions about necessary facilities in banking and liquidity availability.

ending of sanctions and blacklists, and disconnecting humanitarian issues from political considerations. Technical groups from both sides also held separate meetings for even better progress, said Balkhi. Overall, the sessions were positive and both sides agreed to continue such meetings moving forward. "The overall talks remained successful and the parties agreed to continue holding such meetings," Balkhi added. Meanwhile, another statement issued by the US State Department spokesperson said that the two delegations discussed the international community's ongoing and urgent response to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. "The United States remains committed to ensuring that US sanctions do not limit the ability of Afghan civilians to receive humanitarian support from the US government and international community while denying assets to sanctioned entities and individuals," the statement read.

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Taking to Twitter, Balkhi said that the Afghan side assured the US officials about security and sought immediate unconditional unfreezing of Afghan reserves,

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EU launches €300bn bid to counter China

DNA

BRUSSELS: The EU has revealed details of a €300bn (£255bn; \$340bn) global investment plan, described as a "true alternative" to China's Belt and Road strategy. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the Global Gateway scheme should become a trusted brand. China has funded rail, roads and ports but has been accused of leaving some countries saddled with debt. The Commission chief said countries need "trusted partners" to design projects that were sustainable. The EU is looking at how it can leverage billions of euros, drawn from member states, financial institutions and the private sector. This will largely take the form of guarantees or loans, rather than grants.

Briefs

UAF VC for combating agri issues

FAISALABAD: University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan on Wednesday stressed the need for collaborated efforts on the part of researchers, policymakers and farming community for combating agricultural issues and increasing per acre productivity in order to ensure food security and reduce agricultural imports. He was talking to the participants of 32nd Mid-Career Management Course, National Institute of Management, Islamabad.

"Our per acre yield is low due to use of traditional methods by farming community," he said and added that nature had enriched Pakistan with natural resources but unfortunately we have not been able to use them wisely". He said that adoption of modern trends to make agriculture a profitable business was the need of the hour which would not only ensure food security but also alleviate poverty. He urged the agricultural scientists to find indigenous solutions to the agricultural problems.

"We can double our production if the recommendations of agricultural scientists are followed," he said, adding if we make flour from a mixture of wheat and corn, it will also improve the quality of nutrition". - APP

SSP holds crime review meeting

PESHAWAR: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations, Haroon Rashid here Wednesday held a crimes review meeting to discuss investigation of serious nature offences, prevention of aerial firing and arms' brandishing at public gatherings.

The meeting was held at Malik Saad Police Lines and attended by SP Can't Zunair Ahmed Cheema, SP City Atiq Shah and all SDPOs and SHO's of City and Can't divisions. The meeting reviewed investigations of crimes occurred last month. SSP directed for solution of public complaints on priority basis and maintaining contact with complainants. He said that investigation is necessary for elimination of street crimes, stressing improvement in investigation system is the need of hour. SSP directed for deployment of police jawans in plain clothes in public places for taking strict action against those brandishing arms during gatherings. He said that no compromise would be given to those criminals using police uniforms and they would be dealt with iron hands. - APP

ABAD presents charter of demands to CM Sindh

In our Charter of Demand, a single authority should be set up for the approval of NOCs for construction projects and no one should be able to challenge this authority

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Chairman Association of Builders and Developers (Abad), Mohsin Sheikhan has said that a five-point charter of demand has been presented to Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah for development and protection of construction sector in Sindh. He said this while addressing a press conference at Karachi Press Club. He was accompanied by Abad Senior Vice Chairman Muhammad Hanif Memon, Vice Chairman Altaf Kantawala and Abad Southern Region Chairman Sufyan Adhia. Mohsin Sheikhan said that we do not ask any concessions or land from Sindh government but we just want to be allowed to work according to law. Abad is against illegal constructions and Abad has always spoken out against illegal constructions. Picked up Mohsin Sheikhan said that if the construction sector in Karachi is damaged then hundreds of sub-industries will also be affected. It will be difficult for the engineers graduating from the Engineering University of our city to get employment.

In our Charter of Demand, a single authority should be set up for the approval of NOCs for construction projects and no one should be able to challenge this authority. He said that when we build buildings to comply with all the laws and pay billions of rupees in taxes, then it is known that there were irregularities and demolition orders were issued. Mohsin Sheikhan said that single authority



KARACHI: Chairman ABAD Mohsin Sheikhan addressing a press conference at Karachi Press Club here on Wednesday. Senior Vice Chairman Hanif Memon, Vice Chairman Altaf Kantawala, Chairman SR Sufyan Adhia, former Office bearers and members of ABAD were present on the occasion.

registration would develop the construction sector in Sindh which would provide employment to the people of Sindh and also boost the economy of Sindh. Our second demand is to make a master plan for Karachi within 12 months. And all stakeholders should be involved in the preparation of the master plan. The

master plan will benefit Karachi's infrastructure and will also consider master plan documentation and other issues. We have asked the Sindh Chief Minister to set up a Punjab-style commission in Sindh as well so that every case can be heard in accordance with the law and the issue can be resolved.

He said that the issues and laws that we have discussed with the Chief Minister of Sindh, if they become law and those who work legally get protection, then the builders and developers here have so much potential that Karachi which is currently 62 in Pakistan's revenue. The percentage is 120 percent he said.

PSW to facilitate local investors

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Pakistan Single Window (PSW) is a unique and innovative initiative of the government to improve the overall ranking in "Ease Of Doing Business" which will not only attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) but also facilitate local investors to setup their high-tech industrial units in Pakistan in a hassle free environment, said Mr. Imran Mahmood Sheikh Senior Vice President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI).

Addressing an awareness session of PSW organized in collaboration with Pakistan Single Window Company and the All Pakistan Bedsheets & Upholstery Manufacturers Association (APBUMA), he said that facilities of as many as 72 government departments both from federal and provincial governments have been clubbed under this window. "This arrangement will help new investors to complete all the mandatory formalities at a single stage instead of visiting different offices", he said and added that it will also catalyze the import and export business as all consignments could be cleared on Good Declaration (GD) instead of submitting "E" form. Appreciating the participation of more than 200 members of APBUMA in this awareness session, he said that it indicates that the business community in general and those belonging to the SME sector are ready to contribute their role in national exports provided the government extends them basic and fundamental facilities.

He said that this facility has been introduced in line with the futuristic needs and every businessman has to register himself with the PSW for its own benefit. He also demanded the introduction of the Export Facilitation Scheme with an objective to achieve the export targets set for the year 2025. Earlier Mr. Arif Ihsan Malik, Central Chairman APBUMA introduced his organization and said it is the largest elected trade body of the SME sector with its offices in all important cities of Pakistan. He said that the SME sector is contributing 80% share in national exports but due to meager financial resources, it has to face multiple difficulties. He said that by simplifying the system we could further enhance our exports and bridge the present trade deficit in our exports and imports.

Work on 60 foreign funded schemes in progress in KP

PESHAWAR: Work was in progress on 60 different uplift schemes of Rs.687 billion under foreign assistance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for which Rs 89 billion have been allocated in Annual Development Programme (ADP) of current fiscal year.

These schemes include Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cities Improvement Project, 300 MW Balakot Hydropower Project, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hydropower and Renewable Energy Development Program and other important development projects in various sectors.

This was said during a meeting to review progress on donors funded projects held here the other day with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Maahmood Khan in the chair, said an official handout issued here on Wednesday. The participants were briefed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cities Improvement Project has been approved by Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) whereas ECNEC has also cleared the PCI of Balakot Hydropower Project and bids have been advertised for the first package of this project.

It was further informed that under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Roads Improvement Project, seven roads in different districts had been completed whereas work on two roads was in progress. Similarly, under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism

Development Project, a master plan has been approved to establish four Tourism Zones at the different sites of the province. A feasibility study of the Kumrat Cable Car Project was also completed.

They told that 50 percent work on dualization of Swabi-Mardan Road has been completed adding that Expression of Interest (EoI) has also been finalized for the Supervisory Consultant of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Irrigated Agriculture Improvement Project. Under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hydropower and Renewable Energy Program, land acquisition for the 88 MW Kalam-Gabral Hydropower Project is underway. - APP



LAHORE: Director General PID Lahore Shafiq Abbas presenting shields to Rashid Khan, personal secretary and Shahid Anwar assistant at their farewell party. - DNA

China Packaging Machinery Digital Expo

DNA

LAHORE: The "China Plastics and Packaging Machinery (Pakistan) Digital Expo", hosted by the Ministry of Commerce of The People's Republic of China, organized by Beijing Leading International Business & Exhibition Co., Ltd. is officially opening on the "Trade Promotion Exhibition" online platform. Using the digital exhibition platform, Chinese and Middle Asian enterprises share trade online.

This digital exhibition selected 40 Chinese high-quality brand enterprises to exhibit, and more than 350 Middle Asian buyers to register online. The exhibit products such as clothing, fabrics, home textiles, clothing accessories, shoes, epidemic prevention supplies products, etc. in conjunction with the local market of Pakistan, India and other Middle Asian countries, effectively enhance the will of local enterprises to cooperate and develop with Chinese enterprises, promote "China Brand" to go global, weave the global industrial chain and value chain.

FESCO organizes staff safety seminar

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: There would be no compromise on safety because safety of the staff is top priority of FESCO said Executive Engineer (XEN) Regional Training Center (RTC) Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) while addressing a certificate distribution ceremony in connection with two days workshops on the top of "Electrical Safety Requirement".

He said that any kind of negligence in line with safety of staff would not be tolerated. He further said that company is striving hard and utilizing all available sources to provide save the working environment to the FESCO officials and line staff. He said that organization of such workshops not only provide familiarity with changing circumstances but also effective in performing duty safely. The participants of workshop was provide detailed information about grounding, earthing, power cable insulation, safety requirement, ground clearance, unsafe act and unsafe condition. Assistant Director Training Shahid Mehmood, Abdul Waheed, Aziz ullah Khan, Amir Shahzad, Abdul Jabbar, Kabral Saeed Abdal and large number of FESCO officials attended the workshop. At the end of workshop XEN, RTC Naeem Akbar Kahloon distributed the certificates among the participants.

DC listens public complaints at revenue court

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: On the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Bazzdar, under the Revenue Awami Khidmat Services the problems of public regarding revenue were listening on first and second working days of every month and in this regard the monthly revenue services was held at DC office. Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad listen the public complaints regarding revenue matters and directed the revenue officers for speedy solution of the applications. Deputy Commissioner said that the delay in the matters of public would not tolerated and responsible revenue officer and staff would accountable. He said that the Department of Revenue

was at the forefront of public service and holding Revenue Awami

Public Service would not only solve the problems of the people but also increase their confidence. Deputy Commissioner said that the problems of the people's under one roof are being addressed by listening to the problems related to the revenue department. He said that speedy solution of issues and grievances related to the revenue department including issuance of domicile, farad, registry, income certificate and other revenue matters are being solved on spot. He said that officers of the revenue department including Assistant commissioners and revenue officers and ADLRs were also directed to ensure attendance in the court.



FAISALABAD: DC Ali Shahzad listening the problems of public during the revenue awami khidmat services katchri. - DNA

صحافی محفوظ

صحافت آزاد

حکومت پاکستان

پروٹیکشن آف جرنلسٹس اینڈ میڈیا پروفیشنلز ایکٹ 2021

محفوظ زندگی کا حق

پیشہ ورانہ ذمہ داریوں کی آزادانہ اور غیر جانبدارانہ انجام دہی اور آزادی کا اظہار رائے کا حق

کسی بھی فرد یا ادارے کی جانب سے جبر و تشدد، خوف و ہراس، دھمکیاں، دھمکی اور جبری تشدد کے خلاف تحفظ

نئی زندگی، گھراور ذاتی خط و کتابت (بشمول الیکٹرانک گت و شنید) کی پرائیویسی کا حق

اپنی خبر کے ذرائع کو مخفی رکھنے کا حق

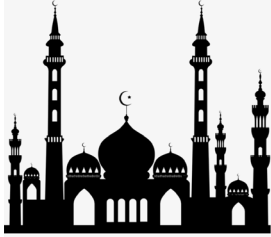
انسداد و اشتہار گردی اور قومی سلامتی کے قوانین کی میڈیا پروفیشنلز کی پیشہ ورانہ سرگرمیوں کو روکنے کے خلاف نا حق استعمال کی روک تھام

میڈیا پروفیشنلز کی شکایات کی آزادانہ تفتیش اور فوری ازالہ کیلئے کمیشن کا قیام

میڈیا پروفیشنلز کے خلاف دھمکیاں، جارحانہ اور تشدد کاروائیوں کو فوری اور موثر تفتیش اور قانونی کارروائی سے مستثنیٰ حاصل نہیں ہوگا

PID(0) 3632/21

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	05:26 am
Zohr.....	11:57 am
Asr.....	03:22 pm
Maghrib.....	04:59 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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Wapda Rawalpindi 111-309-309	

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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11th Mountain Festival opens with painting competition

Awareness raising and education about the causes and consequences of the climate change is very important for the society. Such events support it

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: A live painting competition on the theme "mountains in the changing climate" marked the opening of 11th edition of Pakistan Mountain Festival (PMF) on Wednesday. The festival is an annual flagship event of Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) to commemorate the UN's International Mountains Day (IMD). About 50 girl-students and a male enthusiastically participated in the live painting competition hosted at Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU). The participating institutions included Fatima Jinnah Women University, National College of the Arts (NCA), Rawalpindi Women University, Westminster Academy, Foundation University Islamabad campus, IMGCG F-7/2, and National Textile Institute. The participants painted real-life scenes from the northern parts of Pakistan depicting the impact of climate change. Melting glaciers, avalanches, landslides, lake outbursts, deforestation and degradation, and loss of biological diversity were the content of oil-on-canvas paintings. The paintings not only reflected the aesthetic sense of the participants but also the level of their understanding of the climatic challenges.



dent participated in the competition, mentioned that the young generation is very concerned about the loss that older generation have done to the environment. Their irrational consumption behaviour has caused the climate changing that is impacting the life and livelihood of the people right from the mountains to the downstream. FJWU Head of Fine Arts Raheela Mushtaq said engaging art students in such a crea-

tive pursuits is imperative to highlight the impact of climate change as they reflect the mountain miseries. Awareness raising and education about the causes and consequences of the climate change is very important for the society. Such events support it. Devcom-Pakistan Creative Director Riffat Ara Baig said that they are engaged with students of different age groups for the last two decades to sensitize them about the environment and

conservation of natural resources. The educational institutions shall consistently engage their students and their parents to raise awareness about rational use of resources around us. Speaking to this scribe, Executive Director Devcom-Pakistan and founder and director of Pakistan Mountain Festival Munir Ahmed said the paintings have visual impact more than the speeches and writings. That is why the live painting competition has become a tradition of the Pakistan Mountain Festival since its inception in 2005. International Mountain Day (December 11) is dedicated to raising awareness about opportunities and challenges facing mountain regions. Art pieces can play a pivotal role in this regard. He said we need to build alliances that will bring positive change to mountain peoples and places around the world. Devcom-Pakistan has been organizing different events to mark IMD engaging mountain communities and stakeholders in the mountain regions and downstream with the collaboration of different partners from government, national and international non-government and UN organizations, and academia for about two decades. Pakistan Mountain Festival has become Pakistan's global image for mountain conservation, management and development of natural resources in the highlands.

AIOU appoints tutors for programs

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has finalized the process of tutors appointment for hundreds and thousands of the students enrolled in the programs offered in the first phase of autumn 2021 semester including matriculation and intermediate programs while the process of tutors appointment for BA programs is currently in progress. Detailed information about the appointed tutors will be uploaded on the university website soon to facilitate the students. Due to digital transformation of key academic and administrative operations of the university, course books for matriculation, intermediate and BA programs have been uploaded on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk). Printed books are also being dispatched to the students enrolled in these programs. - DNA



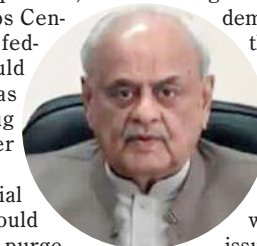
ISLAMABAD: Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar, SAPM chairs the session at high-level national learning event, "Pakistan's COVID Response: Lessons for Improving Governance" co-hosted by Oxford Policy Management, UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, and Sub-National Governance. - DNA

'Eradication of narcotics collective responsibility'

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Narcotics Control Syed Ijaz Ahmed Shah on Wednesday said it was the shared responsibility of all stakeholders to make efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the country. Addressing the passing out parade of Assistant Directors, Inspectors, Sub-inspectors, Assistant Sub-Inspectors, and Constables at Armored Corps Centre Nowshera, he said, the federal government alone could not deal with the problem as there were six million drug addicts in the country as per the 2012 Report. "The federal and provincial departments and masses would have to make joint efforts to purge the menace of drugs from the society", Shah emphasized. The minister also congratulated the passing out officers and officials for completing their training course. He urged the youth to work to fulfill the expectations of their parents. Ijaz also appreciated officials for imparting quality training to new officers and officials during the last six months. He said that the department being chosen

by the youth would brighten and secure their future with the prestige of serving the nation from the front.

The minister said that it was the target of the government to save its young generation from the scourge of drugs. He also stressed for cutting the supply lines besides taking measures for the drug reduction demand, along with special focus on the awareness-raising and rehabilitation of drug addicts in the society. "We are not the drug-producing state, but a victim of narcotics", he regretted.



He highlighted the measures taken by the government to deal with COVID-19 and environmental issues. He said, "The entire world has appreciated the performance of the Pakistani government, especially the NCOC for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic in an effective way". He has urged people to get fully vaccinated at the earliest to stay safe from the new variant of Coronavirus. The minister said that the Green Pakistan project launched by Prime Minister Imran Khan had also received appreciation from the international community. - DNA

Mewaki Forest being established in Sector G-9/4

ISLAMABAD: In order to improve the environment of the Federal Capital, on the special instructions of the management of the Capital Development Authority, the Environment wing is establishing Mewaki forests on lands retrieved from encroachers. In this regard, Enforcement Directorate had recently handed over more than ten kanals of government land in Sector G-9/4 of Islamabad to the Department of Environment after removing illegal possession. Now the Environment Department has created Mewaki Forest on the subject land on the special directions of CDA administration. Establishment of mewaki forest will not help keep the city beautiful and green but will also help avert encroachment on the state land. - APP

Pakistan to commemorate World AIDS Day: Faisal

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Dr Faisal Sultan Wednesday said Pakistan has joined hands with rest of the world to commemorate World AIDS Day in the country. In a video message issue here, he said the theme for this year is End Inequalities, End AIDS, End Pandemics where the ministry was collaborating with provinces to work with communities to halt the spread of new infections. Dr Faisal said that rapidly increasing AIDS cases in Asia was a challenge for Pakistan as 84 percent increase was witnessed in the region from 2010 to 2021. He said the government at both the national and provincial levels, despite competing priorities and fiscal limitations, and with the support of partners like UNAIDS, UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, local civil society organizations and academia strived to provide HIV prevention and treatment services through high impact community-based HIV prevention programmes. "We further pledged to advocate for increased government spending to cover all aspects of the National HIV response especially that relating to prevention and treatment with mobilizing domestic resources and the integration of HIV services into the health system through our untiring support for Universal Health Coverage," he added. "I am proud to be a part of this year's commemoration and to reaffirm the Ministry's continued commitment to empowering the people of Pakistan to end AIDS and other health inequalities," he said. - DNA

Pakistan keen to enhance trade ties with Kazakhstan

The visiting dignitary commended Pakistan's efforts for peace, adding that Pakistan was an important country in the region

STAFF REPORT



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani in a meeting with the Ambassador of Kazakhstan, Yerzhan Kistafin. - DNA

ISLAMABAD: In his meeting with the Ambassador of Kazakhstan, Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani has underlined Pakistan desire to further augment cooperation with Kazakhstan in all fields. Better economic ties between Pakistan and Kazakhstan will help further boost bilateral cooperation, said Sadiq Sanjrani while exchanging views with Kazakhstan envoy Yerzhan Kistafin, who called on Sanjrani here at Parliament House on Wednesday. During the meeting, discussion took place on a range of courses including Pakistan-Kazakhstan bilateral cooperation, ways to precipitate the exchange of delegations at parliamentary and trade levels and the overall development of the region. "Enhanced economic linkages and parliamentary diplomacy would help further cement the bilateral cooperation between the two fraternal countries. Maintaining better ties with Kazakhstan remains an important part of Pakistan's foreign policy", Sanjrani said. Kazakhstan-Pakistan Friendship Group in the Senate could also play a crucial role in expanding parliamentary relations between the two countries, adding that both sides have maintained excellent relations at international fora. While exchanging views with the Kazakh envoy Sanjrani called for tapping into the avenues that could help in bolstering economic ties and elevate the trade volume between the two countries. The Ambassadors appreciated Pakistan's efforts for peace in the region and noted that Pakistan was an important country in the region.

Jazz concludes its Data Science Training

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Jazz, Pakistan's number one 4G operator and the largest internet and broadband services provider, has successfully concluded its Data Science Central (DSC) training program. After six months of training, four trainees have been offered permanent positions within the company's Data Science team and the Analytics & Insights team. The training program on-boarded twelve candidates in total, putting them through a rigorous mix of theoretical and practical training modules essential in the technological field, for the first three months. The trainees attended a set of courses conducted by foreign trainers from world-reputed universities, equipping them for practical projects in the second stage of the program. The next three months focused on critical thinking, problem resolution, and practical business skills using Jazz's live data. A massive influx of data is being generated at Jazz at all times, and it has led to rising demand for data scientists. Currently, the country faces a dearth of experts; and the Jazz DSC program has attempted to bridge this gap by training a new generation of data scientists with industry experts and using practical business cases. "As more organizations are learning to put their data to work, the demand for data scientists is becoming much higher than the supply. In line with Jazz's ambitions of becoming a pioneering digital company, we designed and executed our Data Science academy, to train and select the top talent to satisfy the growing dependency on analytics," added Kazim Mujtaba, Chief Data and Strategy Officer, Jazz.

Govt will cooperate with ECP on EVM: Shibli

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal government led by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Wednesday announced full cooperation with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) regarding implementation of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and i-voting. Federal Minister for Science and Technology Senator Shibli Faraz presided over an Inter-Ministerial Committee meeting on internet and electronic voting machine (EVM). The meeting discussed matters pertaining to EVM and i-voting in the upcoming elections. Talking to media after the meeting, Senator Shibli Faraz said that the government would extend full cooperation to the ECP regarding implementation of EVM and i-voting. He said that the government will also cooperate with the ECP on financial, storage, testing laboratories and other needs. The minister went on to say that Prime Minister Imran Khan wants all future elections to be held through EVM and i-voting.

Open courts being held: Minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Minister for Revenue Malik Muhammad Anwar Wednesday held a Khuli Kachehri (open court) at Municipal Committee office Hasan Abdal. Addressing the gathering, he said the open courts were being held on the 1st of every month across the province to timely resolve public issues. The minister asserted that the provincial government was working hard to resolve public problems because public service was the essence of democracy. The administrative officials have been directed to pull out all the stops to resolve issues pertaining to the general public, the minister said. He said public welfare was the core agenda of the PTI so the people should take full benefit of this platform to resolve their problems relating to govt departments.

Briefs

Govt working to reduce inflation: Usman Dar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Usman Dar on Tuesday said the government was making all out efforts to reduce inflation. He said inflation had become a global challenge due to COVID-19 because it had fluctuated big economic powers of the world. He said edible items and other things were still available at cheap prices in the country as compared to other countries, adding the government was working to provide relief to common people at maximum level. The SAPM said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) was habitual to use illegal tactics during the elections and they were using audio and videos for winning the bye election in the constituency of NA 133 Lahore.

Usman Dar said the people of the country were well aware about the corruption of previous governments of PML-N and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) as both the political parties had looted the national wealth mercilessly during their tenures. The opposition was not ready to support the government over the matter of electronic voting machine as they knew that modern technology would stop all the doors of rigging during the elections so that was why they were fearing from Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

He said the incumbent government was utilising all out sincere efforts to make the country as developed and prosperous and the people had full confidence in the honest and courageous leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan. He said the prime minister was only political figure in the country who had full capabilities to uplift the country.

AIOU exams from December 16

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is commencing final examinations of programs offered in spring 2021 semester including MA, MSc, M Com, MBA, MLIS, M Ed and PGDs from December 16, 2021. Date sheet and roll number slips have been uploaded on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk) and dispatched to the students as well.

Roll number slips, downloaded from the university website, would be acceptable in the examination halls. Examination centres have been established in the nearby vicinities of the students and at the union council level to facilitate them upon the special directives of the Vice Chancellor, AIOU. Moreover, examinations schedule for MSc (face to face) programs is being finalized and it would be uploaded on the university website soon.

It is pertinent to mention here that these examinations will not be taken online. — APP

Pakistan's exports rises by 33%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's export increased by 33 percent in the month of November, announced Adviser to Prime Minister of Pakistan for Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood on Wednesday. In his tweet, Abdul Razak Dawood said that Pakistan's exports during the month of November increased by 33% to a historic monthly high of \$2.903 billion as compared to \$2.174 billion during the same period last year, while the target for the month was \$2.6 billion. Dawood further said that during the first five months of this current fiscal year, Pakistan's exports increased by 27 percent to USD 12.365 billion as compared to USD 9.747 billion during the same period last year.

ICCI shows concern over record high inflation

Food inflation has jumped by 11.9 percent in urban areas, average inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Index has exceeded 18 percent and Wholesale Price Index has surged to 27 percent in November

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) said that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has shot up to 11.5 percent in November recording its highest level in the last 20 months, which should be a cause of concern for the policymakers as rising inflation would drastically reduce the purchasing power of people and put a negative impact on business and economic activities.

He said that the food inflation has jumped by 11.9 percent in urban areas, average inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Index has exceeded 18 percent and Whole-

sale Price Index has surged to 27 percent in November. These figures showed that things were getting tougher for the common man and the business sector.

He called upon the government to take urgent measures to curb the rising inflation to save the people and the businesses from deep troubles.

Shakeel Munir said that the unprecedented surge in oil prices, hefty hike in policy interest rate, frequent increase in electricity & gas tariffs, constantly falling value of rupee and high taxes were the major factors that have combined to push up the inflation.

He said that the rising inflation has increased freight charges making international trade costlier that would hurt our exports. He



emphasized that the government should evolve a comprehensive price control mechanism in consultation with all stakeholders to save the economy from further plunge.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh, Senior Vice President ICCI said that the shrinking purchasing power of the consumers due to inflation was taking a big hit on the business activities and businesses were facing losses that would increase unemployment. He urged that SBP should rationalize interest rates as tight monetary policy has failed to control the rising prices of food items. He said that rising inflation would become a serious threat to the economy.

He said that NEPRA has recommended Rs.4.74 per unit hike in electricity tariff as fuel price adjustment for October to generate additional revenue of Rs.60 billion in December. He said that such hard measures would give rise to more inflation for the common

man and stall the growth of business activities and urged that the government should avoid taking such tough decisions in these difficult times.

Faheem Khan, Vice President ICCI said that despite decline in international oil prices, the government has kept oil prices unchanged for the next fortnight and increased petroleum levy & sales tax, which was unfortunate.

He urged that the government should consider reducing taxes on POL products and revise high energy tariffs to provide some relief to people and the business sector. He further said that the government should focus on promoting ease of doing business to improve the economic outlook of the country.



ISLAMABAD: Military Factory and Shipyard Operations A. Ş Pakistan country director Sinan Topuz has paid a courtesy visit to Dilşad Şenol, Representative of KKTC Islamabad. Turkish state owned Military Factory and Shipyard Management Inc. Pakistan Country Manager Mr. Sinan Topuz paid a courtesy call to TRNC Islamabad Representative Dilşad Şenol. — DNA

Missing persons cases are state's failure: IHC CJ

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court on Wednesday adjourned the hearing of journalist and blogger Mudassar Naur's recovery case after hearing from Human Rights Minister Shireen Mazari and Interior Secretary Yousaf Naseem Khokhar. During the proceedings, IHC CJ Athar Minallah remarked that someone's disappearance is the state's failure and a serious crime against humanity. "Mazari Sahiba, the court has summoned you here to convey that no sagacity can be witnessed on the part of the state when someone is missing. When a citizen goes missing then why should not the compensation be paid to that person's family from the pocket of the chief executive whose under very nose he goes missing?" The court asked Minister Mazari to put forward her opinion in this regard and adjourned the hearing until December 13.

The court also ordered the federal government to satisfy Mudassar Naur's family by the next hearing. The CJ remarked that the whole family faces trauma when one member of it goes missing. Shireen Mazari responded "I totally agree with the court that all citizens have equal rights. The state's reaction should be identical in every missing person's case." The CJ maintained that the rule of law is quite essential, otherwise such cases cannot be stopped.

When Shireen Mazari pointed out that the former government did not do anything in this regard, Justice Athar Minallah interrupted her saying: "Half of our lives have seen non-democratic governments and this all have been the result of it." — DNA

'Taliban must prove their governance'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, China, and Russia have been trying to convince the Taliban to prove their governance credentials to the rest of the world, said Ambassador Tariq Fatemi. The former adviser to the Prime Minister on foreign affairs was speaking at an event on Russia-Afghanistan relations organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) here on Wednesday. Ambassador Fatemi asserted that paying heed to international concerns about the Taliban's governance could assist them in solving the economic problems of the country. He agreed with the Pakistan government's approach towards the Taliban government in Afghanistan, wherein it was using its limited leverage with the Taliban to convince them that its advice was to their advantage and trying to encourage them to address their domestic governance challenges. Similarly, he added, the Chinese, Russians, and Iranians had been making the same point. He urged the Taliban to establish an inclusive setup to be accepted and acknowledged by the international community as the legitimate government of Afghanistan. — DNA



Bulgarian envoy, Chairman PARC discuss agri co-op

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A meeting between Irena Gancheva, Bulgarian Ambassador in Islamabad; and Dr. Ghulam Ali, Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) was held on 1st December 2021 at PARC Headquarters, Islamabad. During the meeting, Irena Gancheva, Bulgarian Ambassador congratulated Chairman PARC, Dr Ghulam Muhammad Ali and Pak-Bulgaria avenues of collaboration in agriculture sector were discussed.

The Chairman PARC thanked the honorable Ambassador for paying visit to PARC in order to initiate Pak-Bulgaria cooperation in agriculture sector, which would be mutually beneficial for enhancing food security and alleviating poverty.



Dr. Falak Naz, Member Coordination and Monitoring Division and other high officials of PARC were also present in the meeting.

It was agreed to sign the MOU covering important areas of agriculture, such as Germplasm sharing, Farm

mechanization, Livestock breed improvement and high value horticulture crops framework for bilateral cooperation between the sides.

The Ambassador thanked Chairman PARC, for extending support for fruitful cooperation.

Puppet show for orphan children organized at PNCA

Mina ki Kahani is a story of a village child girl who despite of her urge to receive education and go to school like her brother was denied of her right to education. Somehow at lateral stage her parent realize importance of education for girls and allow her go to school

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: National Puppet Theatre Pakistan National Council of the Arts has started its theme-based puppet shows including its message-oriented performances on various socio-economic issues and their solutions. In the series of this endeavor, PNCA in collaboration with Secours Islamique France has held two puppet shows on 30th November and 1st December, 2021 at PNCA's Auditorium.

The objectives of these puppet shows were to create awareness among community regarding rights and responsibilities of children and parents, help and support orphan children and their families by providing equal opportunities for quality education of girls and boys, provision of nutrition, clean water and clean environment for their growth to protect children from drug addiction and drugs, to create awareness among children for their right of protection from laborious work which directly affect their physical and mental growth and their protection from sexual and physical abuse.

NPT had conveyed these messages through stories of "Meena Ki Kahani" and "Roshan Mustaqbil". Mina ki Kahani is a story of a village child girl who despite of her urge to receive education and go to school like her brother was denied of her right to education. Somehow at lateral stage her parent realize importance of education for girls and allow her go to school. "Roshan Mustaqbil" is a story of three orphan children two brothers and sister who are street hawkers and house maid. They earn their livelihood through labor work.

Their employers take responsibility for their education livelihood with a message to encourage well off families to support orphans and less privileged communities in our society to get educa-

tion and other basic necessities of life. Promotion of Puppetry Art in Pakistan and use of Puppetry as a strong medium of communication to create awareness on socio-economic, social issues and their solution, ethics and moral values, diseases, their treatment and prevention are the key objectives of Pakistan National Council of the Arts on which PNCA will work through its National Puppet Theatre in collaboration with public and private sector organizations.

All public & private sector organizations especially working in the fields of education, health, social welfare, child & women's rights protection and social issues are encouraged to approach PNCA for collaborative activities.

As all of us working individually cannot bring change and improvement in society at national level but our collective efforts will turn us into an educated and enlightened nation with a common sense of responsibility among us to preserve water, provide

clean water, health facilities, quality education, safe environment for growth to everyone. PNCA through arranging message-oriented art and cultural activities can provide platforms to all for creating a common sense of responsibility among the public. At the end of the show, the host of the show, the puppet character of Kiran, requested all to join hands with PNCA in creating awareness on social issues and their solutions PNCA in collaboration with Secours Islamique France has arranged puppet shows to bring awareness on rights and responsibilities of children and parents.

SIF has been working in Pakistan since 2010 to provide support to orphan children and their families through provision and creation of opportunities for education, clean water, health facilities and nutrition. After the shows, visits to galleries were arranged for orphan children and their mothers to encourage them to explore their inborn skills for drawing, painting and to create some artwork. Children and families and other guests appreciated solo exhibition "Beauty Alt Atrocity" of Ayisha Arshad Shah Nawaz, PNCA's permanent collection of artworks and paintings of renowned artists and legends of Visual Arts Sadquain, Masood Kohari, Mian Ejazul Hassan, Jamil Naqsh, Fouzia Minnullah, Haji Sharif, Zahoor ul Ikhlaq, A.R Chughtai, Mian Sallahudin, Guljee, Amin Guljee, etc.

The shows were successful and received great applause. Mothers urged PNCA to arrange such activities in future as well for provision of message-oriented entertainment for their children and themselves. They lauded efforts of PNCA & SIF for their support. In Future, PNCA will plan a series of these shows in collaboration with other organizations for the less privileged and general public to bring smiles on their faces, to educate them and to promote puppetry art in Pakistan.



NAB prosecutor resigns

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) prosecutor Rizwan Ahmed has resigned from his post for 'personal reasons' who was pursuing Avenfield and fake accounts' cases against the Sharif family. NAB prosecutor Rizwan Ahmed has tendered his resignation from his post for 'personal reasons'. He was pursuing important corruption cases in the Islamabad High Court (IHC).

Rizwan Ahmed had also been appointed as a member of the anti-corruption watchdog's team that was constituted on the appeals of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) vice-president Maryam Nawaz and Captain Retired Safdar.

The prosecutor was representing the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in the proceedings of appeals filed by the PML-N central leaders in Avenfield reference, whereas, he was also appearing in the hearings of the fake accounts cases at IHC.

It is pertinent to mention here that an accountability court in Islamabad had given 10-year imprisonment to PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif, a seven-year jail term to his daughter Maryam Nawaz and a one-year jail term to his son-in-law Captain Retired Safdar in its verdict in Avenfield reference on July 6, 2018. Moreover, the accountability court had also imposed a fine worth £8 million on Nawaz Sharif and £2 million on Maryam Nawaz in the case.

Fatyana's PAC membership at stake

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Public Accounts Committee (PAC) membership of MNA Riaz Fatyana is at stake as Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan has decided to review the list of government members in the committee after allegations of minister's fight.

MNA Fatyana levelled false allegations about a brawl between Adviser to Prime Minister on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam and Minister for State Zartaj Gul during a UN moot in Glasgow. Sources said that PM Imran Khan was furious over the allegations of the MNA Fatyana and has summoned details of the members of the treasury benches in the PAC of the NA. It has been learnt that the premier will himself review the list of the members and changes are expected in the members from the government side. It is to be noted that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's body of internal accountability had also issued a show-cause notice to MNA Riaz Fatyana over the allegations of witnessing a fight between two ministers.

Police Malpractice

HERE is a perception that the crime statistics in Pakistan are not an accurate representation of the crimes committed, since so many criminal acts go unreported. However, it has been found that even the crimes that are reported often go officially unreported, leading to a false misrepresentation of the reality of crime in major cities. The recent reports on the malpractice around statistics by the Lahore Police is a glaring example of this practice. According to inside officials, complaints to the police had gone unreported as the police allegedly manipulated them to demonstrate a lower crime rate.

According to the record now, citizens from all divisions of Lahore had filed 16,533 complaints between January to the end of October of this year in all six divisions under the jurisdiction of the Lahore police. All the complaints pertained to crimes that have been on an alarming rise, including acts of vehicle snatching, theft, robbery and banditry. Now, with the developments on initiating further accountability of the police, including the transfer of the entire police high command of the provincial capital in a massive reshuffle, those 16000 applications, which had been turned down in ten months, are being registered at this time.

There has already been a lot of literature and criticism of the police with regards to the difficulty of encouraging reporting of crimes. A vast number of crimes go unreported, due to the perception of the police station being an unfriendly place for victims, or the FIR being a useless procedure. News reports like these, which show that even when the victims go through the trouble of visiting a police station, their complaints go unregistered, can be extremely damaging to what is already a poor state of affairs.

This is made more unfortunate by the fact that this is not a new problem in response to the pressure put on the police due to rising crime—the issue of ignoring complaints has a colloquial term attached to it in the police circles itself, known as “burking”, or fudging of statistics to present a safer picture of the city.

These actions will only increase the crime rates of the major cities, which are already at alarming levels. More than that, it is the fundamental right of citizens enshrined in the constitution of Pakistan to report to the police for the recovery of stolen items. The government needs to take this malpractice extremely seriously.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 175

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Reserve Injection

ON Monday, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) signed an agreement with the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) to receive \$3 billion, which will be placed in the SBP's account with an aim to improve foreign exchange reserves. This agreement was reached last month during the visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to KSA.

The expected inflows from Saudi Arabia will boost our forex reserves to \$25.77 billion in addition to taking off some pressure on the rupee. In fact, reports indicated that stocks went up significantly following the announcement of the agreement with investors making long shot rate-cut bets with the threat of the new Covid variant looming large. It is evident that this deal is beneficial for us in the immediate term, however there are concerns over the interest rate of the loan which has been kept confidential. Banking sources are of the belief that the rate is higher than the global market which will prove to be an issue for the servicing of this loan. Moreover, it is not an ideal precedent to set where a loan is being agreed to without the details being made public.

While this deal signifies the strong ties we have with Saudi Arabia and could further help augment the economic relationship, it is important to remember that such cooperation is extremely vulnerable to the vicissitudes of bilateral relations. This was witnessed in 2018 when relations between the two countries deteriorated and Islamabad was asked to return \$2 billion worth of deposits.

At the same time, given our current economic struggles, we did not have a lot of other options to consider and are in dire need of assistance given the strict guidelines of the IMF plan we must adhere to. So, for now this is a welcome development as it will also help us cope with the adverse shocks of the pandemic. However, going forward, we cannot continue to bank on such external support as it is not a sustainable policy and there is a need to build internal capacity to absorb economic shocks and be more independent.

Iran and Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Dr. M Akram Zaheer



China had reservations about Iran's membership, which had always taken a hard line against the United States, and China did not want to give the impression to the international community that the SCO was an organization aimed at competing with the United States

THE Shanghai Cooperation Organization is an organization led by China and Russia with the participation of some regional countries. Iran has been participating in the SCO since 2005 as an observer. It also has applied for full membership several times. It took more than 15 years for the endorsement of its permanent membership. Iran's frustration with the United States prompted him to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. In

addition, Afghanistan's neighboring countries, including Iran, pay close attention to the country's situation.

In fact, they are trying to prevent large numbers of jihadists from entering Afghanistan, which might pose a threat and harm to regional countries particularly. The fight against terrorism is also one of the key issues of the SCO. By joining the SCO or strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation within the SCO framework, Iran will maximize its regional worth and security.

Iran has long been isolated by some Western countries, led by the United States. Washington continues to impose sanctions on Iran. Although US President Joe Biden's administration has promised to restore the Iran nuclear deal, he has done nothing about lifting sanctions yet. The new Iranian president, Ibrahim Raisi, and his government have no illusions about improving Iran-US relations, and Raisi has repeatedly agreed to work with China and Russia. Due to the Iranian nuclear issue, the West has long considered Iran a doubtful and insecure to the international community. After the joining with the SCO; Iran will avoid such diplomatic and political isolation to the point of sightlessness.

This means that Iran's recognition as an important country of the region by some major powers will bring significant political benefits for it. In terms of security, the SCO's counter-terrorism efforts are much significant. Now Iran is a member of the SCO, it will cooperate in intelligence sharing and coordination with other member states. It will also serve as a strong deterrent to the possible spread of extremism in the future of Afghanistan. Moscow has stated that Tehran plays important role in the region and works closely with SCO. According to the Tehran Times, during a telephone conversation between Chinese State Councilor and

Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Iranian Foreign Minister Hussein Amir Abdullahian, Abdullahian thanked Wang for supporting Iran's permanent membership in the SCO. On the other hand, China has been little bit cautious of Iran's entry into the SCO because US-Iran tension.

China had reservations about Iran's membership, which had always taken a hard line against the United States, and China did not want to give the impression to the international community that the SCO was an organization aimed at competing with the United States. But, Beijing also hopes that Tehran would achieve peaceful coexistence with the Washington and never provide any chance to the United States for incitements. China and Iran have formally signed a 25-year long-term cooperation agreement in March, reflecting China's desire to strengthen cooperation in various fields. Now Iran has become a member of the SCO, then strengthening ties with Iran is not a bad option for China.

This situation means that China and Russia have built up consensus on the regional issues. But it may take some time to complete all the procedures. Against the backdrop of the confrontation between China and the United States and between Russia and the United States, it would be a tendency for China, Russia and Iran to strengthen their cooperation and alliance.

These three countries are much important to the region. Their solidarity, especially cooperation through the SCO platform, will serve as a counterbalance or deterrent for the United States. The newly appointed foreign minister of Iran Hossein Amir-Abdollahian welcomed the endorsement and states that "important impact of on the process of Iran's comprehensive cooperation in the lines with its neighborhood and Asia centered policy".

— akramzaheer86@yahoo.com

Britain is exploiting refugees to fuel right-wing nationalism

Nafees Mahmud

Home Secretary Priti Patel wants to push migrant boats back to France using jet skis and wave machines. The government's own lawyers have told her this contravenes international maritime law. She insists it will go ahead

WHAT would you do if you'd been exposed for corruption and making false promises, were declining in popularity, and looked utterly incompetent, arrogant, and weak? If you were the right-wing, nationalist, British Conservative government you'd fabricate a 'crisis' out of people doing what you'd think capitalists like them ordinarily approve of: seeking a better life for oneself. The problem is, of course, that the people doing this happen to be from poorer countries and have darker complexions. Therefore, according to the government, they are not human beings escaping poverty and persecution; rather, they are scroungers looking for a free ride and to burden our public services — "not genuine asylum seekers" as the home secretary has falsely claimed.

The government's strategy is simple: when all else fails, appeal to a 'patriotic duty' to 'protect borders'. Sensationalist and disproportionate media coverage from their right-wing, nationalist ac-

complices in newspapers like The Sun, Express and Daily Mail ensure the minds of the masses are sufficiently hypnotised to believe migration is the number one threat facing the country.

The government wants to protect our borders from what, exactly? Yes, this year there has been a four-fold increase in the number of people entering the UK via the English Channel, bringing the total up to 25,000. But let's put that number in perspective. This is a country of 67 million, where there are now one million job vacancies, a labour shortage and more people leaving than coming to the country. We need more people. Yet in Britain if you aren't rich or white (preferably both) you aren't considered a person. So it's easy to regain support no matter how corrupt and incompetent you are by demonising and rejecting refugees of colour.

People crossing the English Channel is not a 'crisis'. What is, though, is the refusal to help them; also, the fabrication of a narrative that there is no space for them and they must be sent back to France, a 'safe' country. France is not a safe country for refugees. At the hands of the police they face harassment, abuse, confiscation of meagre possessions, destruction of tents and obstruction of humanitarian assistance — followed by denial from the state that this is even happening. While the UK refuses to open up legal, safe routes for refugees, we see a growing number of them dying while crossing the water. Yet there's still no let up in the government's callous narrative. For Conservatives, the more hostile to refugees they can be, the more they will gain support by right-wing nationalists who are willing to ignore all their other failures. This is why over the last few months we've seen unhelpful and inhumane policies proposed — as well as actions taken — for dealing with the situation.

Home Secretary Priti Patel wants to push migrant boats back to France using jet skis and wave machines. The government's own lawyers have told her this contravenes international maritime law. She insists it will go ahead. Britain has just sent troops to Poland's border

with Belarus out of fear some migrants will attempt to enter the UK. Some of these are Yazidi refugees whose lives were shattered by Daesh and have since been living in Iraqi refugee tents recently affected by devastating fires.

The UK recognised a desperate need to help them when they were attacked by Daesh in Iraq in 2014 — an attack regarded as a genocide. It began a military operation in northern Iraq (which still continues). While the UK was willing to spend money on air strikes to help Yazidis in 2014, now, strangely, it is spending money to obstruct them. The troops it has sent to Poland are now said to be supplying "engineering support", i.e. building fences and walls to deny some of the world's most vulnerable a chance of a better life. Then, creeping higher up the fascist scale, there has been talk of imitating the Australian policy of detaining asylum seekers in offshore processing centres — Albania and the Falklands have been suggested — which the UN and International Criminal Court say violate human rights and amount to torture. One MP said international law should be overridden because the UK is a "sovereign country".

Britain is also shooting itself in the foot by not accepting refugees. Those coming here can be given jobs, training and support, which would help rebalance an economy hit hard by Covid-19. There are many examples of recent refugees creating successful businesses here, including Dama Cheese, a brand of haloumi set up by Syrian refugee RazanAlsous. For the government, the more asylum seekers that cross the channel to the UK in the coming months, the better. This will allow for the continuation of Britain's diplomatic tussle with France, which is nothing more than theatrics for an audience of anti-EU supporters. It will also be sensationalised to dominate media and political narratives. This serves to not only distract from recent corruption scandals but also provide cover for any upcoming malfeasance they won't want people to know about.

— Nafees Mahmud is a freelance journalist who has written for the Guardian and Middle East Eye.

Why MBZ's visit could mark the start of a new era

Kadir Ustun

The UAE's pulling back from the Yemen war - whose humanitarian cost has become a key issue in Washington - is another testament to his flexible outlook when he feels the tide might be turning. MBZ must realise that there is no need to clash with Turkey on regional issues for ideological reasons, since Turkey is also open to pragmatic cooperation. US disengagement from the Middle East, alongside Russia's increased influence in countries such as Syria, is another factor in the regional realignments

THE recent visit by Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed (MBZ) to Turkey highlights the ongoing recalibration of Ankara's foreign policy in the Middle East.

Turkey and the UAE have been locked in a struggle for regional influence for years, supporting opposite sides in conflict zones such as Libya and Syria. Relations soured during the Arab Spring, when Turkey supported the uprisings against authoritarian rulers, while the UAE and Saudi Arabia led the counter-revolution. Ankara has also held suspicions about the UAE's involvement in the 2016 failed coup attempt in Turkey, and after Saudi Arabia and the UAE cut relations with Qatar in 2017, Turkey became a key lifeline for Doha.

Now, after a decade of clashing visions and regional competition, MBZ's visit to the Turkish capital could herald a new era - one defined by cooperation rather than confrontation. But what has led to this apparent change of heart in Ankara?

A key reason is the agreement early this year between Qatar and neighbouring Arab states, which officially ended the four-year Gulf crisis. During the blockade, Turkey sent necessary supplies and security forces to Qatar, bolstering its ability to withstand the isolation imposed by Saudi Arabia, the UAE and their allies. By ending the blockade, the deal in January removed one of the major points of conflict for Ankara and Abu Dhabi.

Both Turkey and the UAE might also have realised that neither benefits from regional confrontation. After Turkey intervened in Libya to support the UN-recognised government in Tripoli, while the UAE supported renegade general KhalifaHaftar, a military stalemate

emerged. A political process is now underway, and the upcoming elections in December, however flawed, could set the country on a path towards stability.

While there is always a risk of the civil war reigniting, Turkey is committed to the government's survival, and the UAE has little to gain by playing the role of spoiler. Turkish intervention also keeps Russian influence at bay, which is Washington's preference - further incentive for the UAE to come to an understanding with Turkey, rather than trying to undermine its efforts in Libya.

Another driver of the rapprochement concerns the lopsided economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Turkey has struggled to contain the pandemic's financial effects, and the plummeting lira has made life increasingly difficult for many families. In contrast, the UAE's economy remains strong amid high oil prices. There has been much emphasis in recent days on Emirati investments in Turkey, with Abu Dhabi reportedly ready to invest billions - a much-needed cash injection that would further strengthen ties. All of this will have regional implications. Speaking to the Turkish state broadcaster TRT, the Emirati industry minister, Sultan Ahmed al-Jaber, noted: "This visit comes at a time when the UAE and Turkey are working together on a vision of a more peaceful, stable and prosperous future for the region."

MBZ is a pragmatic player, despite his deep distaste for the Muslim Brotherhood and Iran. He must feel that the Muslim Brotherhood is much less of a "threat" these days, and with the Biden administration in the US seeking a nuclear agreement with Iran, it is wise for him to reach out to other regional players, such as Turkey.

The UAE's pulling back from the Yemen war - whose humanitarian cost has become a key issue in Washington - is another testament to his flexible outlook when he feels the tide might be turning. MBZ must realise that there is no need to clash with Turkey on regional issues for ideological reasons, since Turkey is also open to pragmatic cooperation. US disengagement from the Middle East, alongside Russia's increased influence in countries such as Syria, is another factor in the regional realignments. While the US maintains interests in the region, Washington is shying away from providing a vision according to which regional players can position themselves, bolstering the need for intra-regional dialogues and adjustments.

For Turkey and the UAE, the question remains as to how far this emerging realignment can be solidified. Serious differences persist between Turkey on one side and Egypt, Israel and Greece on the other over the Eastern Mediterranean. The UAE has strong ties with Egypt and has already normalised relations with Israel. What would be the UAE's position if tensions were to increase in the Eastern Mediterranean, or if civil war returns to Libya? Can Turkey and the UAE compartmentalise such issues and continue deepening their economic ties? They certainly have strong reasons to do so.

— Kadir Ustun is executive director at the SETA Foundation, Washington, DC.

Briefs

Smuggling a bane...

FROM PAGE 01
load is recorded for tracking purposes. The meeting was briefed that significant success has been achieved to control illegal petrol smuggling and operations against hoarders. The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, Muhammad Hammad Azhar, Makhdum Khuro Bakhtiar, Syed Fakhar Imam, Asad Umar, Advisor Finance Shaukat Fayaz Tarin, Advisor Commerce Abdul Razaq Dawood, SAPM Dr. Shehbaz Gill, Governor State Bank, Chairman FBR, senior civil and military officers.

PM directs to expedite work on...

FROM PAGE 01
The Prime Minister highlighted that continuity of policies is essential for long-term projects in order to achieve maximum benefits for the country. Earlier, SAPM on CPEC Affairs Mr. Khalid Mansoor briefed the meeting about updated status of CPEC projects. The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Muhammad Hammad Azhar, Ali Haider Zaidi, Asad Umar, Advisor Finance Shaukat Fayaz Tarin, Advisor Commerce Abdul Razaq Dawood and senior officers.

Taliban seek urgent...

FROM PAGE 01
It further stated that the US treasury department has issued general licenses to support the continued flow of humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan and other activities that support basic human needs. During the meeting, the US officials urged the Taliban to protect the rights of all Afghans, uphold and enforce its policy of general amnesty, and take additional steps to form an inclusive and representative government. They also expressed concerns regarding the presence of Al Qaeda and Daesh in Afghanistan. At this, the Taliban reiterated their pledge to not allow Afghan soil to be used by anyone to threaten any country. The Taliban expressed openness to engaging with the international community on full access to education and asked for support in the education sector.

Afghanistan economic crisis one...

FROM PAGE 01
withstand the recent shocks of the Covid-19 pandemic, droughts and the militant Islamist group's takeover, according to the authors of the report. The UNDP forecast that per-capita income in Afghanistan, already the poorest country in Asia, would drop to \$350 next year from \$500 in 2020, having already fallen from a peak of \$650 a decade ago. The economy had relied on foreign aid, which the UNDP said accounted for as much as 80 per cent of budget expenditure. Afghanistan's foreign currency reserves, which amount to almost half of the country's \$20bn annual GDP, were also frozen soon after the Islamists took over this year, prompting a cash and liquidity crisis.

'PML-N, PPP have...

FROM PAGE 01
also be an alternative agenda to attract people. He said instead of having desire to remove the government, the two parties need to present their proposals about reforms. Earlier, Fawad Ch told that Federal Cabinet while discussing the most important decision on the electronic voting machine opted that after amendment in the [election] laws, it is mandatory for the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold all next by-polls through these machines. "If elections are not conducted through the EVMs, there is another opinion that the government will not be able to fund ECP," he said. The minister said the ECP should ensure use of the EVMs in all the next elections as the Parliament had given mandate in this regard.

12th Chairman JCSC Open Golf Championship starts



Opening Ceremony of the Championship was held today at KGC and President Services Sports Control Board

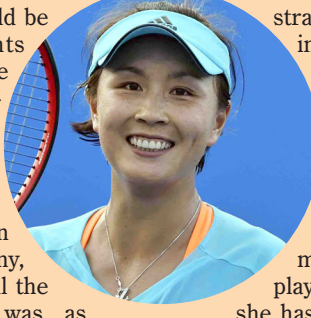
DNA
KARACHI: 12th Chairman JCSC Open Golf Championship is being held from 1-4 December at Karachi Golf Club (KGC) under the arrangements of Services Sports Control Board, Joint Services Headquarters in collaboration with Pakistan Navy. The Services Sports Control Board is committed for promotion of sports in the country at all levels. Around 400 professionals, amateur, veterans, juniors and ladies are competing in this event. Organization of this mega event will not only promote the game all across Pakistan but will also provide a platform to all professional and amateur players to outshine in the sport. The premier Prize money for the Championship is Rupees 10 Million which is the highest ever prize money. Other prizes include Cars, Heavy bikes and LEDs. Leading sponsors of this mega event are Engro Corporation Pakistan & AAA Associates. In addition; Bank of Punjab, Askari Commercial Bank, Avari Hotels and The Fruit Nations have also contributed to make this event a success. Opening Ceremony of the Championship was held today at KGC and President Services Sports Control Board, Rear Admiral Abdul Basit Butt was the Chief Guest. Besides the sponsors and official dignitaries; the ceremony was also attended by renowned professional and amateur players. In the end, the Chief Guest Rear Admiral Abdul Basit Butt thanked all the organizers especially Pakistan Navy, KGC and sponsors for providing all out support in organizing this event at Karachi and formally declared the Championship open.

PDM to decide strategy...

FROM PAGE 01
The opposition alliance will decide on a long march, Lahore march and tendering resignations from assemblies. A session will be held in Islamabad with Maulana Fazlur Rehman in the chair, he said. In a previous meeting, the opposition alliance Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) had announced to launch 'Mehnga' march in provincial capitals before going ahead with a long march towards Islamabad. The decision was taken at the summit session of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), convened on an urgent basis by the alliance's president, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, to discuss the strategy of the alliance for a joint sitting of the Parliament. The opposition alliance had decided to launch the 'Mehnga' march or Inflation march in all provinces. 'Mehnga' marches would be held in Quetta, Peshawar, Lahore and Karachi.

Stosur watching how Peng's 'story' unfolds

SYDNEY: Former US Open champion Sam Stosur said she hoped China's Peng Shuai was safe and well and that the tour and players were waiting to see how the "terrible story" unfolds. The whereabouts of Peng, a former doubles world number one, became a matter of international concern for nearly three weeks after she posted a message on social media alleging that China's Vice-Premier Gaoli had sexually assaulted her. Current tennis players, including Naomi Osaka, Serena Williams and Billie Jean King, joined to confirm she was safe. World number one Novak Djokovic said it would be "horrific" unless the situation resolved. "It's a terrible story, unfolding Shuai," Australian player, on Tour. All the who she was as she has won Grand Slams and been number one in the world in doubles. "From the players' point of view and the Tour, we just want her to be safe and hopefully everything is OK, but things are unfolding and we just have to wait and see how that plays out." Last month, Peng had a video call with International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach but the Women's Tennis Association said it did not address or alleviate concerns about her health and safety. Senior IOC member Dick Pound denied the organisation vouched for Peng's safety to avoid angering 2022 Olympics host Beijing. - DNA



Shaheen, Hasan achieve career-high Test rankings

SPORT DESK
DUBAI: Fast bowler Shaheen Afridi has made it to the top five of the MRF Tyres ICC Men's Test Player Rankings for the first time in his career after a fine show in the first Test against Bangladesh which Pakistan won by eight wickets. The 21-year-old left-arm, who grabbed seven wickets including a haul of five for 32 in the second innings of the Chittagong Test, has moved up three places to fifth position after overtaking James Anderson, Kagiso Rabada and Neil Wagner. Shaheen's new-ball partner Hasan Ali too is at a career-best position after finishing with a similar seven-wicket match haul that included a five-for in the first innings. Hasan has advanced five places to 11th place. His previous best in Tests was 14th, reached in May this year. Pakistan's opening batters were not the ones to be left behind. Abid Ali may have missed out on a century in four innings but his scores of 133 and 91 helped him shoot up 27 slots to a career-best 20th position while Abdullah Shafique enters the rankings at 83rd with scores of 52 and 73. Other Rankings: For Bangladesh, Mushfiqur Rahim is up four places to 19th with scores of 91 and 16 while Liton Das has moved up 26 places to a career-best 31st position after accruing 114 and 59. Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam has progressed two places to 23rd after an eight-wicket match haul that included seven scalps in the first innings. The thrilling draw in Kanpur between



India and New Zealand had quite a few performances from either side that reflect in the latest weekly update that also includes the first Test between Sri Lanka and the West Indies at Galle, which the host side won by 187 runs. Debutant Shreyas Iyer's Player of the Match effort of 105 and 65 helped him enter the rankings in 74th position while opener Shubman Gill (up six places to 66th) and Wriddhiman Saha (up nine places to 99th) also made notable progress after notching half-centuries. Ravindra Jadeja is up two places to 19th among bowlers with five wickets in the match and is also up one place to second among all-rounders. Ravichandran Ashwin is the third-ranked all-rounder and 79th among batters. For New Zealand, Tom Latham's knocks of 95 and 52 place him back in the top 10 as he goes up from 14th to ninth. Fast bowler Kyle Jamieson is ninth among bowlers, his three wickets in each innings resulting in a gain

OIC envoys briefed on proposed...

FROM PAGE 01
people faced "crisis levels of hunger" and that the situation was getting worse every day. The risk of acute malnutrition, especially amongst women and children, was increasing in addition to internal displacement. The Foreign Secretary further stressed that potential economic collapse could not be ruled out. "This would not only be a humanitarian tragedy but also exacerbate the security situation, spur instability, and lead to a mass exodus of refugees. This would have grave consequences for international peace and stability," he added. The Foreign Secretary emphasized that as the collective voice of the Islamic Ummah, the OIC can and must play its part in helping address the urgent humanitarian and economic needs of our Afghan brethren. In addition, he underlined, OIC's leadership could help galvanize other international actors to come forward and extend a helping hand to the Afghan people currently in dire need of international support and solidarity. Please use the sharing tools found via the share button at the top or side of articles. Copying articles to share with others is a breach of FT.com T&Cs and Copyright Policy. Email licensing@ft.com to buy additional rights. Subscribers may share up to 10 or 20 articles per month using the gift article service. More information can be found at https://www.ft.com/tour.

Man Utd co-chairman Glazer buys UAE T20 franchise

DUBAI: Manchester United co-chairman Avram Glazer has acquired a franchise in the United Arab Emirates' inaugural T20 Cricket League, the Emirates Cricket Board said on Wednesday. The Glazer family, who also own National Football League (NFL) team Tampa Bay Buccaneers, have made their first foray into cricket by acquiring one of the six franchises in the league through their company Lancer Capital. A member of the Glazer family was also among the bidders when two new Indian Premier League (IPL) franchises were unveiled in October but was unsuccessful with a bid. read more "I am very excited to be a part of UAE T20 at its formation. UAE T20 promises to be a world class event that will be transformative to the growth of cricket in the Emirates," Glazer said in a statement. The newly established tournament with six franchise teams is set to be staged across the UAE in February and March next year. - DNA

Pakistan elected G77 chair

FROM PAGE 01
As the new chair, "Pakistan hopes to collaborate with members of the group to promote a common development agenda for developing countries that includes debt restructuring, redistribution of the 650 billion new special drawing rights (SDR) to developing countries, and larger concessional financing," Qureshi said.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani exchanging views with Totuiaev Ulanbek Asankulovich, ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan. - DNA

Germany beat Britain to reach Davis Cup semi-finals

Germany only needed one match point with Puetz firing an unstoppable return down the line to spark celebrations among the players and support staff even if there were no fans inside the Olympiahalle because of Austria's COVID-19 lockdown

INNSBRUCK: Germany duo Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz sent their country into the Davis Cup semi-finals as they beat British pair Joe Salisbury and Neal Skupski in a tense doubles decider to earn a 2-1 victory on Tuesday. Their 7-6(10) 7-6(5) win in Innsbruck sealed a remarkable comeback for the Germans, who avenged their defeat at the same stage of the competition by Britain in 2019. Dan Evans had given Britain the lead by thrashing Peter Gojowczyk 6-2 6-1 in the first singles. But Jen-Lennard Struff then kept Germany alive in the last-eight clash with an inspired performance to defeat world number 12 Cameron Norrie. Struff won 7-6(6) 3-6 6-2 to send the tie into the deciding doubles rubber which proved a nerve-jangling affair. The German pair saved four set points on their way to winning the first set in a remarkable tiebreak in which they claimed it on their fourth set point. They were then 5-0 down in the second tiebreak of the match but reeled off seven consecutive points to seal the win and set up a semi-final against

either Russia or Sweden in Madrid. Germany only needed one match point with Puetz firing an unstoppable return down the line to spark celebrations among the players and support staff even if there were no fans inside the Olympiahalle because of Austria's COVID-19 lockdown. "It's great, it's an unbelievable feeling," Germany captain Michael Kohlmann said. "We had super team chemistry." Krawietz, twice a French Open doubles champion, said: "I am super happy that we're going to Madrid. "The box was unbelievably loud - it pushed us a lot and super happy to make it to the semi-finals." While Krawietz and Puetz took the plaudits, it was Struff's performance that proved crucial. The powerful world number 51 came out firing against the wall-like Norrie and used his huge groundstrokes and booming serve to move into a 4-1 ahead. But Norrie, who made his debut at the ATP Finals after a remarkable year,

ground his way back into the match and won five of the next six games to serve for the first set. Struff broke back though and then saved two set points in the tiebreak from 4-6 down before edging a tense opener with a backhand winner on a set point of his own. Norrie quickly re-grouped to level the match and set up a deciding set. It looked as though Struff was tiring as he was forced to battle to hold serve early in the decider but he broke Norrie's serve for a 4-2 lead and then held his own with an ace. He then made it four games in a row to break Norrie's serve again and seal victory. While the second singles was a ferocious scrap, the first had been all too easy for Evans who won in 55 minutes. The Evans win proved the high point of the day for 2015 champions Britain who will wonder how they let the tie slip. "They played well at the end of the second-set tiebreak, but we didn't," Salisbury, twice a doubles Grand Slam champion, told reporters. "I mean, we're 5-0 up, we should win the tiebreak, simple as that. We lost seven points in a row. - APP



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Briefs

Ilhan Omar reveals death threat

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: United States Representative Ilhan Omar has played a racist, death-threat laden voicemail left for her after fellow legislator Lauren Boebert refused to publicly apologise for a video in which she called Omar a member of the "jihad squad" and likened her to a suicide bomber.

In a news conference on Tuesday, Omar called on Republican leadership, who have so far declined to punish Boebert over the comments, to stand up to "anti-Muslim hate" and to "hold those who perpetuate it accountable".

"We see you, you Muslim sand n**** b****" began the voicemail.

"Don't worry, there are plenty who would love the opportunity to take you off the face of this f***** earth," the caller continued. "You will not live much longer b****, I can almost guarantee you that."

Omar said she received the call on Monday, hours after Boebert, in a phone call, refused to apologise publicly for her comments, which were captured on a video that emerged last week.

In the footage, Boebert described encountering Omar at the US Capitol and being relieved she "doesn't have a backpack", in an apparent reference to Omar possibly carrying a bomb.

Boebert last week apologised "to anyone in the Muslim community I offended", but did not directly refer to Omar.

Lithuania mulls state of emergency

VILNIUS: Lithuania's government said on Wednesday it would ask parliament to declare a state of emergency on its border with Poland from Dec. 10 as part of efforts to prevent the smuggling of migrants.

The state of emergency would include border checks focusing on "suspicious vehicles", Interior Minister Agne Bilotaite said.

Poland currently provides the only checks-free route from Lithuania and Latvia to Germany, the destination for many migrants who have arrived in the region via Belarus in recent months.

Lithuanian prosecutors are pursuing 60 cases of illegal smuggling of people and new smuggler "networks" are being established, the Interior Ministry said.

"We see attempts by our own organised crime groups to work with Belarusian criminals to organise the smuggling," Bilotaite told reporters ahead of a government meeting. "We need to stop this secondary migration from gaining momentum."

The government is also to ask parliament on Friday to extend an existing state of emergency on Lithuania's border with Belarus and at camps hosting migrants who arrived from there. — APP

Omicron variant reaches KSA

AGENCIES

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia has recorded the Gulf's first confirmed case of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus in a citizen returning from North Africa, a health ministry official said Wednesday. The strain, which was first announced by South Africa but has since been discovered to have been present earlier in Europe, has prompted governments around the globe to reimpose travel restrictions, despite warnings from the World Health Organization this could do more harm than good.

"One case of the Omicron variant has been detected in the kingdom — it was a citizen coming from a North African country," the ministry official told the state SPA news agency.

"He has been put in isolation, as have his contacts, and the necessary health measures have been taken."

Saudi Arabia last week halted flights from seven southern African countries, mirroring similar moves by other government, but travel links with North Africa have remained unaffected.



BAKU: Federal Minister for Defense Production of Pakistan Zobaida Jalal meets minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan Vilayat Eyvazov in Baku. — DNA

EU expresses strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty

"We remain committed to Bosnia Herzegovina as a single country. We call everyone to do the reforms necessary to keep this unity and to reform the electoral law"

AGENCIES

BRUSSELS: EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell reaffirmed on Wednesday the European Union's strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. "I want to stress for the European Union, the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine is above anything," Borrell told reporters on the way to NATO foreign ministers meeting in Riga, Latvia's capital.

"We will be standing firmly and decisively with a grain in front of any attempt to undermine its territorial integrity and sovereignty," he added. He also warned that the EU and NATO must prepare for all kinds of scenarios, including Russia's potential use of aggression against the country, "to make sure we have a strong response."

He explained that he would discuss the concerning situation in the Western Balkans with top NATO diplomats.

"We remain committed to Bosnia Herzegovina as a single country. We call everyone to do the reforms necessary to keep this unity and to reform the electoral law," Borrell pointed out, referring to the country's political crisis stemming from the separatist



intentions of Bosnian Serbian leader Milorad Dodik.

He also called on Kosovo and Serbia to resume talks since there was "no other way to stabilize the situation." The tension between the neighboring countries has risen over a dispute of border crossings and license plates since late September.

Top NATO diplomats gathered on Monday to discuss the most pressing security issues for the alliance, including Russia's military buildup in and around Ukraine, the Belarus border crisis, and the situation in the Western Balkans.

After the first day of their meeting, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg warned that "aggression against Ukraine would come at a high price and have serious political and economic consequences for Russia."

Russia would not de-escalate: Kremlin

MOSCOW: Russia has said it could not de-escalate tensions with the West over Ukraine due to a large concentration of Ukrainian forces near its border.

"Russia cannot take any measures to de-escalate," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Wednesday.

"We have seen the messages that more than 120,000 Ukrainian troops have been deployed to the conflict zone. This raises our fears that sentiments in Ukraine in favour of a military solution to the Donbass problem could prevail," Peskov said.

"This is very dangerous adventurism. All this causes us deep concern because this is happening in the immediate vicinity of our borders."

Meanwhile, President Vladimir Putin has said that Moscow would seek Western guarantees that would preclude any further NATO expansion and deployment of its weapons near Russia's borders.

Speaking at a Kremlin ceremony where he

received credentials from foreign ambassadors, Putin emphasised Russia will seek "strong, reliable and long-term guarantees of its security."

Statements from Russia came amid Ukrainian and Western worries about an alleged plan by Moscow to invade Ukraine. Tensions have been soaring in recent weeks about a Russian troop buildup near Ukraine, which worried Ukrainian and Western officials, who saw it as a possible sign of Moscow's intention to invade its ex-Soviet neighbour.

NATO foreign ministers warned Russia on Tuesday that any attempt to further destabilise Ukraine would be a costly mistake.

The Kremlin has insisted it has no such intention and has accused Ukraine and its Western backers of making the claims to cover up their own allegedly aggressive designs.

The Kremlin also said its posture is purely defensive. — Agencies



LAHORE: President Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mian Nauman presenting a souvenir to the Ambassador of Belgium. — DNA

Germany's ICU capacity at critical level amid Covid surge

BERLIN: The coronavirus situation in Germany is at its most dire since the pandemic began last year, the country's DIVI association for emergency medicine warned on Wednesday.

If the figures continue to increase at this rate, Germany will see more than 6,000 coronavirus patients in intensive care units (ICUs) in the next couple of weeks before the Christmas holiday, the DIVI said in a statement.

Intensive care doctors urged authorities to swiftly introduce tougher measures to reduce physical and social contact and consider a temporary lockdown to contain the

unprecedented rise in new infections. Many hospitals in Germany's worst-hit coronavirus hotspots have run out of beds in ICUs and postponed all non-critical operations as the country is battling a brutal fourth wave of the pandemic.

There were 4,636 seriously ill coronavirus patients in ICUs across the country on Tuesday, with 2,383 of them on ventilators, according to the DIVI association.

Despite new restrictions announced by local authorities last month, infections remain high, especially in the country's eastern and southern regions, including Saxony, Thuringia, and Bavaria. — Agencies

Baku bids farewell to Garaheybat martyrs

DNA

BAKU: Servicemen, who were killed in a military helicopter crash in Khizi region on November 30, were buried in the second Alley of Martyrs in Baku. Earlier, a farewell ceremony for the servicemen was held at the Sarhadchi Olympic Sports Center in Baku.

A helicopter of the Azerbaijani State Border Service departed from the Sangachal airfield to participate in exercise and crashed while landing at the Garaheybat training center, as a result of which 14 were killed and two wounded.

The status of martyr will be assigned to the officers killed in the helicopter crash.

Earlier, the Prosecutor-General's Office reported that all possible versions of the crash are thoroughly checked.

An inspection of the scene was carried out with the participation of management of the Prosecutor General's Office and the State Border Service, as well as forensic, technical, fire and medical experts.

At the same time, the deciphering of the black box with the involvement of the specialists from the Defence Ministry is currently underway. A criminal case has been initiated into the crash.



Turkey won't submit its economic future to IMF

Erdogan also promised additional measures to help low-income citizens "whose purchasing power has decreased."

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkey will never leave its political and economic future to the "prescriptions" of global economic institutions like the IMF, the country's president vowed on Wednesday.

"Turkey will never again submit its political and economic future to the prescriptions of global economic tutelage institutions, such as the IMF and similar institutions," Recep Tayyip Erdogan told his Justice and Development (AK) Party's parliamentary group. Ruling out an economic policy based on high interest and low

exchange rates, which he called a system of exploitation that would never return to Turkey, Erdogan said: "Our aim is to build an economic structure that will produce more, earn more, and transfer what it gains to areas that will benefit the whole nation and increase welfare and hope."

Recent jumps in inflation and losses in the value of the Turkish currency, the lira, have led opposition parties to attack the government's economic policy, including interest rate cuts. Erdogan has said the rate cuts were part of his "new economic model" and a "war of economic liberation" for Turkey.

"Interest rates are the reason,

inflation is the result," Erdogan has argued repeatedly, pledging



that his policies will lead to high growth and broad-based prosperity. The Turkish president urged calm among the public, asking them "not to stray from common sense" when buying foreign currency, setting prices, and shopping.

Erdogan also promised additional measures to help low-income citizens "whose purchasing power has decreased."

On intervention by Turkey's Central Bank earlier on Wednesday, Erdogan underlined the bank's authority to take such action as it is governed by its own law.

"It has such a right when such a thing is necessary. The Central

Bank makes such interventions and has the right to do so," he said. Turkey's Central Bank on Wednesday said it has intervened in the market via selling transactions due to "unhealthy" price formations in exchange rates, according to a statement by the bank.

The announcement came amid fluctuating foreign exchange rates.

Following the move, the Turkish lira gained 6.27% against the US dollar, reaching 12.65 after a historic low of 14.05

The Central Bank made its last direct foreign exchange intervention in January 2014 with a sale of \$3.15 billion.

Dozens injured in Sudan protests

WEB DESK

KHARTOUM: Dozens of protesters were injured in protests against the military in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, according to medics on Wednesday.

The independent Centers Doctors' Committee said in a statement that police used tear gas canisters on Tuesday to disperse protesters against a recent political deal between Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok and the military.

There was no comment from the Sudanese authorities on the claim.

Meanwhile, the Forces of Freedom and Change (FCC) coalition, which had shared power with the military before last month's military takeover, vowed to continue protests to demand the handover of power to civilians.

On Oct. 25, Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the head of the ruling military council, dismissed Hamdok's transitional government, amid rival protests and accusations between the military and politicians.

Ethiopian army recaptures several towns

ADDIS ABABA: Ethiopia has claimed it has recaptured several towns after Tigrayan rebels took control of them last week as part of their advance towards the capital.

Government spokesman Legesse Tulu said on Wednesday that Ethiopian forces took back towns nearby capital Addis Ababa, including Shewa Robit which is around 220 kilometres away.

"In Shewa front, the Mezezo, Molale, Shewa Robit, Kasa and its surroundings have been freed from the terrorist TPLF," Legesse said in comments broadcast on state media.

Legesse was referring to the Tigray People's Liberation Front group which has been locked in a war with Abiy's government since November 2020.

He also said the government would "in a short period of time" retake Dessie and Lalibela, a UNESCO World Heritage site that fell to the rebels in August.

Meanwhile, fighting has reportedly spread to Debre Sina, a town located less than 200 kilometres by road from Addis Ababa.

The conflict took a sharp turn around a month ago, when the TPLF claimed to have captured the strategic towns of Dessie and Kombolcha, located on a key highway to the capital. Abiy last week announced he would head to the battlefield as fighting reportedly rages on at least three fronts in the country. — APP

UAE announces free Expo 2020 entry

DUBAI: Expo 2020 Dubai has announced free entry for all residents and visitors to mark the UAE National Day, which falls on December 2. The organisers have been rolling out a slew of special passes and offers since the event kicked off this year.

"People can use their existing tickets or turn up on the day to gain free entry, provided they follow the COVID-19 measures," Khaleej Times reported.

It said that the visitors aged 18 and above are required to present proof of any vaccination or a negative PCR test taken within the previous 72 hours.

A four-day slate of world-class events and immersive Emirati experiences is set to mark the Golden Jubilee of the UAE.

Dubai Expo 2020 is the largest and most diverse exhibition in the region with participation from 192 countries, multilateral organisations and businesses. The expo commenced on October 1 and will last till March 31, 2022.

Per the official website of the Dubai Expo, every participating country has been allowed to set up its own pavilion at the expo for the first time in history.

The Pakistani pavilion became an instant hit under the theme of "Pakistan's Hidden Treasures". — APP

Briefs

First flight departs for KSA after lifting of travel ban

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After the lifting of the travel ban on Pakistan, the first flight had departed for Saudi Arabia from the Islamabad International airport on Wednesday. The passengers were seen-off by the Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Maliki. According to the details, after the lifting of travel restrictions, direct flights to Saudi Arabia have been resumed from Pakistan. In this regard, the first flight left from Islamabad for Saudi Arabia. Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Maliki bade farewell to the passengers of the first flight of Saudi Airlines. On the occasion, the Saudi ambassador met the passengers and presented them flowers, calling the move a strengthening of ties between the two countries. It may be recalled that the travel ban imposed by the KSA on six countries including Pakistan has been lifted from today, after which travelers from these countries can now go directly to Saudi Arabia.

Azerbaijan, Pakistan mull military cooperation

BAKU: Azerbaijan's Minister of Defense, Colonel General Zakir Hasanov has met with a delegation led by Federal Minister of Defense Production of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, co-chair of the Azerbaijan-Pakistan Joint Commission Zobaidda Jalal. The sides expressed satisfaction with the growing development of Azerbaijani-Pakistani relations and the level of strategic partnership. They discussed the main areas of military cooperation between the two countries. The Minister of Defense informed the delegation in detail about the work done in the liberated territories after the victory gained by the Azerbaijan Army in the Patriotic War under the command of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Ilham Aliyev. Hailing the development of Azerbaijani-Pakistani military cooperation, Colonel General Zakir Hasanov thanked the leadership and people of Pakistan for supporting Azerbaijan's fair position at all levels and within the international organizations, as well as for the moral support provided to the country.

Govt plans to reverse Rs350 bn tax exemptions

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government has knitted a plan to withdraw all tax exemptions in line with the directions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Sources said Wednesday that in accordance with the plan Schedule 6 of the Amended Finance Bill will be withdrawn which will automatically end tax exemptions worth Rs350 billion. The petroleum development target for the current year will also be lowered from Rs600 billion to Rs350 billion. There was a strong possibility that the tax exemptions on mobile phones, stationery and packed food items may be withdrawn whereas reversal of sales tax exemption on zero-rated sector was also expected. Businessmen Group Chairman Zubair Motiwala while reacting to the plan said the withdrawal of Rs350 billion exemption is actually the tax. National Businessmen Group Chairman Mian Zahin Hussain was of the view that the withdrawal of tax exemptions would have a negative impact on the economy.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi signing the Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Bill, 2021 into law, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. – DNA

Alvi signs Journalists, Media Professionals Bill 2021

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has signed into law the historic Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Bill 2021 to protect the rights of journalists community. A ceremony to this effect was held at Aiwan-e-Sadr in Islamabad Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, President Dr. Arif Alvi expressed his pleasure over the consensus developed on this important piece of legislation. He said there is uniformity of views regarding the rights of journalists and with this act, the responsibility of both the government and the media owners has increased. Arif Alvi said given the threats faced by the media professionals, this act provides for their right to life and protection against ill treatment. The President said other salient features of the act include right to privacy and source non-disclosure and establishment of an independent media commission. President Arif Alvi said whilst the society has a responsibility to demonstrate tolerance towards the journalists who are out to perform their duties, it is also for the journalists to act in a responsible manner and present the stories in the right context.

Rasheed says elections through EVMs

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed on Wednesday said that the government has completed legislation to hold upcoming general elections through Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). Addressing a ceremony in Rawalpindi, Sheikh Rasheed said the use of EVMs in general elections will ensure free, fair and transparent elections with credible and accurate results. The minister said all Pakistani citizens living abroad will have the right to vote in next general elections and hence will play a vital role in decision making. He said the federal cabinet has approved the provision of online visas to people associated with Tableeghi groups. Rasheed said the government is working to control inflation. He said Pakistan is enjoying cordial and exemplary relations with China and Saudi Arabia for a long. The interior minister further said sixty colleges and three universities have been established in the Rawalpindi district while the government is working to establish an IT university in this constituency.

US: 3 killed in Michigan school shooting

WEB DESK

MICHIGAN: A student shot dead three people at a high school in the US state of Michigan on Tuesday, authorities said. The victims were a 16-year-old boy, a 17-year-old girl and a 14-year-old girl. Eight other people, including one teacher, were wounded, police said. Two of the eight wounded were undergoing surgery as of 5pm local time (2200 GMT) on Tuesday, while the six other wounded were in stable condition. Later on Tuesday, Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard said a teacher who received a graze wound to the shoulder was discharged from the hospital. Seven students ranging from age 14 to 17 remained hospitalized, including a 14-year-old girl who was on a ventilator after surgery. The shooting occurred at Oxford High School in Oxford Township, a town located 48 kilometers (30 miles) north of Detroit and with around 22,000 inhabitants.

EU urges countries to consider mandatory jabs

Von der Leyen said on Wednesday that a common approach on vaccinations at the EU level is needed – although only individual member states can impose vaccine mandates

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has said it is time to "think about mandatory vaccination" amid the fast-spreading Omicron coronavirus variant. Von der Leyen said on Wednesday that a common approach on vaccinations at the EU level is needed – although only individual member states can impose vaccine mandates. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia has confirmed its first case of the new Omicron coronavirus variant as countries tighten restrictions on international travel in an attempt to slow its spread. Scientists have been scrambling to learn more about the effects of the Omicron variant, first detected in South Africa last week.

Omicron variant in 23 countries: WHO chief

GENEVA: The new Omicron coronavirus variant has been confirmed in 23 countries and their number is expected to rise, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Wednesday. Speaking at a press briefing here, Tedros said the emergence of the Omicron variant has understandably captured global attention. "At least 23 countries from five of six WHO regions have now reported cases of Omicron and we expect that number to grow. WHO takes this development extremely seriously," Tedros during a press conference. "WHO takes this development extremely seriously, and so should every country. But it should not surprise us. This is what viruses do. And it's what this virus will continue to do, as we long as we allow it to continue spreading," he added. Tedros said that WHO is learning more all the time about Omicron, but there's still more to learn about its effect on transmission, the severity of disease, and the effectiveness of tests, therapeutics and vaccines. Earlier, the head of the UN health agency has criticized "blunt" and "blanket" measures taken by countries in the past few days to stop the spread of the Omicron variant. – Agencies

It remains unclear where or when the variant first emerged. But nations have rushed to impose travel restrictions, especially on visitors coming from Southern Africa, despite the World Health Organization's call for "rational" measures in response to the new strain. Here are the latest updates: The World Health Organization warned a "toxic mix" of low testing rates and vaccination coverage was creating fertile breeding ground for new coronavirus variants. The WHO said measures to stop the globally-dominant Delta variant would also hinder Omicron, first discovered in November in southern Africa and which has since rattled countries around the world. WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus called on countries to optimise their public health and social measures to control the spread of COVID-19.



BAKU: Minister of Defence of the Republic of Azerbaijan Zakir Hasanov met with Federal Minister for Defense Production of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Zobaidda Jalal in Baku. – DNA

Pakistan condemns killings of two Kashmiris in Pulwama

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday strongly condemned the continued spree of extra-judicial killings in staged encounters and fake cordon-and-search-operations in occupied Jammu and Kashmir by Indian forces who, in the latest such incident, killed two Kashmiris in Pulwama. According to a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the two Kashmiris were killed in a so-called cordon-and-search-operation today. The ministry said that at least 18 innocent Kashmiris have been killed with impunity by Indian occupation forces in the past month. The statement notes that while the fundamental freedoms of Kashmiris remain suspended, Indian occupation forces have "further intensified their repression" in Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir in the past weeks. Furthermore, the ministry said that extra-judicial killings, arbitrary arrests, incarceration of hundreds of common Kashmiris and Hurriyat leaders under the draconian laws and harassment of Kashmiris at the military check-points or during the night raids continue with impunity. The statement said that hateful terms such as "hybrid terrorists" and "white collar terrorists" are used to further demonise them. "The deteriorating security and human rights situation in the occupied territory is a matter of grave concern for the international community," stated the ministry. The statement further said that the visit by Indian ministers, amidst all this, to the occupied territory is "another Indian ploy to divert attention from India's state-sponsored terrorism and to project a false sense of normalcy" in IOJK. – Agencies

COMSATS Arts Gallery holds Azerbaijan exhibition

Ambassador Khazar Faradov expressed his pleasure and said that the exhibition was extremely important to bring awareness on the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war. He expressed his gratitude to the people of Pakistan for constant support during the conflict as a brotherly nation

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: A photography exhibition "Azerbaijan- History and Victory" was inaugurated at COMSATS' Art Gallery, COMSATS University Islamabad on Friday. The exhibition was organized in collaboration with the Embassy of Azerbaijan and Pakistan Azerbaijan Alumni Association. Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan, KhazarFarhadov, inaugurated this exhibition which showcased 17 photographs covering the '2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War' between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Speaking at the occasion, the Chief Guest of the event Ambassador KhazarFarhadov expressed his pleasure and said that the exhibition was extremely important to bring awareness on the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war. He expressed his gratitude to the people of Pakistan for constant support during the conflict as a brotherly nation. He acknowledged that

Pakistan was the first country to recognize Azerbaijan and has stood beside Azerbaijan ever since its inception. Prof. Shams-ul-Qamar, Incharge Academics, COMSATS University Islamabad, expressed his gratification to the Ambassador of Azerbaijan for choosing COMSATS University Islamabad for this exhibition. He said such events promote bilateral diplomatic relations and understanding between



the people at the grassroot level ultimately bringing countries closer. He also conveyed to the Ambassador the message of the COMSATS University Rector, Prof. Dr. Muhammad T. Afzal to further academic and cultural cooperation between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. Dr. Afzal said that the exchanges and cooperation between the two brotherly nations in times of peace should exceed those in times of war. Speaking at the occasion, Farrah Mahmood, Incharge COMSATS Art Gallery recalled her visit to Baku and admired the Arts and Crafts of Azerbaijan; especially the rugs, wood craft and pottery. She admired the hospitality of the people of Azerbaijan and the beauty of its landscape. A documentary on war between Armenia and Azerbaijan was also played during the event which showed the actual footages of the war scenes as well as nation celebrating its victory after war. COMSATS Art Gallery will continue the photo exhibition will till Friday 3rd December, 2021.