

# Samana

Friday, December 03, 2021

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Iran says nuclear deal within reach; depends on West's goodwill

**Detailed News On Page-08** 

Local bodies elections through EVMs

**Detailed News On Page-01** 



Azerbaijan to ensure peace in South Caucasus





#### Briefs

#### **Taliban** are my brothers

**DNA** 

KABUL: Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai has said that the

Taliban are

his brothers and we should stay here and make Afghanistan better. While speaking to BBC, he said, "This is our country, this country belongs to us. We are the son of the soil, we should not leave." He said we should stay here and make it better. "I would like to ask on all those Afghans who have left, to come back and build it," he added. During my time in office, I call the Taliban our brothers.

#### PM Khan's remarks appreciable

**DNA** 

Minis-



Chi na-Pakistan Economic (CPEC) fully demonstrated that Pakistan attached high importance to friendship between the two countries and a comcooperation, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Thursday. "China has noted that for some time that PM Imran Khan has made positive remarks

on CPEC. This fully demonstrates that the Pakistani side pays high importance over the friendship between our two sides and a comprehensive cooperation," he made these remarks during his regular briefing.

#### Another promise fulfilled

DNA



State for Information Broadcasting, Far-Habib rukh on Thursday

said Prime Minister Imran Khan gave some nine million overseas Pakistanis their voting rights to fulfill the promise made before the general elections 2018. In a meeting with the PTI UK senior leadership, the minister said the previous governments would love to receive remittances from the overseas Pakistanis, but did not want to give them their voting rights.

### PM tells PAC to expose corruption

PM Imran says the committee is mandated to protect the taxpayers' money and eradicate corruption

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT



Khan has reiterated that he will not compromise on his 'anti-corruption drive' and directed the ruling party lawmakers to expose the wrongdoings

of the incumbent and past governments. According to media, the premier made these remarks in a meeting with MNAs Riyaz Fatyana and Noor Alam Khan in Islamabad on Thursday, who are members of the National Assembly's Public Accounts Committee (PAC). They briefed the premier on PAC's

mittee headed by, opposition MNA Rana Tanveer Hussain, only looked into the audit papers and corruption cases could not be concluded due to government authorities to raise the weakness of investigating agencies awareness among Karyana Stores like NAB and the FIA. The premier also and the potential beneficiaries in this urged the PAC members to expose anyone who try to burry corruption and asked not to back down from the anti-corruption policy. He also directed the PAC members to pees on flour, ghee and pulses will be bring the corrupt under the rule of law. According to sources, the government's that have their monthly income below members of the PAC members alleged fifty thousand rupees. that the bureaucracy was not serious on the issue of corruption. While di- gramme will be launched across the recting the treasury benches members to ensure their attendance in the PAC meeting, PM Imran said the committee der the programme is in progress, was mandated to protect the taxpayers'

money and eradicate corruption.

#### - Directs maximum relief to common man

A sister publication of **CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency** 

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan says the government is taking all possible measures to provide maximum relief to the common man. Chairing a meeting on Ehsaas Rashan Programme in Islamabad, he said being cognizant of the sufferings of people due to inflation, we are extending subsidy to the deserving people on essential commodities. The Prime Minister directed the authorities concerned to speed up the registration performance and added that the com- process of Karyana Stores to benefit maximum number of poor households under the programme.

He also directed to involve district regard. The Prime Minister was apprised that under the programme, a monthly subsidy of one thousand rugiven to twenty million households

was also briefed country on the 15th of this month. Registration of Karyana Stores unand more than 15000 Karyana Stores have been registered so far.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi along with the Ambassador of UAE Hamad Al Zabi and other members of diplomatic corps cutting a cake to commemorate 50th National Day of UAE. – DNA

### 50th National Day of UAE

### 'Pakistan-UAE relations brotherly, unbreakable'

FM Qureshi felicitates UAE leadership and people on 50th National Day

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi has said that Pakistan and UAE enjoy brotherly warm relations. He was addressing a ceremony to commemorate 50th National Day of United Arab Emirates

The Foreign Minister said, "Today, we are not only celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the unification of United Arab Emirates but also 50 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and UAE, I bring warmest greetings from the leadership of Pakistan for UAE leadership". He said that Pakistan and UAE have excellent fraternal relations underpinned by a shared heritage and multifaceted cooperation. "The tremendous progress achieved by UAE would not have been possible without the visionary leadership of the Founding Father of United Arab Emirates, His Highness Late

UAE keen to solidify ties with Pakistan: Amb. Alzaabi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of UAE Hamad Alzaabi has said on 2 December 2021, the UAE celebrated the 50th anniversary of the union of the seven emirates. This occasion marks a sincere reflection of the federation's journey rich in monumental events and achievements, building on the foundation that was first laid down by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and his brothers, the fellow founding fathers.

(Detailed news on Back Page)

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan," said the Foreign Minister. Qureshi said that successive leaders of

UAE have risen to the high standards set by His Highness Sheikh Zayed and have strengthened and diversified relations with Pakistan. "Pakistan-UAE relations were reinvigorated after election of Prime Minister Imran Khan, Repeated visits by him and His Highness Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan generated new momentum in our bilateral ties"

Qureshi said that Pakistan and UAE have also been working closely at international fora. "We congratulate UAE on its election to the United Nations Security Council for the term 2022-23 and for hosting COP-28". Qureshi lauded UAE on successful inauguration of Expo Dubai. ":n the golden jubilee of UAE's foundation, we rejoice in its great achievement of successfully holding Expo 2020.

Continued on Page 06

### Local bodies elections through EVMs: Fawad

- Says govt to provide funds for EVMs, elections to ECP



Ansar M Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry on Thursday said that local bodies elections will be held through electronic voting machines (EVMs). Talking to media persons after meeting of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) core committee, Fawad Chaudhry said that

Continued on Page 06

ly aggressive designs.

Thursday that "if Russia decides to pur-

sue confrontation, there will be serious

consequences," adding that "the best

way to avert a crisis is through diploma-

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Pesk-

#### Opposition to boycott national security briefing

KHAYAM ABBASI ISLAMABAD: Opposition parties have

decided to boycott the upcoming in-camera briefing of the national security committee to be held on December 6, citing the government's "dictatorial" behaviour as its reason. A press release by Parliament's united Opposition stated that parties that are part of the Pakistan Democratic Movement anti-government alliance have always treated issues involving the constitution, law, national security and general public with seriousness and attached importance to them. The media release said that not only did the Opposition parties and their leaders attend briefings on these issues,

Continued on Page 06

#### Indian diplomat summoned

Spin given to Gurdward incident slated

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: A senior diplomat from the High Commission for the Republic of India was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and conveyed Pakistan's categorical rejection of the mischievous spin given by India to an isolated incident involving an individual at Gurdwara Darbar Sahib. It was conveyed to the Indian diplomat that the incident was swiftly addressed and clarified. The Government of Pakistan accords highest primacy to the rights of the minorities.

Continued on Page 06

**US, Russia warn each other of confrontation** 

Antony Blinken told Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Thursday that

### Macron labels Johnson 'a clown': Report

Macron apparently described his dealing with the prime minister as "a circus"

News Desk

PARIS: The French president has reportedly called British PM Boris Johnson "a clown" and said it was a shame to see such a great country, which France could cooperate with, run by a knucklehead. According to the weekly satirical newspaper Le Canard Enchaîné, French President Emmanuel Macron made some highly controversial and undiplomatic remarks about British Prime Minister Boris Johnson during a meeting in Zagreb in late November.

Le Canard Enchaîné claimed on Wednesday that Macron said Johnson is apologetic for the way he acts in public and



his stance on fishing licenses for French trawlers and the submarine deal which saw a French manufacturer lose a \$40 billion contract with Australia. "In private, he tells me he's sorry he acts like he does, conceding he has first and foremost to accommodate public opinion,"

Continued on Page 06

#### Inside.

Buzdar honors DC on his best performance in RED campaign - Page 02

ICCI strongly opposes hike in property valuation by FBR - Page 03

UNESCO brings leaders together for achieving SDGs Page 04

Britain is exploiting refugees to fuel rightwing nationalism - Page 05

COAS attends closing event of 41st PARA central meet - Page 06

Azerbaijan aims to ensure peace in South Caucasus Page 07

UAE keen to solidify ties with Pakistan: Amb. Alzaabi - Page 08



ov said in Moscow that "the Ukrainian authorities' aggressive and increasingly intensive provocative action on the line of contact" gives grounds for concerns about a possible flare-up of hostilities. He



said that recent statements from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other Ukrainian officials indicate that

Continued on Page 06

#### "if Russia decides to pursue confrontation, there will be serious consequences" Turkish foreign minister urges diplomacy

**News Desk** 

ANKARA: The Turkish foreign minister on Thursday urged diplomacy to resolve the crisis in Ukraine. "The crisis in Ukraine should be settled through diplomacy. The Minsk agreements and compliance with int'l law are important," Mevlut Cavusoglu said during his address at the 28th meeting of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Ministerial Council in Stockholm, Sweden. Turkey will not recognize the illegal annexation of Crimea, Cavusoglu reiterated, expressing Ankara's concern about the human rights violations against the Crimean Tatars. Longstanding ten-

sions over Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 have been exacerbated by Russian-backed separatists in the eastern border region of Donbas, along with the recent Russian military buildup decried by the West, Amid the buildup, Russia has accused Ukraine of provocations, a charge Kyiv denies. The Minsk agreements were signed to stop the ongoing conflict between the pro-Russian separatists and the Kyiv administration. The agreements included a cease-fire in the region and prisoner exchange while also allowing Kyiv to make a constitutional amendment that would give Donbas a special status. The pro-Russian separatists, on the other hand, were supposed to withdraw their weapons from the Ukraine-Russia border.



FAISALABAD: Divisional Commissioner Zahid Hussain chairs a meeting. - DNA

### Commissioner orders upgrading THQ hospital

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Divisional Commissioner Zahid Hussain has directed that the up gradation of Tehsil Head Quarter Hospital Jaranwala from 60 to 100 beds should be completed till 31 December and concerned departments should showed pro-active approach in this regard.

He directed this order while reviewing the up gradation of THQ hospital THQ. Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad, Director Development Dr. Naveed Iftikhar Aulakh, CEO DHA Dr. Kashif Mehmood, DD Development Rana Tahir and officers of building department were also present. Divisional Commissioner asked the building department to expedite the work and additional force should be utilize in this regard. He said that at the low level the services of health was necessary therefore the up gradation of THQ is necessary.

Meanwhile Divisional Commissioner chaired a Divisional Coordination Committee meeting and approved the two schemes while chairing a Divisional Development Working Party meeting Commissioner approved two schemes of highways in district Chiniot, one each scheme of Public Health Engineering in Faisalabad and Jhang and one highways scheme in district Toba Tek Singh. He said the departments to start work on these schemes.

Earlier development review meeting was also held and Commissioner directed the

Dollar hits

record high

against rupee

**DNA** 

Deputy Commissioners to speed up the schemes of Sustainable Development Goals Achievement Program Phase IV and approved the schemes of CDP phase III and work order should be alloted as early.

DC reviews anti polio campaign The next Anti Polio Campaign in Faisalabad district would continue from December 13 to 17 in the district and 1.3 million children up to the age of five years would be administered polio drops for which 4870 teams would perform duty and all necessary arrangements are being finalized in this regard. This was informed by Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad during the meeting of District Polio Eradication Committee. ADC HQ Muhammad Khalid, CEO DHA Dr.Kashif Mehmood, DHO Dr. Bilal Ahmad, AC City Sahibzada Muhammad Yousaf and other officers of various departments were also present. Deputy Commissioner directed that before the campaign, all necessary arrangements should be completed keeping n view of micro-plan so that the weaknesses and shortcomings could be rectified.

He clarified that every round of polio was important therefore the training of relevant staff should be completed before time besides for awareness of parents all out resources should utilize. He said that all arrangements should be made finalize in tehsil level also and no negligency would be tolerated in this regard. He also cleared that corona SOPs should be imlemented as per guidelines. DHO briefed the house on

### arrangements of next Polio campaign. **UNODC** begins

ISLAMABAD: The value

**DNA** of US dollar reached an all-time high against the BHURBAN: United Nations rupee again on Thursday, soaring to Rs176.65 in the interbank market during intraday trading. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the dollar appreciated by Rs1.35 against the rupee at around 2:15pm to reach a new high in the interbank market against the backdrop of a steep rise in Pakistan's trade deficit. In the open market, the greenback's selling rate was recorded at Rs177.50 and buying rate at Rs177 at around 3:40pm. included the ANF, Pakistan Customs, and the Pakistan Exchange Companies

Association of Pakistan Coast Guards (PCG). General Secretary Zafar Paracha attributed the record decline in the rupee's value to the delay in the arrival of funds from Saudi Arabia as part of a recently revived support package and the country's rising import bill.

#### World Diabetes Day observed

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Islamic Medical Association (PIMA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter and Prime Foundation observed "World Diabetes Day" at Kuwait Teaching Hospital (KTH).

Experts of various medical fields including endocrinology, juvenile (child) diabetes and pregnancy induced diabetes attended the event and discussed different aspects of disease and the measure needed for prevention of ailment. According to International Diabetes Federation (IDF), 400,000 died of diabetes in the country during 2021. The IDF claimed that Pakistan had the third highest number of population living with diabetes in the world, after China and India.

Meanwhile, Dr. Sobia Sabir Ali, the renowned endocrinologist of Prime Foundation informed that audience that diabetes was fast spreading in our country affecting almost every fifth person. – APP

a roundtable workshop

Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Country Office in Pakistan (COPAK) began a five-day roundtable workshop for the maritime law enforcement agencies at the Pearl Continental Hotel Bhurban on November 30th. The workshop aims to strengthen national action against drugs trafficking and smuggling of contraband items through Pakistan's coastal areas and maritime domain. The participating law enforcement agencies

Welcoming the participants to the inaugural session, Dr. Jeremy Milsom, Representative UNODC COPAK, highlighted the existing and emerging trends in drug trafficking, human trafficking and migrant smuggling (HTMS), and smuggling of other contraband items. Originating from Afghanistan, they create governance and security challenges in Pakistan and the wider re-

gion. He emphasized the need to improve interagency and regional cooperation to effectively respond to these challenges, especially in the backdrop of recent political developments in Afghanistan. He explained that the workshop seeks input from the participating law enforcement agencies to embed international best practices into Pakistan's maritime law enforcement procedures. "In this sense, the workshop will contribute towards the creation of a maritime working group, within the frameworks of Pakistan's Inter-Agency Task Forces and Working Groups on counter-narcotics, HTMS and anti-smuggling."

In his opening remarks, Dr. Syed Kaleem Imam, Federal Secretary, Ministry of Narcotics Control, highlighted Pakistan's role as the first line of defense against the massive flow of opiates and its derivatives, synthetic drugs, and new psychotropic substances to Pakistan both for domestic consumption and transnational trafficking to rest of the

**NCOC** discusses oxygen production

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) morning session on Thursday discussed the epidemic curve chart data, national vaccine strategy and disease prevalence across the country.

The forum was briefed about COVID positivity ratio, disease prevalence, number of deaths and new admissions. The forum discussed in detail, the city-wise Covid-19 vaccination process across the country and the forum agreed upon taking strict measures regarding obligatory vaccination regime.

District wise vaccination targets were reviewed and allout efforts are being made to engage provinces to achieve the set vaccination targets. The forum also discussed the total number of vaccine administration, procurement and balance of vaccine. NCOC stressed upon the provinces to speed up the vaccination process amid rising trend of Omicron variant across the globe as vaccination is the only way to prevent the spread of new Covid variant. The forum also discussed the current status of oxygen production and distribution process across the country. NCOC suggested installation of oxygen plants in various parts of country with special focus on far flung areas which have logistic issues.

#### **SBBWU** celebrates Foundation Day

PESHAWAR: Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University (SBBWU) Peshawar on Thursday marked its 17th Foundation Day wherein Federal Minister for Climate Change Zartaj Gul specially participated as chief guest. Zartaj Gul distributed commendation certificates to the high achievers of staff members and faculty of the university for the year 2020 and 2021. Sharing her remarks she said girls were capable to transform society and it was our aim to prepare them for coming challenges and to

make them career oriented individuals. Addressing on the occasion the Vice Chancellor the varsity Prof Dr Razia Sultana said the university's Research Innovation Commercialization had signed seven Memorandum of Understandings with different organizations to collaborate with the University for the research and exchange programs. - APP

Khanewal.

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

LODHRAN: CM Punjab Sardar Usman

Buzdar honored Deputy Commission-

er Captain (R) Shoaib Ali with Award

on Government level for his best

performance in 21 day special Reach

Every Door (RED) campaign. A Spe-

cial event was held in CM Office in

honor of the officers and staff with sig-

nificant performance in Corona Vacci-

In the event Provincial Minister Health

Punjab Dr. Yasmeen Rashid, Spokes-

person Government Punjab Hassaan

Khawar, Secretary Health Punjab Im-

CM Punjab praised the performance of

Deputy Commissioner Lodhran Cap-

tain (R) Shoaib Ali and his team on

meeting the corona vaccination target.

Department of Primary and Secondary

Health Care had selected 12 districts

upon their performance in Reach

Every Door (RED) campaign, CM Pun-

iab Sardar Usman Buzdar appreciated

the efforts of Deputy Commissioners

and CEO Health of Lodhran, Pakpat-

tan, Narowal, Bhakkar, DG Khan,

Gujrat, Toba Tek Singh, Qasoor, Man-

di Bahauddin, Chakwal, Jehlum and

ran Sikandar Balouch were there.

nation Drive.

CM Punjab in his address said that with the grace of Allah Punjab is on top of the list in achieving the targets of Corona Vaccination. dedication of Vaccination Teams and efforts of administrative officers are making it possible to achieve set targets. He expressed hope that other deputy commissioners, CEO Health and Vaccinations teams of other districts will also give their best performance in next phase to get top positions, he said that information department, population department, schools education, Augaaf, I & CO also gave their best performance. CM Punjab announced the commencement of RED's second phase, in the second phase more than 20 million citizens will be vaccinated with Corona Vaccination. He told that second phase will continue till 31st of December and directed high performing officers and Field Staff of first phase to continue with the same energy in the second phase.

Buzdar honors DC on

his best performance

in RED campaign

He expressed hope that other deputy commissioners, CEO Health and Vaccinations teams of other districts will also give their best performance in next phase to get top positions

> Deputy Commissioner Lodhran Captain (R) Shoaib Ali appreciated the effortsz of CEO Health Sajjad Akhtar, District Focal Person Corona Virus and Vaccination Lodhran Aamir Bashir and their whole team and Health De-

On directions of CM Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar Revenue Public facilitation Courthouse was held in Computerized Land Record Center Lodhran under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner (R) Shoaib Ali, at this time Deputy Commissioner heard the complaints of people regarding revenue matters and issued orders on spot for their resolution.

At this time Additional Deputy Commissioner Azoba Azeem, Assistant Commissioner Lodhran Sveda Amina along officers from Treasury Department were there.

Deputy Commissioner (R) Shoaib Ali said that on directions of Governmen of Punjab Revenue Public Facilitation Courthouse are being equipped with modern needs. He added that in all three tehsils of district on first two working days of each month courthouses are resolving their problems on their doorsteps.

He said that on directions of CM Punjab Usman Buzdar Rural Revenue Centers were established and its reach is spread across Patwar Circles, he added that with these steps people would not have to visit the offices on Tehsil and District Levels.



### Regularization Commission to cover all constructions & existing living

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The constructions and existing residential on government land under regulation act is in the interest of the people of Sindh and we want to form a commission headed by a retired judge. Saeed Ghani said the regularisation Commission will cover all over province.

Sindh Minister for Information and Labor Saeed Ghani and Sindh Health Minister Dr Azra Pechuho in a joint press conference after the Sindh Cabinet meeting on Thursday. They said that the Sindh Cabinet has raised the marks of election instead of 65 marks to save the future of Sindh students. The property tax which was earlier collected by the Sindh government

was then levied on the local council. One committee will be chaired by the Secretary Law and the other will be chaired by the Development Board. The mayor and chairman are ready to talk with the opposition on secret ballot, transfer of health and education centers in the province and others on local government law. There is no objection to discuss anyone.

At present in Sindh we are not in favor of any lockdown and the number of Corona cases is under control at present. The new variant requires people to wear masks, use sanitizers and ensure social distance. On the occasion. Information Secre-

tary Abdul Rashid Solangi was also present on the occasion. Provincial Minister Saeed Ghani said

that the ministers and secretaries of the concerned departments gave a briefing on the development works of the three departments in the Sindh cabinet meeting. In the meeting, two committees have been constituted to collect property tax which is collected by the Sindh government with the help of Excise and Taxation Department and its share is given to DMCs.

Which will submit its report to the Cabinet in 15 days, after which a decision in this regard will be taken.

He said that Sindh Cabinet has also approved SEF Service Rules, Dow Medical and University Act 2004 and allotment of 200 acres of land to Pakistan Army. He said that in today's cabinet meeting keeping in view the concerns of Sindh students regarding medical admission policy and in view of the situation arising out of shortage of doctors in Sindh and further shortage in next four years.

In order to save the career of Sindh students, the selection standard is 50 marks instead of 65 marks.

Health Minister Dr. Azra Pechoho said that the federal government has given the test of admission to students of medical and dental colleges to inexperienced institutions. This was not even in the PMC Act. The decision was against their principles. In order to save the career of Sindh students, we have increased the selection criteria to 50 marks instead of 65 marks. He said that after the 18th amendment, the provinces have the power to make admission and policies but the federation was constantly interfering in it.

He said that last year also 400 seats remained vacant in dental colleges, while medical colleges admitted children from other provinces and they should become doctors and go to their respective provinces and Sindh province where there is already severe shortage of doctors, where there should be at least one doctor in 350 beds, there is only one doctor for every 3500 patients in Sindh.

### FAISALABAD: CTP has launched a crackdown on underage

**CTP launches crack-**

down on underage drivers

drivers in Faisalabad. A spokesman for the CTP said on Thursday that underage drivers were not only putting their own lives on risk but also causing serious threat to the lives of other road-users. Therefore, on special direction of CTO Tanveer Ahmad Malik, the traffic police initiated a vigorous campaign against the vehicles being driven by underage drivers. – APP Islamabad **POST** Available in

### following cities

**ISLAMABAD Qamar News Agency** 03105460372

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**FAISALABAD** Ishfaq Mughal

03007689850 **JEHLUM Iqrash News Agency** 

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03005412069

**SARA-I-ALMAGIR** 0300 5428178

### **Belgium keen to fortify trade ties**

SCCI Senior Vice President Sheikh Zohaib Rafique Sethi said Belgium and Pakistan had always enjoyed most cordial relations in the past

News Desk

SIALKOT: Ambassador of Belgium in Pakistan Philippe Bronchain has stressed the need for making allout efforts to strengthened mutual trade ties between Pakistan and Belgium. He said that Belgium was keen to boost trade ties besides enhancing mutual trade volume between the two countries.

He was addressing a meeting of Sialkot exporters at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), here on Thursday,

SCCI Senior Vice President (SVP) Sheikh Zohaib Rafique Sethi, Vice President Qasim Malik, Trade Commissioner Embassy of Belgium in Pakistan Abid Hussain also attended the meeting.

Belgium Ambassador Philippe



Bronchain promised his full cooperation to ensure easy access of Sialkot exporters to his country's trade markets and to European Union (EU) markets through Belgium

He appreciated the projects completed under Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry and promised his full cooperation in

highlighted the potential of 'Made in Sialkot' products.

and bilateral trade.

He said that the embassy of Belgium had always cooperated with exporters of Sialkot and played a role as a gateway to European Union (EU) market.

providing facilitation in promotion

of business, trade and investment

SCCI Senior Vice President Sheikh

Zohaib Rafique Sethi said Belgium

and Pakistan had always enjoyed

most cordial relations in the past.

Both should exchange trade delega-

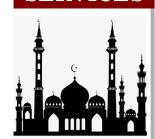
tions and hold exhibitions frequent-

ly in order to enhance B2B linkages

SCCI Vice President Qasim Malik

opportunities in Sialkot.

Furthermore, the business community of Belgium should also explore joint ventures and business opportunities in Pakistan.



raji	03.21 an
Zohr	11:57 am
Asr	03:21 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



#### **Emergency**

Rescue (Police)	)15	
Bomb Disposal	15	
Fire Services	Rawalpindi	
Islamabad	1122 & 16	
Emergency Am	oulance1122	
& Rescue Servi	ices.4451122	
Motorway Polic	e9266044	
Motorway Police9270601-20		
Women Polic	e Stations	
Islamabad	9222596	
Rawalnindi	9270601-20	

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIAFlightInfo	114
PIACargo	.9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.	.5555489
CAA	9281092



#### **Hospitals**

CMH	5611111
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital.	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa Internation	nal.4603666



pehartillelit?		
CDA	9221334-43	
CDA	9208301-04	
Met Office	9250360-6	
RDA	5555864	
TMA	5770886	
Cantonment B	Roard 9270151-3	



#### **Complaints**

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

#### Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
RawalTown	5773343

**Wasa Water Tank** Rawalpindi.....0331-5022125

### ICCI strongly opposes hike in property valuation by FBR

Shakeel Munir said that the growth of over 50 industries depended on the construction sector and new valuation of FBR would damage the business of all construction related industries

#### STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The business community including realtors in an emergent meeting held at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) strongly opposed the new market value determined by FBR for immovable property of 40 major cities of the counincluding Islamabad vide its SRO 1548(I)/2021 dated 1st December 2021 as it would render a big blow to the business activities of property and construction sector and foil all efforts of the government to revive the economy. Addressing the the meet-

ing, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said realizing the vital role of property and construction sector in the economic development of the country, the Prime Minister had offered an construction package, which boosted the business and economic ac-

tivities across the country. However, unprecedented hike in the market value of immovable properties by FBR unilaterally without consulting with stakeholders that would cause a severe blow to the business of property and construction

sector and create lot of unemployment besides weakening the overall economy. He said that in 2019 a Committee including representatives of private sector was formed at FBR level to determine the market

value of property, but FBR has bypassed the said Committee in determining new market value.

He said that depreciation of rupee, high interest rate, rising inflation, increase in prices of POL and utilities tariffs have already affected the business activities and this decision would cause a big slump in the economy. Shakeel Munir said that the growth of over 50 industries depended on the construction sector and new valuation of FBR would damage

was adopted by different

countries - Pakistani in-

vestors also invested in

Dubai and due to lack of

education most Pakistanis

are forced to work abroad

velop the construction sec-

tor With Special Package.

government offers to de-

Digitization of land vital for

improvement: Arif Alvi

the business of all construction related industries. Giving an example, he said that compared to property valuation of 2019 in Islamabad, the market value of immovable property has been increased in F-8 Sector by over 127 percent, E-11 Sector by over 163 percent, E-7 Sector by over 164 percent and F-7 Sector by over 283 percent, which was totally unjustified. He said that this move would cause signifi-

cant outflow of capital from

tors in the construction

sector and said that it is

our valuable asset and such

construction exhibitions

cover more than 60 sec-

tors - Chairman Pakistan

Association of Exhibition

Industry Khursheed Bar-

las said that the aim of our

association is to promote

the economy and tourism

Made in Pakistan products

Former Chairman Trade

Development Authority

of Pakistan SM Munir,

Group Leader RCCI So-

hail Altaf, Chairman RDA

Raja Tariq Mehmood Mur-

taza, President Federa-

tion of Rates Sardar Tahir

Mehmood, government

officials and more than

60 owners associated with

the construction sector

were present. President

of Pakistan also Distribut-

ed shields to stall holders

all over the world.

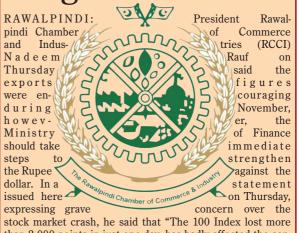
age new investment in the property and construction sector.

He urged that the FBR should immediately withdraw its SRO of new market value and engage all stakeholders including ICCI into the consultation process to arrive at a consensus decision on new valuation of properties. He said, posing confidence in the policies of the current government, many foreign investors have made investment in Paki-

but FBR's new property valuation has created great concerns in them about their future due to which FDI would be badly affected in the country. He appealed to the Advisor PM on Finance and Chairman FBR to call an urgent meeting of stakeholders including ICCI to find out a consensus solution of this important issue. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Masud, Convener, ICCI Real State and Developers Committee said that PM's construction package has attracted investment of billions of rupees in the property sector due to which many big construction projects have been started

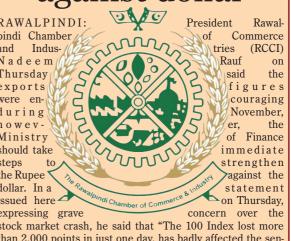
in the federal capital. However, he said that FBR's new market value of property has disappointed all major investors of construction and they have been compelled to reconsider their investments in Islamabad. He urged that FBR should urgently withdraw its SRO 1548(I)/2021 and consult with stakeholders

### stan's construction sector. to resolve this issue.



than 2,000 points in just one day, has badly affected the sentiment of investors and urged the government to take immediate steps for restoration of the investor's confidence" Nadeem asked the government to ensure the supply of cheap raw materials, providing a conducive environment for promoting local industry and SMEs to increase domestic exports. He said that the rates of income tax, sales tax, regulatory duty and other taxes should be reduced to decrease the cost of production. President Nadeem Rauf said that as the oil prices had decreased in the international market, the government should immediately pass on the relief to the

## RCCI urges govt to strengthen Rupee against dollar



masses to reduce inflation. "Policymaking should be done in consultation with stakeholders," he added. - DNA

#### CDA Chairman visits new one window

#### DNA

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest

President of Pakistan Dr.

Arif Alvi attended the clos-

ing ceremony of Pakistan

International Property Ex-

hibition and Convention or-

ganized by Pakistan Associ-

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of the Capital Development Authority visited the new one window and inspected the operational work. The Director Revenue and the Deputy Director Revenue were immediately removed from office due to absent from duty. On this occasion, the CDA management said that no negligence will be tolerated in all the efforts made for the convenience of the people. Furthermore, the CDA management has said that working in a new environment requires more efforts and dedication. Officers and employees will have to change their attitudes. Under One Window, all staff are now working under one roof in the new environment, which will increase efficiency. Furthermore, incentives will be given to officers and employees who will perform well. Meanwhile, The Capital

ation of Exhibition Industry.

Digitization of land re-

cords is essential for the

country - economic activ-

ities of the country were

not much affected during

the Covid. Pakistan faced

the covid Challenges with

Pakistani economic model

the best strategy.

Development Authority (CDA) has also expedited the development process and laying of sewerage line in Sector I-11.

The construction of drains, streets, bridges and other development works were under process in the sector, said a news release.

The CDA has started the development works on the direction of Chairman Amir Ali Ahmed and on the request of I-11 Allottees Welfare Association.



RAWALPINDI: Murree Brewery sponsored the "Smog Awareness Walk" in collaboration with EPA Rawalpindi and District Administration, Rawalpindi at ARL Biodiversity Park. Assistant Commissioner (Cantt) Mrs. Nosheen Israr along with Deputy Director EPA Mr. Muhammad Rafique addressed the walk. Mr. Waqas Ahmad (Environmental Manager), Mr. Khurram Bashir (Auditor Quality Assurance) and Mr. Muhammad Humayun (FSO) from Murree Brewery participated in the walk to raise awareness about Smog impacts. - DNA

### **USC** ensures food security by providing fit products

USC procures sugar, rice and pulses by floating tenders following Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) rules as per government standards. The aim of doing procurement through following PPRA rules is to ensure transparency and accountability

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: During Covid-19 pandemic, despite curtailed working hours and employees of Utility Stores Corporation of Pakistan (USC) being vulnerable to the pandemic, USC ensured uninterrupted supplies of essential commodities via its wide spread network of retail outlets. As a matter of fact USC did not spend any amount on account of COV-ID-19 funds as ECC of the cabinet converted Rs 10 billion into Rs. 7.7 billion as general subsidy and Rs. 2.3 Billion for the automation of USC.

It is worthwhile to mention here that under the Prime Minister's Relief Package, USC has successfully served over 90 million households since January, 2020 by providing subsidy on 5 essential commodities namely wheat flour, ghee, sugar, rice and pulses. During these testing times USC has also assisted Government of Pakistan in regulating prices of essential commodities in open market.

USC procures Ghee/ Oil from Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) recommended manufacturers and maintains high level quality of edible Ghee/ oil. Thus, USC as-



sures that no bad quality Ghee/

Oil is procured. USC procures sugar, rice and pulses by floating tenders following Public Procurement Reg-

ulatory Authority (PPRA) rules as per government standards. The aim of doing procurement through following PPRA rules is to ensure transparency and accountability. Thus, USC assures high quality food products to its consumers and effective quality controls, standards and mechanisms are being adopted to ensure good quality of products. Moreover, USC is providing good quality wheat flour as per human consumption standards after car-

rving out laboratory tests. For better quality controls, USC is in the phase of Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP) implementation. In

its first phase 90% of Point of Sales (POS) machines have been deployed and installed in USC outlets.

The first phase will be live by December 31, 2021. In the second phase warehouses, supply chain management and human resource management modules will be automated and connected to datacenter which will strengthen systems, bring transparency and improve decision making through timely and quality data management. USC is committed to providing high quality and hygienically fit products and better services to its customers.

## gas supply

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) on Thursday directed the Petroleum Division to ensure maximum supply while ensuring implementation of a demand management plan as already approved by the Cabinet.

The directions were issued in a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCOE), held here under the chairmanship of Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Asad Umar. The Petroleum Division presented the projected natural gas supply in the country for the winter. During the meeting, Petroleum Division presented different policy options for management of the gas supply side during winter 2021-22. The meeting was informed about the efforts to enhance the natural gas supply during the meeting. The Committee also considered the summary presented by the Power Division on the implementation of CCoE decisions. It was informed in the meeting that all new renewable energy (RE) projects would participate in the open competitive bidding process to ensure the least cost procurement of renewable electricity.

The CCoE approved the summary and recommended expediting the bidding process in the meeting. The chair further directed the Power Division to inform the CCoE in the next meeting of a detailed roadmap with millstones for the establishment of RE projects, including the potential locations and details of the competitive process be presented. CCoE also reviewed the circular debt report October 2021 submitted by the Pow-

The committee appreciated the sustained reduction in the accumulation of circular debt. It was informed that the performance of the DISCOs was continually improving.

#### Court adjourns reference against ex-sec

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Thursday adjourned hearing till December 20, on a reference against ex-secretary interior pertaining illegal allotment of plot owned by National Police Foundation (NPF).

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) couldn't file its comments against acquittal pleas of the accused and requested the court to grant more time in this regard.

AC-II Judge Muhammad Azam Khan heard the reference lodged by NAB against allotment of plot allocated for the families of martyred. The accused had filed pleas challenging admissibility of reference under fresh amendments in NAB ordinance. They added that the case didn't fall under jurisdiction of accountability court after amendments. The court adjourned further hearing till December 20. – APP

#### Police arrest accused for carrying arms, weapons

RAWALPINDI: Police on Thursday arrested an accused and recovered huge cache of arms and ammunition from his possession and confiscated a motorcycle. A police spokesman said they recovered seven Kalashnikovs, three 12 bore riffles, one pistol of 30 bore and a large quantity of bullets and magazines were recovered from possession of the accused namely Gul Sher. Police registered a case and

started investigation. The action against the accused was taken by Station House Officer Saddar Biruni, incharge Chowki Ranial and his team headed by Assistant Superintendent of Police Saddar Division Saud Khan. City Police Officer (CPO) Athar Ismail appreciated performance of police team and directed that strict action would be taken against outlaws. - APP

#### **Briefs**

#### NUMS holds awareness seminar on Dengue

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pro Vice Chancellor Academics National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS) Maj Gen Saleem Ahmed Khan (Retd) here on Thursday emphasized the need to raise awareness of dengue, saying, role of university students could work as a catalyst in checking its spread across the country.

He was speaking at aseminar on "Awareness and Stop the Transmission" of the dengue which was organized by NUMS Department of Public Health at its PWD Campus here Thursday. He said the students had a great potential and talent in running such campaigns as they had ably demonstrated through their presentations and small documentaries today. The students gave a "wonderful presentation and everything was done excellently", he added.

Lauding efforts of the Faculty and the students, he said, their campaign would further bolster efforts of the concerned authorities in creating awareness about dengue as precautionary measures could help prevent its spread. He congratulated Faculty members and students of Public Health, Multidisciplinary Sciences and Social Sciences & Humanities for being active in dengue awareness campaign.

#### Rice exports surge over 19pc to \$594.5 mlns

ISLAMABAD: The exports of rice surged by 19.04 percent during the first four months of current financial year (2021-22) as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year. At a time when rice exports of the country were on escalating trend, the production of the rice crop has also been estimated at over 9 million tons during current season as compared the output 8.4 million tons of same period of last year.

Pakistan exported rice worth \$594.528 million during July-October (2021-22) against the exports of \$499.442 million during July-October (2020-21), showing growth of 19.04 percent, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Among the rice commodities, the exports of Basmati rice increased by 27.44 percent as these surge from \$161.654 million last year to \$206.013 million during the current year.

The exports of other rice commodities also grew by 15.02 percent by going up from \$337.788 million last year to \$388.515 million during the current year, the PBS data revealed. – APP

### 4,133mln released for IT projects

ISLAMABAD: The government has so far released funds amounting to Rs 4,133.128 million during the current fiscal year to execute Information Technology and Telecommunication projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2021-22).

The federal government has allocated 9,361.06 million for the ongoing and new schemes of the Information Technology and Telecom Division in the public sector development program for the financial year 2021-22. Rs 7,050.000 million were allocated for ongoing schemes and Rs 2,311.056 million were earmarked for the new schemes for the Telecom Division

For new schemes, the government has allocated Rs 400 million in the Public Sector Development Pro gramme (PSDP 2021-22) for the establishment of an IT park in Karachi, Rs. 365.528 million for hybrid power solution Solarization for remote sites in AIK. Rs 365.528 million for hybrid power solution Solarization for remote sites in Gilgit-Baltistan, Rs 160 million for national centers of Research innovation and entrepreneurship in AAI and allied technologies (NCRIE-AI) feasibility study and Rs 100 million for raising smart capital through the private trading market at PSK (PSEB). - APP

# UNESCO brings leaders together for achieving SDGs

UNESCO is a specialized agency of the United Nations working closely with the government and people of Pakistan since 1958

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Participants at an outreach event "UNES-Connect" held here pledged to support UNESCO's mission in Pakistan to mitigate climate change, increase access to education, leverage digital technologies to reduce inequalities, and preserve Pakistan's rich and diverse cultural heritage for future generations.

Around 100 stakeholders including government representatives, diplomatic partners, civil society, stakeholders from development and private sector, artists, activists and experts gathered at the event held at a local hotel by UNESCO Pakistan late Tuesday. The event marked UNE-



SCO's 75-year legacy of working to promote peace in Pakistan and across the world through delivering immense contributions in science, education, culture and heritage as well as renewed commitments towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The United Nations Educa-

tional, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations working closely with the government and people of Pakistan since 1958. UNESCO was founded with the mission of contributing to peace and security by promoting international collaboration



through education, science, culture, and information.
Speaking on the occasion, UNESCO Representative to Pakistan Ms.PatriciaM-cPhillips stated, "A successful development agenda requires inclusive partner-ships. UNESCO believes in a partnership-based approach founded on a sense

of shared purpose and mutual accountability. Together, we want to find newer, better, more sustainable ways to make a difference". UNESCO hosted the event to facilitate meaningful engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders, and highlight the specialized strengths, opportunities, and assets that

UNESCO possesses to support the development agenda 2030 in Pakistan, in the fields of education, culture, science, and information. Internationally acclaimed singer, AriebAzhar enthralled the audience through performing traditional folk songs and Sufi poetry along with the musicians on Tabla, flute and Guitar.

Renowned journalist, ZarrarKhuhro moderated an open discussion to brainstorm ideas in developing linkages among public, private, and multilateral organizations to address eminent challenges facing Pakistan. The participants eulogized the contribution of UNESCO in building back communities after the COVID-19 pandemic and emphasized on continue its role for the betterment of humanity with consistency.

### ANF seizes 71 capsules of cocaine

ISLAMABAD: Anti-Narcotics Control (ANF) has seized 71 capsules of cocaine valued at 200,000 US dollars in the international market from a Nigerian national.

According to an ANF spokesperson the force conducted an operation at Islamabad International Airport and failed the attempt of the Nigerian national to smuggle 923 grams of cocaine.

The accused had hidden the drug in his stomach. The investigation was underway as per the law of the ANF. – APP

#### Citizens Foundation at Dubai Expo

ISLAMABAD: The Citizens Foundation (TCF), perhaps the largest network of independently run schools in the world, is set to be featured at the Expo 2020 Dubai's Global Best Practices Programme in December 2021. This week as the Expo 2020 Dubai celebrates the Knowledge and Learning Week, we will see many organisations such as TCF highlighting best practices in education to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

The Citizen's Foundation is a leading non-profit working to provide quality education in Pakistan's most neglected rural and slum communities where we find children, especially girls, out of school. Pakistan is the world's sixth most populous country and has the second-highest number of out-of-school children in the world. These children in Pakistan often face deep-rooted structural inequalities that are most often linked to gender biases, poverty and lack of access to quality schools.

What started as a discussion among 6 friends to correct their country's trajectory, has now become a national movement and a global best practice. TCF has evolved a model to deliver quality education at scale. It runs 1,687 schools in 62 districts across Pakistan. Currently it has an enrollment of 275,000 students, of which nearly 50% are girls.

nearly 50% are girls.
"When we started TCF we wanted to ensure that girls received an equal opportunity to study. That is why we make sure that all TCF schools are within walking distance to communities. We also hire only female teachers to encourage parents to send their daughters to school," says AteedRiaz, Co-founder and Chairman of The Citizens Foundation.

has made TCF one of the largest private employers of women in Pakistan with a faculty of 12,950 women. TCF not only provides transportation to these teachers to and from the schools but also conducts a rigorous training of over 120 hours annually to develop their capabilities and ensure quality education in its classrooms. – APP

Hiring only female teachers

### People should receive Covid booster shots

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Health expert on Thursday has urged the people for getting the booster vaccine against coronavirus as National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) has approved a booster shot of Covid-19 vaccines for the priority group of healthcare workers and those aged over 50 years in the country.

Talking to a PTV news channel, a senior virologist Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar urged the people to acquire their vaccines if they are eligible as quickly as possible, adding, the Omicron variant was spreading fast globally and it is the only way to protect themselves.

Booster vaccine shots are more effective which can be measured in several different ways. One is their ability to protect people from mild infections in the winter season, he mentioned.

"Vaccination remains the most effective tool to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and to boost the immunity system in the human body,' he added. Replying to a question, he said that the COVID-19 virus seems to be more severely affecting people with pre-existing conditions including hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular heart disease, chronic respiratory diseases, and cancer, however, a positive mindset is vital for reducing stress and inflammation.

## CPEC's much awaited M-14 motorway open to traffic on Dec 13

ISLAMABAD: The Hakla-Dera Ismail Khan Motorway (M-14), a key section of the western alignment of CPEC, will be open to traffic on December 13, said SajidHussain, project director of the M-14 motorway told Gwadar Pro on Wednesday. A source added that the member motorways of the NHA board had informed the authority's chairman that the motorway was complete in all respects and could be inaugurated even in early December. He added that work was underway on construction of service areas. However, the main work has been finished, he said.

The M-14 motorway is the starting section of the western corridor of CPEC. It connects South KP, South Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan provinces with the M-1 motorway, intersecting the eastern alignment of CPEC at Hakla near Islamabad. The provincial governments of KP and Balochistan are presently purchasing land for the next section of M-14, from Dera Ismail Khan to Zhob district of Balochistan.

However, the federal government has already initiated work on modifying the existing two-lane highway from Dera Ismail Khan to Quetta, capital of Balochistan, into a four-lane expressway. This will drastically reduce the distance and travel time between northern and southern parts of the country. The corridor will finally lead to Karachi and Gwadar, thus providing for the shortest route of CPEC.

The M-14 motorway has been the most awaited CPEC section in Islamabad, as the expat workers to benefit from this motorway form the largest community in the federal capital. It is very exhausting to travel to Islamabad from southern parts of the country on existing roads. The M-14 motorway will make our travel and life easy, said Siftain Khan, who hails from Dera Ismail Khan and works as an overseas education consultant in Rawalpindi, the twin city of Islamabad. – **DNA** 



ISLAMABAD: Iranian ambassador to Pakistan Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini calls on CEO PIA, Air Marshal (R) Arshad Malik. Topics of mutual interest were discussed and agreed on increasing d efforts to promote air between Iran and Pakistan. – DNA

### Pakistani students achieved highest number of Indonesian scholarships

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indonesian Embassy hosted an informative gathering for more than twenty awardees of the KNB and other scholarship programs on December 02, 2021 in Pearl Continental Hotel, Rawalpindi. This year total 63 scholarships were awarded to students from Pakistan, in all categories, which was the highest as compared to the previous year. The event was attended by the scholarship awardees, alumni of the KNB and Journalists.

Ambassador Tugio congratulated all the students of the Indonesian scholarship awardees and shared the cultural and academic cooperation between Indonesia and Pakistan which needs to be encouraged and promoted to strengthen the ties between the two brotherly countries.

H.E Mr. Adam Tugio said Indonesia and Pakistan are blessed with rich cultural heritage and traditions carrying interesting and attractive similarities. Both the countries cherish various traditions and share many similarities from nature to culture and from preserving (Islamic) tra-



dition being two of the most populous Muslim countries of the world, embracing modernity.

Ambassador Tugio expressed his

Ambassador Tugio expressed his excitement knowing majority of the Indonesia's scholarship awardees would study in the best universities in different cities in Indonesia, and reminded that most of universities are on the list of 500 best universities based on QS World Ranking of 2020.

He expressed hope for the students that have completed their study programs in Indonesia, they will not only play a more constructive role in the progress of Pakistan but in many fields which will help further strengthen the friendly relationship between In-

donesia and Pakistan. The Minister Counsellor for Information and Social Cultural Affairs of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr. Pramudya Sulaksono highlighted the insights of the Government regulations for foreign students in Indonesia. He also shared imperative details regarding visas and immigration with the students for their understanding.

Mr. Wasim Chaudhry, Alumni of KNB Scholarship who has recently graduated from Institute of Technology Bandung, also shared his experiences and association with all the attendees. Two Students who were already enrolled on-campus students pursuing their Ph.D. degrees in Indonesia joined the gathering virtually and shared their tips studying in Indonesia.

The event was concluded with a question and answer session, where freshly enrolled students asked various relevant questions pertaining to their degree.

### NBF online book shop gains popularity

ISLAMABAD: National Book Foundation (NBF) online book shop is gaining popularity among students and readers that was promoting healthy reading culture to produce quality minds and sharp intellect. An official of NBF Raza Saeed told APP that the Foundation had uploaded its fresh publications on the website and introduced new schemes to ensure the availability of quality books that were appealing to the taste of present-day readers.

Saeed said the e-book trend was gaining popularity among

the readers as advanced technology ensured easy availa-

bility and user-friendly access to the masses. He said this new initiative was fruitful as the readers were able to have access to all important publications with just one click on the website (www.nbf.org.pk). Saeed said the book ordering process was simple and easy, adding, a separate tab has been created to browse books in NBF online Book Shop. The portal developed by NBF has the latest features where a user could add any book to the cart, after adding any book to the cart one could also view one cart any time by clicking the cart icon in the top menu, he added. After the ordering process, the NBF representative would call you for order confirmation and the order would be delivered to the home or any address provided by the user, NBF official told. It may be mentioned here that the NBF is offering a 50 percent discount on all general books published by the Foundation. NBF aims to encourage the proposition of creativity, literacy and to enhance the culture of writing and reading. NBF is working with a mission to ignite a literacy cultural renaissance by encouraging all stakeholders of society across the country as well as in foreign countries. The NBF official said the foundation believed in creativity leading to premier quality academic and scholastic resources to masses pertaining to fiction, non-fiction, applied sciences, and pure sciences educa-

tional domains, and to disseminate effective professional edu-

cational and literary content within the country and across the

globe. He said that NBF has a vision of instilling the passion of

reading, learning, and writing in the hearts of every segment of

the society which is synonymous with instilling the foundations

of progress and excellence in the country. - APP

### KAAP and the Korean Govt's support for Covid

PIMS Hospital Director, Dr.IlajQadeer has thanked the South Korean Government for its continued support towards the government of Pakistan's efforts in overcoming COVID-19. He reiterated the wish to further solidify the cooperation in the health sector between the two countries

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Republic of Korea has supported the Government of Pakistan's response in controlling the outbreak and spread of COVID-19. The Korean government has already provided masks, RNA kits, and PPEs (Personal Protective Equipment), worth more than USD 800,000. The healthcare facilities in different localities are still lacking in medical supplies such as beds, wheelchairs, and stretchers.

In an effort to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and strengthen the healthcare system of Pakistan, the KOICA (Korea International Cooperation Agency)Pakistan Office and KOICA Alumni Association of Pakistan (KAAP) has provided 40 beds, 50 wheelchairs and 50 stretchers in Azad Jammu & Kashmir (Abbass Institute of Medical Sciences Muzaffarabad), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Civil Hospital Razmak) and Islamabad (PIMs Hospital).

PIMS Hospital Director, Dr. Ilaj

Qadeer has thanked the South Korean Government for its continued support towards the government of Pakistan's efforts in overcoming COVID-19. He reiterated the wish to further solidify the cooperation in the health sector between the two countries. Mr. Ikram Ul Haq (General Secre-

Mr. Ikram Ul Haq (General Secretary KAAP), Prof. Dr. RizwanTaj (Executive Director PIMs) and Dr. Ilaj Qadeer (Hospital Director) attended the ceremony.



### Islamabad POS.

#### Smog causes accidents

N alarming accident on the M-2 Motorway should wake the government to the dangers of smog. As many as 20 people were injured on Tuesday morning in a chain collision involving several vehicles on the motorway near Sheikhupura interchange.

While accidents on the motorway occur every now and then, this pile-up should raise alarms considering the reason behind this dangerous incident was not vehicle malfunction or skirting of motorway rules but smog and fog. This is seriously worrying since lack of compliance of safety rules can be solved immediately through regulation, but a problem such as smog, which seems like it is here to stay, can be a much more long-term, unpreventable and dangerous problem for roads everywhere, but especially one as accustomed to high-speed vehicles like the motorways.

Climate change activists have been warning for years that the dangers of smog are not just restricted to health issues, although that is enough for the government to be highly concerned. In the last few years, the most casualties incurred from smog have been due to roadside accidents. The smog causes visibility issues, which can be highly dangerous for the traffic, especially on the motorway.

There have been several accidents in recent times caused due to the wintertime smog; this has had an impact on business and trade as well due to the danger posed to trucks and large vehicles transporting materials for trade. Like landslides and dust storms, smog is also quickly becoming a hazard for any kind of transport and travel; the worrying fact is however that it is only bound to get worse with each year unless the government takes this seriously and springs to action.

Temporarily closing schools and workplaces one day of the week is not going to make things any better. We need smog action right now and a proper strategy for long term action. This is a nationwide problem now, and the federal and provincial governments need to cooperate on a uniform plan together.

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#### Ticking clock

HAT the Elections Bill 2021 sailed through the parliament did little to end the conversation. The opposition is still sitting on a warpath. With PPP Chairman steadfast in his manipulation banter and PML(N) Secretary-General Ahsan Iqbal unveiling plans to drag the much-talked-about amendment to the court, there remains no doubt about the polarisation taking a turn for the ugly. That too, quite soon.

Politics has always been an art of convenient forgetfulness but the vigor with which both parties have white-washed the pilot projects of 2011's local government elections and NA-4 by-polls in 2017 is-for the lack of a better word-phenomenal. But cry all they want, there is no denying the new order of the land. The new challenge now is to come up with the drive that can see the gargantuan project through. Thankfully, the ECP has stepped down its disdain horse and formed relevant committees to actively piece together the technology puzzle. The role of Federal Science Minister Shibli Faraz as he sets off on a crusade to extend all-possible cooperation cannot be emphasised enough. He does seem genuinely interested in bringing down the cost (by roping on domestic science labs) and supporting the exercise fully (one million hacking challenge.

There still remain issues of capacity as the ECP has yet to come up with the magic number–how many machines, how many personnel, and how many pilot exercises. Roaring claims on media suggest a continuous production of over 3000 machines daily till the D-Day. If true, the state machinery better roll up its sleeves and churn out the funds needed to ascertain around-the-clock production. The big cities might be a breezy ride but what about the rural ecosystem: those sitting in a downtrodden village of Chitral, perched atop a hill in Murree or casting their vote from Thar dunes?

The parliamentary win was enough reason for the government to relish its grip on its seat. However, the ball has now been rolled. It is up to the relevant ministries and the ECP to see it through. Let's just hope Mr Faraz and his team find a place in the sun since he has cleary stepped in the right direction. Free and fair elections appear to be the only panacea to our rigging-bruised and authority-battered democracy. May 2023 be the first-ever elections that are not marred by dirty allegations!

### Britain is exploiting refugees to fuel right-wing nationalism

Nafees Mahmud

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

traction from g incompetence.
What would you do it

NTI-REFUGEE rhetoric is a useful distraction from government corruption and incompetence.

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 accomplices 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 (prefera-

bly 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".

In other words, Conservative MPs are saying Britain should scrap its human rights laws to justify such extreme means of keeping refugees out. Most of the MPs calling for such drastic measures represent constituencies dominated by Brexit-supporting nationalists.

If the demonisation of migration continues in both media and government, and once again starts dominating the public discourse – as it did in the run up to the Brexit vote in 2016 – we will, as we saw then, see an increase in racism. The far-right politician Nigel Farage has already said he's considering a return to politics.

The fact is Britain is a country that loves shooting itself in the foot. We're not even a full year on from leaving the EU and the failures of Brexit have proven this, from the failure to "take control of our own borders" and attract some of the world's highest achievers to take up citizenship, to the inability to secure a fishing deal with the EU that benefits British fishermen. Then there are the food shortages.

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 halloumi set up by Syrian refugee Razan Alsous. But the narrow-minded, short-sighted government doesn't care about the wellbeing of refugees, nor even the prosperity of the country. It cares about staying in power while abusing that power.

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.

- Courtesy: TRT World

## World repeating its mistakes on omicron

Frank Kane



Some sense came from Angelique Coetzee, the South African doctor who first identified omicron as a COVID-19 variant. who spoke of "very, very mild symptoms," like fatigue and headaches, in the sufferers she had treated. None had been hospitalized and all were being treated at home, she said. That does not seem enough to risk

S the cure to omicron, the new COVID-19 variant currently spooking the world, going to be worse than the disease?

bombing the global

economic recovery

This question is not coming from some COVID-19 conspiracist, an anti-vaxxer or a mask skeptic. I am fully jabbed up and have obeyed all the official rules on anti-coronavirus measures to the letter since the beginning of the pandemic.

But after the events of the past few days, I am beginning to wonder if we have all collectively overreacted to the omicron threat. Immediate flight bans and threats of even more draconian measures seem to be hugely premature.

From the economic indicators, there is a real danger that such knee-jerk reactions risk damaging us more than the disease itself. Global stock markets plunged on the omicron news last week and have looked decidedly shaky since. Crucially for the Middle East, the oil price fell by 10 percent on the day after the new variant was discovered, and at a very awkward time for global energy markets.

Ever since the height of the COV-ID-19 lockdowns last year, the message has been that the world will never really eradicate the virus, even with the powerful vaccines that were rolled out with impressive speed and which are still being refined and improved. We will instead have to learn to live with it, in much the same way we do with the common cold and influenza.

But cutting off virtually an entire continent – Africa – from the rest

of the world is not "learning to live" with it. It is a heartless reaction to the plight of others that risks all our economic livelihoods.

The very first reactions to the arrival of omicron were scarily irresponsible. Eminent scientists (who should have known better) talked about an entirely unproven link with the HIV disease, conjuring all our worst fears.

With hardly any evidence, dire predictions were made about transmissibility, lethality and resistance to existing vaccines. It will be at least another week before virologists will be able to reach any conclusive results about omicron.

Some sense came from Angelique Coetzee, the South African doctor who first identified omicron as a COVID-19 variant, who spoke of "very, very mild symptoms," like fatigue and headaches, in the sufferers she had treated. None had been hospitalized and all were being treated at home, she said. That does not seem enough to risk bombing the global economic recovery.

Instead of contemplating what further restrictions to put in place, maybe policymakers should convene a task force to take urgent actions on the two main reasons omicron has surfaced: Resistance to vaccination in many parts of the world and lack of access to vaccines in the developing world, especially Africa.

Governments have been incredibly tolerant to the anti-vaxxers, but I sense that the exasperation is rising. There have been increasingly tough mandates in the US, for example, and the Europeans have also brought in a series of measures to dissuade the conspiracists from their stupidity, Austria being the most notable with its quarantine on unvaccinated people.

I personally like the French method, whereby anti-vaxxers can indulge their fantasies but at the cost of a daily PCR test if they want to leave their homes at all. A daily financial penalty will probably change quite a few stubborn minds.

There is one measure Western gov-

ernments can take that would make a significant and immediate difference: End vaccination poverty now. It seems incredible that, nearly two years into the pandemic and with more than 5 million people dead (a conservative estimate), the vaccination rollout appears to have ground to a halt. American and European governments seem more concerned about protecting the profits of their pharmaceutical companies than saving lives in Africa or Asia.

At least the Americans have attempted to waive patents on their vaccines, but have encountered opposition from the bureaucratic Europeans to any change in the existing patent rules. Meanwhile, members of the EU continue to stockpile vaccines rather than send them to Africa and elsewhere. The logic is unfathomable.

In the omicron response, we have to be cautious, of course. But the reaction so far has shown that we have learned little over the past two years and are doomed to repeat the same mistakes over and over again.

## Why Biden's frozen conflict policy is doomed to fail

Dr. Dania Koleilat Khatib



S President Joe Biden began his term in office with a vow to replace "forever wars" with "relentless diplomacy." Nevertheless, diplomacy needs enforcement. As the US retreats from world affairs, and especially from the Gulf region, it does not want to handle a collapse in Syria. In this sense, the administration sees that the status quo, though unsatisfactory, is the most realistic interim solution that ensures the least damage possible.

However, after the Nov. 23 missile attack on its Al-Hasakah base in Syria, the US might realize that a frozen conflict policy is unsustainable. As the outlook for a possible deal with Iran grows bleaker, the US needs a contingency plan to contain Iran's destabilizing activity in the region.

of course, diplomacy should continue, but there should also be a parallel course. This should work on reining in Iran in the region, as the US can no longer bank on a deal that will entice the

regime to ask its proxies to reduce their aggressive behavior. Here, the US should coordinate with allies and adopt a clear strategy along with comprehensive action plans.

The point is, there should be both carrot and stick in America's approach with Iran. The problem with the current US policy is its lack of balance. It has always been either offering a carrot or waving a stick. While Barack Obama adopted a laissez-faire approach, Donald Trump imposed impossible conditions.

Policies are usually disrupted and adjusted by events. When events take place, states are pushed to review their policies. Attacks such as last week's on Al-Hasakah show that America's hands-off approach emboldens Iran. Russia and Israel have an agreement under which the latter has a green light to bomb Iran and its proxies in Syria. Iran, feeling uncomfortable with this arrangement, is seeking to push the US out of Syria. This would increase its bargaining position with Russia and other players. Nevertheless, after the debacle in Afghanistan, a consensus in the US was reached to keep a small contingent in Syria.

US forces had been spared, up until a short while ago, by the Iranians, who do not want to spark a larger confrontation. They also do not want to disrupt the negotiations to return to the nuclear deal, since Iran's main objective remains to remove sanctions. But as the Israelis increase attacks on Iran, and as Tehran loses hope of a revival of the nuclear deal and the removal of sanctions, it will play hardball.

Iran views Syria as is its terrain and it is banking on the loyalty of Bashar Assad to maintain its presence there. It is now taking a more aggressive stand toward the US to save its presence in Syria. Last week's attack came a month after an attack on the Al-Tanf military base by a group called the Syria Allies Operations Room. The Iranian media, when reporting on the attack, made a comparison with Afghanistan and said that only military attacks drove the US out of that country. Iran is now banking on the US being intimidated by the attack and that it will eventually leave Syria. Nevertheless, Iran does not want an all-out confrontation. It wants to exhaust the US in Syria, hence the calculated attacks. Although it is not in Iran's interests to go to war with America, Tehran is assuming that sustained pressure on its positions will push Washington to leave Syria once and for all. Therefore, the US should expect more attacks of this sort. But the question is does the US have a plan, or will it leave and create more chaos, as it did in Afghanistan?

However, there is also a consensus in Washington that something should be done regarding Iran's proxies. Tehran is known to keep raising the bar until it gets a slap on the wrist. What will the US do now?

At some point, the US will have to take action, as it cannot afford chaos. As US Gen. David Petraeus, who led the 2007 surge in Iraq, has said: "The Middle East is not part of the world that plays by Las Vegas rules: What happens in the Middle East is not going to stay in the Middle East." Chaos in the region means a headache for the US and the West. Sooner or later, the US will realize that a passive approach aimed at freezing the conflict and avoiding a collapse is doomed to fail.

- Courtesy: Arab News

– Courtesy: Arab News

#### Briefs

US, Russia warn each...

From Page 01 "the Ukrainian leadership doesn't exclude a forceful scenario." "The probability of hostilities in Ukraine still remains high," Peskov said in a conference call with reporters. Denis Pushilin, the head of the self-proclaimed separatist republic in Donetsk, said on Russian state television that he could turn to Moscow for military assistance if the region faces a Ukrainian attack.

Ukrainian officials have denied an intention to reclaim the rebel regions by force. The two ex-Soviet neighbors have remained locked in a tense tug-of-war after Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014 following the ouster of the country's Kremlin-friendly president and threw its weight behind a separatist insurgency in Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland, known as the Donbas. More than 14,000 people have died in the fighting. President Vladimir Putin

has warned NATO against deploying its troops and weapons to Ukraine, saying it represented a red line for Russia and would trigger a strong response. He said Wednesday that Moscow would seek Western guarantees precluding any further NATO expansion and deployment of its weapons near Russia's borders. Blinken said "we have deep concerns about Russia's plans for renewed aggression against Ukraine," adding that "it's a concern that is shared by many in Europe."

#### Local bodies elections...

From Page 01

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa local bodies election will be held on December 19 while a new structure for village council will be introduced for Punjab. Fawad Chaudhry has said that the Punjab government has prepared an amendment in the local bodies bill to conduct it through electronic voting machines (EVMs). While sharing matters discussed during the PTI core committee meeting headed by Prime Minister Imran Khan, Fawad Chaudhry said that they are ready to hold elections through EVMs and will even pursue coalition parties to support the bill.

"The new amendment will pave way for the local bodies' elections in Punjab province," he said adding that the government would extend any cooperation needed to hold elections through the voting machines.

The minister further rejected the impression that EVM would prove costly and said that it would rather make the election process cheaper as the machine would be purchased for a single time and would be used in multiple elections. He further said that the government would provide funds for the EVM and elections to the Election Commission of Pakistan.

#### Opposition to boycott...

From Page 01 despite the absence of the prime minister, but also provided recommendations to solve the issues.

The Opposition's statement said that the government's dictatorial attitude and their recent move to bulldoze important bills in Parliament prompted it to boycott the in-camera briefing session. The press release stated that it was disappointing that the government was turning Parliament into a "rubber-stamp" institution

with its recent actions. The Opposition accused the government of not raising important issues related to external and internal threats and those concerning the common man, adding that it was tackling vital issues through such in-camera briefings.

"In reality, it is the government that has practically boycotted Parliament, which is a constitutional and legal forum of the public," said the Opposition's statement. The Opposition said that the prime minister had not attended Parliamentary briefings and sessions, giving an example of a ses sion on occupied Kashmir. The statement added that it indicates how the prime minister does not believe in the democratic spirit of consultation and the importance of tolerating differing opinions.

### COAS attends closing event of 41st PARA central meet

The biggest Military Shooting Honour 'The Master at Arms' Trophy was awarded to Lance Havildar Arshad Saddique of 12 Punjab Regiment

JHELUM: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) attended Closing Ceremony of the 41st Pakistan Army Rifle Association (PARA) Central Meet at Jhelum Garrison as Chief Guest. The mega shooting event was conducted at Army Marksmanship Unit from 26 October to 1 December 2021. Over 2500 firers from Army, Navy, Air Force, Civil Armed Forces (CAFs) including Rangers, Frontier Corps and Airport Security Force as well as civilians participated in the competition that comprised numerous events involving different ranges and types of weapons.

COAS awarded trophies and medals to the winners and runners up in each shooting category. In Inter Formations Competition, Multan Corps came first followed by Mangla Corps. In CAFs category, trophy has been won by Punjab Rangers while Gilgit Baltistan Scouts

Warholm, Thompson-Herah named World

**Athletes of the Year** 

PARIS: Norwegian 400m hurdler Karsten Warholm and Ja

maican sprinter Elaine Thompson-Herah were named the

World Athletes of the Year on Wednesday for sensational

performances at the Tokyo Olympics. Warholm received

the men's award for smashing the 29-year-old world re-

His performance is widely considered one of the great

Thompson-Herah took the women's award for achieving

the sprint double at a second consecutive Olympics. Al-

though her compatriot Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce was the

favourite for the 100m coming into the Games, Thomp-

son-Herah beat her to retain the short sprint title she

won five years earlier at the Rio Olympics. In the 200m

she held off 18-year-old Namibian revelation Christine

In addition to her Olympic triumphs, Thompson-Her

ah also clocked 10.54sec and 21.53sec over 100m and

200m respectively to move to second on the world all

I went very close to the world record so, you know, any

thing is possible. No spikes hanging up any time soon!" the

29-year-old said at the World Athletics ceremony in Mona-

time lists behind the late Florence Griffith Joyner.

Mboma to complete an Olympic 'double-double'.

cord to win the Olympic final in a time of 45.94sec.

est Olympic track performances of all time.



WASHINGTON:Tennis

stars threw their support

behind the WTA's move to

suspend its tournaments

in China over concern for

Peng Shuai, as calls grew

Thursday for other sports

to follow suit. The women's

tennis tour made the

decision over what

its chairman called

enduring "serious

doubts" about the

safety of Chinese

player Peng, who ac-

cused a Communist Par-

ty leader of sexual assault.

Women's Tennis Associa-

tion chair and CEO Steve Si-

mon reiterated his calls for

China to conduct "a full and

transparent investigation

Peng's claim that former

vice-premier Zhang Gaoli

without censorship" into

Tennis stars back 'bold' WTA

move to suspend China events

February. "This is a brave

雕刨

everywhere and particular-

ly for Peng Shuai," added

Navratilova. Pam Shriv-

er, another retired tennis

Steve Simon

and the WTA

put princi-

and stand up

for women

stance by

in tennis, among them

men's number one Novak

Djokovic and women's tour

It could potentially cost the

WTA hundreds of millions

of dollars because China is

one of its biggest markets.

Djokovic called the WTA's

stance "very bold and

while 12-time Grand

Slam singles win-

ner King tweet-

ed that the

WTA "is on

side

challenged

tory." Tennis

rectly

great Martina

Navratilova di-

courageous",

right

founder Billie Iean King.

were runners up. In Inter Services Matches, Pakistan Army won all the four contests including COAS, Chief of Air Staff (CAS) and Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) Matches . PAF remained runners up in COAS and CAS Matches while Pakistan Navy came second in CNS Match. Pakistan Army won Shotgun, Long Range and Small Bore Trophies in Open National Matches. Pakistan Army also won the Prime Minister 'Skills at Arms' Big Bore National Challenge while Pakistan Navy secured second position.

The biggest Military Shooting Honour 'The Master at Arms' Trophy was awarded to Lance Havildar Arshad Saddique of 12 Punjab Regiment. The President's Cup National Challenge Match Trophy was awarded to Havaldar Jaffar Hussain of Army Marksmanship Unit. The Prime Minister 'Skills at Arms' big bore National Challenge Match was won by Pakistan Army. The 'Best Shot Match Trophy' was awarded to Lance Dafadar Zulfigar Khan.

commentator, urged other

organisations to follow the

"What other human rights,

sports, cultural and po-

litical organisations will

join and collaborate with

tweeted. "It's a tough

road, but the correct

35-year-old Peng, a Wim-

bledon and French Open

doubles champion,

has been at the

centre of grave

international

concern for the

past month. She

was not seen for nearly

three weeks following her

allegations on the Twit-

ter-like Weibo that Zhang,

now in his 70s, coerced her

into sex during a years-long

on-off relationship. - DNA

the American

WTA's lead.

#### 'Pakistan-**UAE** relations...

From Page 01 It is the first ever World Expo in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (MENASA) region. In the spirit of our love for UAE, Pakistan has participated enthusiastically in the Expo". Qureshi said that economic and trade ties between Pakistan and UAE are an important part of our bilateral relationship and have been growing steadily. With bilateral trade of over \$ 8 billion, UAE remains Pakistan's largest trading partner in the Middle East and North Africa Region. It is also among the largest foreign investors in Pakistan. Concluding his address, Foreign Minister extended heartiest facilitations from the people and Government of Pakistan to the people of UAE and its leadership on the Golden Jubilee of their unification.

#### Macron labels Johnson...

From Page 01

Macron stated, adding that Johnson has apparently realised that Brexit is in fact a big mess. According to the journal, Macron points to fuel shortages and empty shelves as evidence, although many people have dismissed Brexit as the cause of the supply chain issues.

Macron apparently described his dealing with the prime minister as "a circus," noting that they will talk in person. and everything is fine, but then he goes and does something in "an inelegant way." The comment is seemingly a reference to Johnson's publication of a letter addressed to Macron on November 25 in which he outlines a plan to deal with the migrant crisis one day after 27 died in a failed English Channel crossing. Macron concluded that it is "very sad to see a great country, with which we could do a lot of things, led by a clown. A clown or a proud knucklehead? Or both?"

Relations between the UK and France have deteriorated to their worst in decades amid rows over Brexit, fishing and the AUKUS submarine pact. France reacted to Johnson's publicized letter last week by withdrawing an invitation to Home Secretary Priti Patel, who was due to meet with her French counterpart in Calais to discuss the migrant crisis. The French move was criticized for being counterproductive.

## Verstappen eyes title

If he succeeds and trims the Red Bull driver's eight-point advantage to just one, or even zero, in Sunday's race, the title will be decided by a final winner-takes-all showdown in Abu Dhabi on December 12. But Hamilton knows it is a perilous challenge and that he cannot afford to take any risks. Verstappen will take the title on Sunday if he wins and

"You just have to be very careful - more cautious than ever before," said Hamilton, stressing the importance of avoiding an accident. "You have to be ready to do whatever you can to avoid a collision even if it means leaving the track," he told Germany's Auto Motor Und Sport. "After all, you want to finish the race. If you are too stubborn and defend your position, you will crash." The 36-year-old Briton and Verstappen have collided twice already this year, at Silverstone and Monza, and had several near-misses in a roller-coaster season filled with incidents and arguments. "In Brazil, I made sure to avoid the collision," added Hamilton, referring to his offtrack excursion when forced wide by a lunging Verstappen. "I was always very decent in situations like this, I would say. Of course, you don't always get it done perfectly. - Agencies

"forced" her into sex. The the International Olympic co. She said the world championships in Oregon next year Committee to respond, WTA's move to suspend were "my next big target" and expressed hope that, unlike writing on Twitter that "so its tournaments in China, the empty stands at the Olympics where spectators were including Hong Kong, won far I can barely hear you!!!" banned because of the Covid-19 pandemic, she would be China will host the Beithe immediate backing of performing in front of a full house. - Agencies jing Winter Olympics in some of the biggest names

ANKARA: Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed and Senator Mushtaq Ahmed visited Pakistan embassy Ankara and met ambassador Syrus Qazi and exchanged views on Turkey-Pakistan relationship. Senators were on an official visit to attend 4th conference of the League of Parliamentarians for Al Quds. - DNA

### Hamilton looks to extend F1 race as

JEDDAH:Lewis Hamilton will bid to keep alive his hopes of a historic eighth Formula One world title at the inaugural Saudi Arabian Grand Prix this weekend, powered by the new engine that aided his remarkable triumph in Brazil. After consecutive victories in Sao Paulo and Qatar, Mercedes' defending champion seeks to complete a hat-trick, or see championship leader Max Verstappen suffer a setback, on the streets of the high-speed Jeddah Corniche Circuit.

Hamilton finishes outside the top six.

#### Indian diplomat summoned

From Page 01 Sanctity of religious places

and revered sites of every community is ensured in Pakistan. The Indian diplomat was instead told to urge the Government of India to investigate the incidents of gross and systematic persecution of minorities in India which continue with impunity and state complicity. Given its systematic marginalization and brutalization of minorities, India has no locus standi to even feign concern for minorities elsewhere.

Indian authorities must focus on ensuring effective protection of their own minorities and places of worship from repeated instances of desecration, hate crimes and mob lynching.

#### Real Madrid go seven points clear

LONDON: Karim Benzema applauded Real Madrid's fans after they chanted "Karim, Ballon d'Or" as his goal against Athletic Bilbao on Wednesday sent Madrid seven points clear at the top of La Liga. Benzema's 20th goal in 24 games this season proved the difference in a 1-0 victory at the Santiago Bernabeu that puts Madrid firmly in charge of the Spanish title race, even after only 15 games played.

'We're on a good run and I like the atmosphere right now in the team," said Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti. A run of seven consecutive wins in all competitions has helped pull Ancelotti's team away from the chasing pack and Benzema, along with the explosive Vinicius Junior, has been instrumental. Ancelotti insisted on Tuesday Benzema had not been "crying" about losing out to Lionel Messi in the Ballon d'Or on Monday, with the Frenchman finishing fourth in the final vote. - APP

### **Security plan for West Indies tour revealed**

"The only thing is we and the ECB must walk together because it's important for every board to understand each other, their frustrations, meet the expectations. I think the ECB also understood they committed a mistake by withdrawing, and it was a knee-jerk reaction," Raja added

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Rebuilding - this is something cricket in Pakistan has been familiar with ever since the unfortunate terrorist attack on Sri Lanka's cricket team back in 2009. Slowly but surely, through the

efforts of various PCB personnel occupying the managerial position, things improved over time; the PSL came back on home soil, World XI match was held, various Test-playing nations traveled to Pakistan including South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and international cricket was restored to Pakistan. The recovery phase was almost concluded until New Zealand decided to pull out of their tour to Pakistan this year citing a 'security threat'.

Following in New Zealand's footsteps, England also confirmed that won't be coming to Pakistan either. This created a lot of controversies and thus tainting Pakistan's reputation on the international stage once again.

In order to rectify the situation, the newly appointed Chairman of PCB Ramiz Raja opted to come



on the front foot and refused to accept blame for any potential threat, which was later widely accepted as a hoax.

This confrontation saw the Chairman of ECB Ian Watmore leave his position after just 13 months due to immense criticism over the cancellation of the Pakistan tour. After recognizing their mistake, a public apology was issued and the ECB boss Tom Harisson traveled to Pakistan to smooth over the differences and plan future tours. Following their meeting, Ramiz Raja shared his views with the media. "I'm thankful to the England Cricket Board (ECB), as it wasn't easy for them. They were under pressure and we became emotional when the pullout took place. Everyone saw how Pakistan made its case, and the result is they came here," said the

"The only thing is we and the ECB must walk together because it's important for every board to understand each other, their frustrations, meet the expectations. I think the ECB also understood they committed a mistake by withdrawing, and it was a knee-jerk reaction," Raja added.

PCB Chairman.

After fighting hard to restore the image on the international stage (again), the PCB is looking to ensure a seamless home tour against West Indies. In order to avoid any mishaps or slip-ups, the security for the tour has been increased.

#### NCOC allows PCB to host 100 per cent crowd

ISLAMABAD: A full capacity crowd at the National Stadium in Karachi will be allowed to watch the matches between Pakistan and West Indies. According to sources, the National Command and Control Center (NCOC) has allowed 100 per cent capacity after the request of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).

Meanwhile, the decision of allowing spectators in the HBL Pakistan Super League (PSL) season seven will be taken in the third week of December. On the other hand, the tickets sale for the West Indies series are expected to go live from Friday. The most expensive ticket is likely to cost Rs. 1,000 while tickets of Rs. 500 and Rs. 250 will also be available. Children up to the age of 12, who have been vaccinated, will also be able to come to the stadium with their families and enjoy the match. NCOC has directed PCB to follow all Covid-19 protocols for these matches. It must be noted that West Indies are scheduled to arrive in Karachi on December 9 for three-match T20I series and as many ODIs, part of the ICC World Cup Super League. - DNA

According to the sources, over 1500 personnel including 800 SSC Commandos and lady Commandos will be performing security duties during the tour.

The security personnel will be safeguarding National Stadium Karachi, Karachi airport, hotels, routes, and other undisclosed areas. Sharpshooters will also be deployed at sensi-

tive areas to ensure extra protection against any threat. The security plan also includes the presence of a specialised command and control team at the National Cricket stadium to maintain the law and order situation in and around the stadium. Shuttle service will be used to transport the spectators to the stadium to further reduce any risk element.

### Business / World



#### Briefs

#### Germany agrees new Covid restrictions

**AGENCIES** 

BERLIN: Germany's federal and state governments agreed on Thursday to measures aimed at tackling a fourth wave of COVID-19, including restrictions on the number of people who can meet inside and closures to discos and clubs above threshold case numbers.

"We have understood that the situation is very serious and that we want to take further measures in addition to those already taken," Chancellor Angela Merkel told a news conference.

"To do this, the fourth wave must be broken and this has not yet been achieved," she said, adding that a nationwide vaccination mandate could take effect from February 2022 after it is debated in the Bundestag and after guidance from Germany's Ethics Council.

#### 4 killed in roadside blast in Somalia

#### News Desk

MOGADISHU: At least four people were killed and several others wounded in a roadside bomb attack targeting a water hauling vehicle meant for drought victims in Somalia's Lower Juba region on Thursday, state media and police said. The IED was planted by the al-Shabaab terror group on the outskirts of Kismayo, a port city in the region, according to the Somali National Television.

The attack came hours after overnight gunfight and mortar shelling in central Somalia resulted in the death of at least two children.

The attackers targeted a military base of Djiboutian forces serving under the African Union Mission to Somalia in the town of Beledweyne, the capital of the Hiraan region, 344 kilometers (213 miles) from Mog-

"After midnight, al-Shabaah terrorists attacked our security forces base in Beledwevne, but we were able to repulse the attack and inflicted heavy casualties,' a security official in Beledweyne told Anadolu Agency. Separately, the country's National Intelligence and Security Agency said it killed at least 12 Somali-based al-Qaeda affiliated terrorists in a security operation in the capital on Wednesday night.

#### Greece reports 1st omicron variant case

#### Foreign Desk

ATHENS: The first case of the omicron variant of coronavirus has been detected on the Greek island of Crete, Health Minister Thanos Plevris announced

on Thursday. Plevris said at a press briefing in Athens that the Greek national has recently returned from South Africa to Chania, on the island of Crete, and that health authorities have taken the necessary procedures to follow his contacts. According to Theoklis Zaoutis, the head of the National Organization for Public Health (EODY), the man, whose identity has yet to be revealed, returned to the island on November 26 and took a rapid test, which revealed a COVID-19 negative result.

However, after the man developed a few mild symptoms on November 29, it was confirmed that he was infected with the virus, and authorities confirmed it was the new omicron variant on Thursday morning. He is currently quarantined, and his contacts have all tested negative, ac-

cording to officials. Meanwhile, Greek health experts advised that children aged 5 to 11 receive a lesser dose of the vaccine. On Wednesday, the parliament approved the mandatory vaccination against COVID-19 for all adults over the aged of 60. The immunization campaign for this age group will begin this month. Those who are not vaccinated will face a fine of 100 euros each month starting January 16.



BAKU: Minister of Defence Production Ms. Zobaida Jalal held an interaction with Pakistani community members at Pakistan House on 1st December. Minister is visiting Baku for Joint Ministerial Commission. - DNA

# Azerbaijan aims to ensure peace in South Caucasus

"Our main goal is to ensure lasting peace. We want to create such an ecosystem that will allow having different formats of cooperation. Transport and trade routes can open in the South Caucasus"

#### **DNA**

BAKU: Azerbaijan aims to ensure lasting peace in the South Caucasus region, presidential aide Hikmat Hajiyev has said. He made the remarks during the Peace4Culture Partners Forum 2021 held

in Baku on December 2. "Our main goal is to ensure lasting peace. We want to create such an ecosystem that will allow having different formats of cooperation. Transport and trade routes can open in the South Caucasus," Hajiyev said. He noted that the 44-day war and Azerbai-

in the South Caucasus. Speaking about the situation on the Azerbaijani-Armenian border, the presidential aide noted that it is stable. "Our servicemen are serving on the sovereign territories of our

Pakistan can

explore system to

increase exports

BEIJING: "With the development of the ICT industry and

accelerating technical training for ICT personnel, Pakistan

can combine its advantages in software services, explore

export channels in system integration services, and use ICT

technology to serve the digital transformation and upgrad-

This was stated by Wang Lufeng, Dean, Artificial Intelli-

gence and Big Data Dept. of Chongqing Industry Polytech-

CQIPC has been training ICT talents for Pakistan since

2018, and the third Pakistan ICT middle and senior manage-

ment training course in 2021 in cooperation with HUAWEI

is in full swing. Mr. Wang shared his views on strengthen-

ing vocational college cooperation and ICT cooperation be-

"Our college, in conjunction with Huawei Technology Co.,

Ltd., has innovated the three-dimensional training model of

'skills-management-corporate culture', training new ICT tal-

ents who can adapt to technological renewal and corporate

culture, and serve export-oriented local enterprises to go

abroad, so as to alleviate the shortage of ICT management

talents in Pakistan." the dean explained. - Agencies

nic College (CQIPC) in an interview to Gwadar Pro.

ing of traditional fields.'

tween China and Pakistan.

jan's victory opened up great opportunities

The presidential aide also spoke about the mine threat issue raised by Azerbaijan before the international community.

He stressed that the mass mining of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia was aimed at delaying as long as possible the ongoing reconstruction and the return of former IDPs. "We once again appeal to the international community, it is necessary to increase awareness on this issue. Azerbaijan needs support in de-mining. We ask citizens not to visit the liberated territories without permission," he added.

Speaking about the deadly military helicopter crash in Azerbaijan, Hajiyev said that necessary efforts are being made to inform the public in a timely manner about the reasons for the crash.

"This is evidenced by our experience during the war, the activities of state communica-



tions on issues related to the activities of the armed forces. In some cases, there is a need for certain serious investigations, inspections," he said. He underlined that one of the main conditions is to provide reliable.

complete information to the public after serious investigations are conducted.

"It should be borne in mind that a person's life is concerned in such cases. Families should be properly involved. I would like to note that the Azerbaijani media have shown professionalism. The provision of inaccurate information by the media was prevented. But unfortunately, we did not see this on social networks. It is important that the society, the people working in the media, should be as sensitive to these issues as possible," he added. The presidential aide stressed the necessity to minimize references to the Armenian media, as enough false information is being spread.

He noted that the circulation of inaccurate information by the Armenian media is connected with the ongoing processes in Armenia. "Such information is spread in Armenia for local people," he said.



with M Madikiza, High Commissioner of South Africa in Pakistan. - DNA

#### China summons Japanese ambassador

BEIJING: China's foreign ministry summoned Japan's ambassador in Beijing for an "emergency meeting" on Wednesday evening after former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said neither his country nor the United States could stand by if China attacked Taiwan. Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Hua Chunying called Abe's remarks "erroneous" and a violation of basic norms of relations between China and Japan in the meeting with ambassador Hideo Tarumi, according to a statement from China's foreign ministry. Abe's comments "openly challenged China's sovereignty and gave brazen support to Taiwan independence forces", it cited Hua as saying. Speaking during a virtual address with the Institute for Nation-

al Policy Research, a think-tank in Taiwan, Abe on Wednesday warned of the serious security and economic consequences of any Chinese military action against Taiwan and urged Beijing "not to step onto a wrong path".

"Military adventure would lead to economic suicide," the veteran politician added. A Chinese invasion of Taiwan would constitute a significant threat to Japan and therefore "an emergency for the Japan-US alliance", he said. - Web Desk

## Bus attack

DAMASCUS: At least 10 oil field workers were killed Thursday in an attack on their bus in eastern Syria's Deir Ezzor province, state media reported.

'Ten workers Al-Kharata oil field were martyred and another was wounded in a terrorist attack on a bus transporting them back from work," the official SANA news agency said, without elaborating. It was not immediately clear who was responsible.

But the Islamic State group has regularly claimed operations in the oil-rich province that was once a part of its sprawling proto-state straddling Syria and Iraq. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said an explosive device was used in the bus attack in an area of Deir Ezzor where "IS sleeper cells are active". Al-Kharata oil field lies 20 kilometres (12 miles) southwest of Deir Ezzor city, said the Observatory.

Regime forces recaptured it in 2017 after IS jihadists were expelled from the area, the Observatory said. The IS group's self-proclaimed caliphate was declared defeated in Syria in the riverside hamlet of Baghouz in March 2019 following a gruelling US-backed offensive. But the group still attacks government forces from hideouts in the vast Syrian desert, which stretches all the way from the Damascus outskirts to the Iraqi border. - APP

### US defense chief slams China's drive for hypersonic weapons

#### AGENCIES

SEOUL: America's defense chief rebuked China on Thursday, vowing to confront its potential military threats in Asia and warning that its pursuit of hypersonic weapons intended to evade U.S. missile defenses "increases tensions in the region."

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's stern comments after annual security talks with South Korea, a top U.S. ally, are a window into one of the Biden administration's top foreign policy worries: How should Washington and its partners contain a Chinese military that is strengthening - both in sheer firepower and in confidence - as it pursues an end of American dominance in Asia? China sees much of Asia as its natu-

ral sphere of influence. But many in the region warn of a pattern of Chinese interference, accompanied by moves to acquire the weapons needed to dominate its rivals. Austin's comments were directed at China's July test of a hypersonic weapon capable of partially orbiting Earth before reentering the atmosphere and gliding on a maneuverable path

Experts say the weapons system is clearly designed to evade U.S. missile defenses, although China insisted it was testing a reusable space vehicle, not a missile.

to its target.

"We have concerns about the military capabilities that the PRC continues to pursue, and the pursuit of those capabilities increases tensions in the region." Austin said about the hypersonic weapons test, using the abbreviation for the

country's official name.

"We'll continue to maintain the capabilities to defend and deter against a range of potential threats from the PRC to ourselves and to our allies," he said.

The Pentagon released on Monday the results of a global posture review that calls for additional cooperation with allies to deter "potential Chinese military aggression and threats from North Korea."

Last month, Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the United States is also working on hypersonic weapons. But there is worry in Washington that it is lagging behind China and Russia in pursuing these types of weapons. Russia said Monday its navy successfully tested a prospective hypersonic cruise missile.

### **EU agrees on more sanctions against Belarus**

For weeks, thousands of migrants have been stranded in the freezing forests and swamplands of the Poland-Belarus border, as Warsaw has closed the frontier and prevented them from crossing over

#### **News Desk**

BRUSSELS: Diplomats of the European Union (EU) have agreed to add 28 individuals and bodies to a list of sanctions against Belarus, repeating claims that Minsk is luring migrants to the border with Poland in retaliation for existing EU sanctions.

On Wednesday, senior EU envoys said that they had approved a list of punitive measures against Belarus drawn up by the European Commission.

The new targets, according to the

EU ministers, include 17 officials and 11 companies or official bodies from Belarus. The ministers are expected to formally ratify the decision on Thursday.

For weeks, thousands of migrants have been stranded in the freezing forests and swamplands of the Poland-Belarus border, as Warsaw has closed the frontier and prevented them from crossing over. The refugees, mostly from West Asia, Afghanistan, and Africa, are trying to enter the EU.

Poland has sent armored vehicles and troops to the border, with Belarusian President Alexander



Lukashenko accusing Warsaw of blackmailing his country with the military build-up on the frontier. The crisis escalated last month when hundreds of the asylum seekers tried to enter Poland illegally but were pushed back, often

brutally, by Polish security forces. At least 12 migrants have so far lost their lives since the crisis began in the summer, aid groups say, calling for de-escalation and a humanitarian response to the problem.

Minsk has adamantly dismissed the allegation that it has lured the migrants to the border.

The European Union has previously slapped sanctions on 166 people and bodies, including Lukashenko himself and two of his sons, over an alleged crackdown on protests over his disputed 2020

Separately on Wednesday, the United States said that it too would announce new sanctions against Belarus.

"I think you will very soon see a sanctions package that's been coordinated" between the US and the EU, AFP quoted an unnamed senior US State Department offi-

cial as saying. After Polish police fired tear gas and water cannons at people trying to cross the border last month, Belarus began moving hundreds of the refugees to shelters, offering them their first humanitarian aid in weeks.

#### Russia says detains three Ukrainian spies

MOSCOW: Russia said Thursday that it had detained three Ukrainian spies - adding that one had been planning a terrorist attack - as tensions spike around Ukraine's conflict with pro-Russia separatists. The FSB domestic intelligence agency did not say where or when it had detained the Ukrainians.

It said two of the alleged spies - a father and son were agents of Ukraine's SBU security service who had "travelled to Russia to collect information and take photographs and videos of strategically important enterprises and objects of transport infrastructure."

The pair confessed to having been recruited by the SBU, the FSB said, which offered them a fee of \$10,000. The third Ukrainian, who

planned to carry out an attack, "was recruited and acted on the instructions" of a top Ukrainian intelligence officer, the FSB said.

"The attack was planned to be carried out by detonating two improvised explosive devices with a total mass of 1.5 kilogrammes in a TNT equivalent," the FSB said in a statement. - APP

#### Erdogan replaces finance minister

#### WEB DESK

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has replaced the country's finance minister after weeks of economic turmoil in which inflation soared as the lira plummeted to record lows.

The currency has lost more than 40 percent of its value against the US dollar this year, making it the worst-performing of all emerging market currencies. According to a presidential decree issued near midnight on Wednesday, Erdogan accepted the resignation of Lutfi Elvan and appointed his deputy, Nureddin Nebati, as the new finance minister.

Nebati, 57, has a bachelor's degree in public administration and a master's degree in social sciences from Istanbul University. He also holds a doctoral degree in political science and public administration from Turkey's Kocaeli University.

His predecessor had only been in the role since November 2020, when he was appointed after the resignation of Erdogan's sonin-law, Berat Albayrak. Elvan's year-long tenure was marked by numerous crises. Earlier on Wednesday, the Turkish Central Bank intervened in markets to prop up the nosediving lira, which has lost nearly 30 percent in value against the dollar in just a month.

#### kills 10 oil workers in east Syria



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#### **Briefs**

#### **Abbasi** demands fresh **elections**

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-

(PML-N) leader and former prime min-

ister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi Thursday said the solution to Pakistan's problems lies in preventing vote theft and holding free and fair new elections.

Addressing a rally in Kohistan Dasu, the former prime minister said that never in the history of the country has there been so much inflation as in these three years of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

He stressed that elections should not be rigged, public opinion should be respected and free and fair elections should be held, now everyone in every house is worried. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that Fawad Chaudhry and PML-N have nothing to do with the affidavit of Rana

Fawad Chaudhry does not know the constitution or the law. Our position regarding National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has always been strict. He said that NAB did not see any corruption without PML-N. PML-N speaks for the people of Pakistan and not for power, He said that everyone knows this government. PML-N is the only party that will save the country. Dasu Dam and Diamer Bhasha Dam are projects of Nawaz Sharif. PML-N will solve the problems of Kohistan.

#### Germany announces new curbs for unvaccinated

#### **News Desk**

MUNICH: Germany announced a series of tough new restrictions targeting people who have not been vaccinated against Covid-19, outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel announced Thursday, the latest country to crackdown on vaccine holdouts to combat soaring coronavirus cases and ease the burden on overwhelmed hospitals. The new restrictions will mean unvaccinated people are barred from almost all businesses and public spaces, Merkel announced, citing Germany's "very serious" coronavirus situation as an explanation for the new measures. There will also be caps on the numbers of people who can attend indoor venues like nightclubs. Vaccination could become compulsory from February, Merkel said, pending approval from Germany's federal parliament, the Bundestag.

#### Iran: Nuclear deal 'within reach'

TEHRAN: Iran's top diplomat said Thursday that an agreement to revive his country's nuclear deal with world powers was "within reach" but it depended on the goodwill of the West.

The ball is now in Washington's court, the Islamic repub lic said. Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said on Twitter that negotiations in Vienna were "proceeding with seriousness" and the removal of sanctions was a "fundamental priority"

The talks resumed on Monday after Iran paused them in June following the election of ultraconservative President Ebrahim Raisi. European diplomats had

warned on Tuesday that "we don't have the luxury to spend time on niceties" and they would assess the "seriousness" of Iran's position in the next 48 hours.

In his tweet, the foreign minister said experts' talks were continuing and that he was in daily contact with his deputy and lead negotiator, Ali Bagheri. "Good deal within reach if the West shows goodwill. We seek rational, sober and result-oriented dialogue," said Amir-Abdollahian. – APP

### UAE keen to solidify ties with Pakistan: Amb. Alzaabi

Says the UAE has moved rapidly from a pearl industry to a fully diversified modern economy that is now leading the world in technology, science, and sustainability

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of UAE Hamad Alzaabi has said on 2 December 2021, the UAE celebrated the 50th anniversary of the union of the seven emirates. This occasion marks a sincere reflection of the federation's journey rich in monumental events and achievements, building on the foundation that was first laid down by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and his brothers, the fellow founding

He added, since its foundation on December 2, 1971, the UAE has followed the principle of promoting security, peace and sustainable development in various parts of the region and the world. Through his vision, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan guided the UAE towards the adoption of a successful and

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and

Qatar on Thursday have re-

iterated their resolve to fur-

ther strengthen the mutual

ties through education and

It was decided during a meet-

ing between the Ambassador

of State of Qatar to Pakistan

Shaikh Saoud bin Abdulrah-

man Al Thani and the Federal

Minister for Education, Pro-

fessional Training, National

Heritage and Culture Shafqat

Mahmood held at Ministry of

Federal Education to discuss

SHUJAAT HAMZA

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the

Prime Minister on Finance

and Revenue Shaukat Tarin

has filed his nomination

papers for a vacant Senate

seat of Khyber Pakthunkh-

wa in line with the govern-

ment's bid to reappoint him

The Election Commission

of Pakistan (ECP) said

Thursday Shaukat Tarin's

nomination papers were

filed by Khyber Pakhtunkh-

wa Minister for Finance

Taimur Saleem Jhagra and

Khyber Pakthunkhwa Min-

ister for Higher Education

and Information Kamran

Khan Bangash at the elec-

tion commission's Pesha-

war office.

as the finance minister.

State of Qatar has also offered five seats, every year

Shaukat Tarin files

nomination papers

for Senate seat

cultural activities.

active foreign policy based on balance, moderation, and non-interference in internal affairs of other countries, in acknowledgement of the role and responsibility the UAE holds at regional and international levels.

He added, the country under Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, continues its journey, emphasizing, deepening and developing this dimension through great contributions at various humanitarian, political and economic levels, inspired by these Policies are the thoughts, etiquette, and values of the rulers of the Emirates.

Talking about bilateral relations he said, he felt blessed and honored to celebrate the golden jubilee anniversary of UAE in my second home the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and gladly celebrating 50 years of PAK-UAE historical and friendly relations

Pakistan, Qatar agree to strengthen educational ties



Over the past 50 years, the UAE has moved rapidly from a pearl industry to a fully diversified modern economy that is now leading the world in technology, science. and sustainability. A hub for trade and logistics for centuries due to its unique position, the modern UAE has a global presence that focuses on innovation, technology, and education. Founded on the values of tolerance, equality, inclusion, moderation, and generosity, the UAE stands for diplomacy over conflict, partnerships over unilateralism, and dialogue over confrontation

The UAE believes that the most pressing threats to human development, such as food insecurity, violent conflict, global health, and climate change, can be overcome through international cooperation, as we witnessed in the challenging covid-19 pandemic. The opening of Expo 2020 Dubai on first of October 2021 marked the conclusion of five decades of achievements, marking the launch of the next fifty years strategic projects.

Expo 2020 is the largest economic and cultural event which happening for the first time in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia region, where 192 countries gathering under the theme "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future", and provides an ideal opportunity for every participating country to showcase their history, heritage and technology advancement.

The UAE is a resourceful and progressive nation that constantly seeks to better itself and the world around it. It is founded on the values of tolerance, equality, inclusion, moderation, resilience, and generosity.

The UAE has developed a unique model that benefits the entire Middle East - one that empowers women, embraces diversity, encourages innovation, and welcomes global engagement. The UAE Government is constantly working to enhance the economy's competitiveness and sustainability and provide new investment opportunities, particularly in the fields of technology, space, food security, and

#### **UN food agency** urges support for Afghanistan

**DNA** 

UNITED NATIONS: With millions in Afghanistan facing starvation as winter arrives, the World Food Programme (WFP), a Rome-based UN agency, on Thursday urged countries to put politics aside and step up support to avert a potential catastrophe.

Humanitarian needs in the country had increased, the agency said, with all 34 provinces facing crisis or emergency levels of food insecurity. As a result, some 23 million Afghans require urgent food assistance, a figure never seen before. This includes more than three million children who are at risk of severe hunger and the life-threatening consequences of malnutrition. "The international community has very real concerns and at this time we need to separate the humanitarian imperative from the political discussions," said Mary-Ellen McGroarty, WFP's Afghanistan Country Director.

"The people of Afghanistan, the innocent people of Afghanistan, the children of Afghanistan who have had their lives upended through no fault of their own, cannot be condemned to hunger and starvation just because of the lottery of geopolitics and the lottery of birth." WFP is seeking US \$ 2.6bn for its operations in Afghanistan over the coming year. WFP said visits to remote areas of the country have revealed the plight of citizens coping amid the impacts of a prolonged drought, economic collapse and Covid pandemic, coming on top of years of conflict, which culminated in the Taliban's takeover of the country in August.



matters pertaining to the bilateral relations. Qatar has offered to Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training the highest standard Primary school to build in Islamabad for Pakistani Students by Qatar Foundation; a non profit organization made up of more than fifty entities working in Education, Research and Community Development. The Embassy of State of Qatar would also offer scholarships to those students whose parents can not aford the fee, said the Ambassador of State of Qatar.

Tarin was appointed as the

finance minister in April

during a cabinet reshuffle,

however, his stint had ended

in October, and the govern-

ment changed his portfolio

to an advisor on finance, as

a non-elected person can re-

main a federal minister for

Following the expiry of the

six-month period, the said

person needs to get elected

in either the Senate or the

National Assembly to con-

tinue working as a federal

Last month, PTI's Ayub

Afridi had resigned from

the Senate to make way

for Tarin. As per the rules,

when a seat falls vacant, the

Election Commission of Pa-

kistan is bound to hold elec-

tions on it within 30 days.

six months.

minister.

in Hammad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) to Paki stani students along with free accommodation and salary. On completion of their graduation, these Pakistani Students would also be given job in Qatar. While expressing his gratitude for the offers, Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training

Shafqat Mahmood has said, Pakistan has very close and cordial relationship with the State of Qatar and



CAIRO: DGJS Lt Gen Mohammed Waseem calls on Commander in Chief of Egyptian Armed Forces, Minister of defense and military production during ongoing EDEX 2021. - DNA

### **Chairman NAB lauds KP Bureau's performance**

Chairman NAB was told that NAB KP has process 56,397 complaint verifications, 1,940 inquiries and 765 investigations since it's inception as per law. The bureau has filed 368 corruption references in learned Accountability Court Peshawar

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Justice Javed Iqbal Chairman NAB during his visit of NAB Khyber Pakhtunkhwa lauded the excellent performance of NAB KP Regional Bureau.

Chairman visited the bureau where Director General NAB, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Brig (Retd) Farooq Naser Awan gave a detailed briefing to chairman NAB regarding ongoing mega corruption cases

Chairman NAB was told that NAB KP has process 56,397 complaint verifications, 1,940 inquiries and 765 investigations since it's inception as per law. The bureau has filed 368 corruption references in learned Accountability Court Peshawar.

DG, NAB told that the provincial bureau KP has so far recovered Rs 12,621 million from corrupt people.

Due to effective effective and vigorous pleading of cases, the learned Accountability courts had convicted 51 accused persons in the last four years. It was further informed that NAB KP had distributed millions of rupees recovered from fake housing societies among the affectees. Chairman NAB lauded the excellent performance of NAB, Khyber Pakhtunkhkwa.

Speaking on the occasion, chairman NAB said NAB, NAB KP is an important regional

bureau of NAB which has played pivotal role in enhancing overall performance of NAB. He said corruption was the main cause of all ills being confronted by the country. Corruption is also biggest hurdle in development and prosperity of the country. NAB is a national institution having the services of dedicated officers who consider eradication of corruption as part of their faith. NAB has first and last affiliation with state of Pakistan and bureau is pursuing the policy of

accountability for all. He said business community was the jugular vein of development and prosperity of the country. NAB respects business community. NAB has referred the cases related to sales tax, income tax and under invoicing to FBR for further processing.

NAB always respects the persons and institutes performing their duties as per law. NAB also respects their self esteem. NAB has strengthened its monitoring and

signed memorandum of understanding with China for monitoring projects of CPEC. Reputed national and international institutes including transparency international, international economic forum, PILDAT and Global Peace, Canada has lauded the performance of NAB. The bureau is role model in Saarc countries. NAB is focal institute of UN anti corruption convention. Quaid e Azam in his 1947 address had termed corruption and nepotism as a big curse. NAB has summoned the untouchable people but also questioned about their looted money. NAB presents an accused in court within 24 hours of arrest.

performance of the bureau.

evaluation system for capacity building of

its officers. The bureau has also started

refresher courses for officers on modern

scientific lines. This would held enhancing

He said NAB is the only institute which

cused after evaluating evidence. There is a difference between white collar crimes and common cases. Plea bargain is done under the relevant law, which is also consented by the relevant court. Chairman lauded the performance of NAB, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa headed by Brig (Retd) Farooq Nasir Awan and hoped that NAB, KP will leave no stone unturned in performing their duties.

Court awards physical remand of the ac-

Pak issues 136 visas to Hindu pilgrims

**DNA** 

NEW DELHI: The Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi has issued as many as 136 visas to Hindu pilgrims for visit to their religious sites in the country.

A large number of pilgrims from the neighbouring country is expected to visit Pakistan to participate in the 313th birth anniversary celebrations of Shiv Avtari Satguru Sant Shadaram Sahib. The celebrations will be held at Shadani Darbar Hayat Pitafi in Sindh's Ghotki from Dec 4 to 15.

Shadani Darbar, founded by Sant Shadaram Sahib in 1786, is a sacred place for Hindu devotees across the globe. "Issuance of pilgrimage visas to Hindu & Sikh pilgrims is in line with the Government of Pakistan's efforts for facilitating visits to religious shrines," the high commission said in a

statement. "It's also reflective of Pakistan's respect for religious places of all faiths and efforts for promoting interfaith harmony." Last month, the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi had issued around 3,000 visas to Indian Sikh pilgrims to participate in Baba Guru Nanak's 552nd birth anniversary celebrations in Kartarpur.

#### Twitter shuts 'propaganda' accounts in six countries

SAN FRANCISCO: Twitter on Thursday said it had shut down nearly 3,500 accounts that were posting pro-government propaganda in six countries, including China and Russia.

The vast majority of the accounts were part of a network that "amplified Chinese Communist Party narratives related to the treatment of the Uvghur population in Xinjiang,' Twitter said in a statement. China faces accusations of grave human rights violations against the ethnic minority in the northwestern province, where experts have estimated that more than one million people are incarcerated in camps.

Aside from 2,048 accounts linked to the pro-Beijing campaign, Twitter also shut down 112 accounts connected to a company named Changyu Culture, linked to Xinjiang's regional government. The move came a day after Facebook's parent company Meta said it had shut down more than 500 accounts that were part of a China-linked influence campaign relating to Covid-19. The accounts promoted claims from a fictitious Swiss biologist, Wilson Edwards, that the United States was interfering in efforts to identify the origins of the coronavirus. -APP

#### Pak soldier serving UN Mission martyred

**DNA** 

RAWALPINDI: A Pakistani soldier Havaldar Muhammad Shafiq embraced Shahadat (martyrdom) while serving in the United Nations Mission in Central African Republic (CAR) ensuring protection and peace of the local masses.

The funeral prayer of the soldier was offered at his native town in Mian Channu, Khanewal, where the Shaheed (martyred) soldier was buried with full military honours, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) media release here received on Thursday.

Havaldar Muhammad Shafiq had joined the UN Mission in February 2021. He was a brave and dedicated member of the Pakistan contingent ensuring protection of civilians in CAR and facilitating delivery of humanitarian assistance.

So far, 162 Pakistani peacekeepers have laid down their lives as part of global mission for international peace and stability. Shaheed Havaldar Muhammad Shafiq is survived by his wife and three sons.

