



Islamabad POST

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Ch Fawad traces historical, religious Pak-Thai linkages

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Pope criticizes Europe over migrant issue

Detailed News On Page-08



Owen joins Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Iran won't walk back demands

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani said on Sunday that the Islamic Republic of Iran won't walk back its demands on removing US sanctions against the Iranian nation. In an interview with the Italian news agency ANSA, Bagheri Kani said that the US was the party that left the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2018, so it was up to Washington to take the first step. Bagheri Kani serves as Iran's top negotiator in the talks in Vienna between Iran and the remaining participants in the JCPOA.

Missions not facing financial issues: FO

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Spokesperson of Foreign Office on Sunday termed as entirely baseless, irresponsible and mala fide, the social media posts and related news reports in sections of the media alluding to financial difficulties faced by some Pakistan missions abroad. In response to media queries, he said, "this deliberate disinformation attempt is outrightly rejected as all Pakistan Missions continue to be provided the requisite resources for effective functioning in accordance with relevant financial and budgetary rules and regulations."

No one can dare topple govt

DNA

PESHAWAR: Defence Minister Pervez Khattak on Sunday said no one can dare topple the government of Prime Minister Imran Khan. "There's no chance of an in-house change," the senior PTI minister said while addressing a ceremony in Peshawar on Sunday. "I stand firm in support of Prime Minister Imran Khan." Khattak further said, "The situation due to the inflation will get better once the gap between the demand and supply improves".

Lankan man's wife pleads for justice

Six more arrested; Police have also arrested the man who took a selfie with Kumara's body



LAHORE: Dead body of the Sri Lanka national being transported to his country. - DNA

ABID RAZA / DNA

LAHORE: Punjab police arrested six 'prime suspects' in Sialkot tragedy with the assistance of CCTV footage and mobile calls data during the past 12 hours. The Punjab police spokesperson on Sunday said that the accused were seen in the CCTV footage while torturing the Sri Lankan manager. Some of the accused were holding batons while others were also torturing the slain foreigner, the spokesperson added. Meanwhile, the grieving wife of Priyantha Kumara has pleaded for justice for her slain husband from both Pakistani and Sri Lankan leaders. In the new video, Malik Adnan could be seen lying on the Sri Lankan manager's body in order to protect him and imploring the frenzied youth not to attack him since he was a non-Muslim and had no idea what was written on the sticker. "I give you a guarantee that not only will I sack Kumara but will also get an FIR registered against him," he could be heard saying to the frenzied youth in the video.

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Cabinet meeting summoned to discuss Sialkot tragedy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan will chair the session of the federal cabinet on Tuesday to discuss a 17-point agenda. The federal cabinet will review the political, economic and security situation of the country. The cabinet will also discuss the Sialkot incident while the federal cabinet would be taken into confidence regarding the investigation being carried out in the case. The federal cabinet would be briefed on vacant posts of MDs, CEOs in different national institutions. The meeting will give approval to visa process for international NGOs. OGRA report 2019-20 will be presented in the cabinet meeting while the appointment of CEOs in Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPSCO) and Tribal Areas Electricity Supply Company (TESCO) has been included in cabinet's 17-point agenda. In a previous cabinet meeting, the session approved gas load management plan for the winter season in order to better deal with the gas shortage. The federal cabinet session had approved the supply of 50,000 metric tons of wheat to Afghanistan on a humanitarian basis.

Indian villagers burn army vehicles

An army officer said the soldiers fired at a truck after receiving intelligence

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: Angry villagers in India burned army vehicles in protest after more than a dozen people were killed by soldiers who mistakenly believed some of them were militants in the country's remote northeast region along the border with Myanmar, officials said on Sunday. Nagaland state's top elected official Neiphiu Rio ordered a probe into the killings, which occurred on Saturday, and he tweeted, "The unfortunate incident leading to the killing of civilians at Oting is highly condemnable." An army officer said the soldiers fired at a truck after receiving intelligence about a movement of

Continued on Page 06

Indian troops kill 13 villagers

WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: Indian security forces have killed at least 13 civilians in a botched ambush near the Myanmar border, officials say. An army patrol mistakenly opened fire on miners returning home after work, killing six. Seven more civilians and an Indian soldier died when angry locals confronted troops. Home Minister Amit Shah said he was "angushed" and vowed to investigate.

Continued on Page 06



KABUL: Humanitarian aid from the French govt for the Afghan people arrives in Kabul. -DNA

LAHORE ELECTION

PML N retains Lahore seat
Shaista Malik filed application against polling staff

DNA

LAHORE: The unofficial results NA-133 by-elections were announced on Sunday as Shaista Malik was announced winner. According to the unofficial results of all 254 polling stations of the constituency, PML-N representative Shaista Malik Parveiz has emerged victorious by bagging 46,811 votes while the PPP's representative Aslam Gill remained runner up and captured 32,313 votes. Earlier, Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz's (PML-N) candidate Shaista Malik Pervaiz filed application against polling staff of constituency NA-133 on Sunday. As per details, the candidate stated that in the polling station of constituency 232, 233 and 234 the presiding officers were involved.

FM Qureshi to visit Brussels from Dec 6-8

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: At the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Belgium Sophie Wilmes, Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi will be visiting Brussels from 6-8 December, 2021. Pakistan and Belgium enjoy a cordial and friendly relationship, based on shared values of democracy, pluralism,

Continued on Page 06

Nations warn Taliban over targeted killings

The 22 nations demanded that the Islamist regime respect its pledge

NEWS DESK

LONDON: The US and a host of allied countries have called on the Taliban to end the targeted killings of former members of Afghan security forces. In a joint statement, the 22 nations demanded that the Islamist regime respect its pledge not to harm former government or security personnel. "We are deeply concerned by reports of summary killings and enforced disappearances", the statement says. It follows a damning report on killings and abductions by the Islamist regime. Released by the Human Rights Watch earlier this week, the report documented more than 100 executions and abductions of former Afghan government officials since the Taliban took control of the country almost four months ago. It also documented the murder of 47 members of the Afghan security forces who surrendered to, or were captured by, the Taliban between 15 August and 31 October. This is despite the regime's assurance that previous government workers would not be harmed.

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Pakistan to host OIC moot on Afghanistan

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will host the extraordinary meeting of foreign ministers from the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) as well as representatives of the powerful countries later this month in order to develop a joint strategy to prevent humanitarian crisis and economic collapse in Afghanistan. Invitation is being sent to the Taliban interim government while permanent members of UN Security Council, representatives of European Union, World Bank as well as other international financial institutions would also be requested to join the council of foreign ministers of OIC on December 19 in Islamabad.

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Economic stability: Romanian envoy all praise for Pakistan govt efforts

Says in the fierce battle with the pervert virus we have lost so many precious lives and there is so much pain and sufferings that we need solidarity more than ever

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Romania Nicolae Goia has said Pakistan represents an important partner for Romania in the South Asian region. We acknowledge Pakistan's efforts in fighting terrorism, militancy and radical extremism and hope that these endeavours will continue to be an important part of international war on terror. Ambassador Goia expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of National Day of Romania. Governor KPK Shah Farman was the chief guest on the occasion while a large number of guests from various walks of life were invited to be part of the National Day celebrations. Ambassador Goia further said, in spite of these challenges, which obviously affected the advancement of many economic projects, we welcome the positive dynamics of the Pakistani economy, which are witnessing despite the obstacle created by the pandemic situation, a steady and robust econom-



ic growth, as well as the opportunities created for the foreign companies interested in doing business in Pakistan. "We are eager to work with our Pakistani friends and partners for taking forward the bilateral agenda, as well as the cooperation within the EU-Pakistan framework and in multi-lateral formats, especially in the UN. I warmly welcome the spirit of Romania-Pakistan relations, characterized by friendship and collaboration and the new dynamism witnessed in the recent years with a result driven

political dialogue reflecting a clear desire of both states for developing a pragmatic relationship in fields of mutual interests". The ambassador said, we are living in a complicated period of mankind history, over the past two years the challenges the world is facing having multiplied many folds particularly by the Covid 19. In the fierce battle with the pervert virus we have lost so many precious lives and there is so much pain and sufferings that we need solidarity more than ever before to win this absurd and illogical war and to have our lives back. The 1st of December 1918 represented the main event in the history of modern Romania, when the great Assembly in Alba-Iulia voted to unite Transylvania with Romania thus creating a unitary state. Building on a 100-year history, December 1st was adopted as Romania's National Day in 1990, but had grown into a meaningful celebration for Greater Romania since 1918.

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Briefs

SAARC CCI
condemns
Sialkot
incident

DNA

LAHORE: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry, an apex trade body in the region Sunday strongly condemned the lynching of Sri Lankan factory General Manager in Sialkot, Pakistan.

President SAARC Chamber Iftikhar Ali Malik in condolence letters addressed to President Sri Lanka Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa expressed deep concern and shock over the fatal attack on Priyantha Kumara, a General Manager working garment factory at Sialkot in Pakistan.

He said Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan sharply reacting to the "horrific vigilante attack" said "it was a day of shame for Pakistan and personally overseeing the investigations and let there be no mistake all those responsible will be punished with full severity of the law". Iftikhar Ali Malik said people from all walks of life, shades of opinion and schools of thought in Pakistan unanimously condemned to the highest degree saying it was a violation of the teachings of the holy Quran and Sunnah.

He assured the government and people of Sri Lanka for bringing the culprits to justice by conducting fair and impartial investigations. He said on the special directive of Prime Minister Imran Khan nearly 120 suspects have so far been rounded up and perpetrators will be fixed up. Iftikhar Malik said Pakistan should fully ensure safety and protection to Sri Lankan workers across Pakistan he concluded.

Youth
guarantee
country's
development

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farukh Habib said that youth are our precious asset and a guarantee of development in the country.

He was addressing 'Chenab Zone' zonal conference at resource academia here on Sunday evening.

He said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government as per the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan had initiated various projects like Kamyab Jawan and Ehsas Programmes in the country to ensure the active role of human capital in economic development. He said that the government was imparting training of modern information technology (IT) to 100,000 youth adding that 25,000 were now on jobs. He said that 50,000 scholarships were also being provided every year under Ehsas Programme. State Minister Farukh Habib said that youth would have to come out from the traditional way in the era of knowledge economy and work hard to shatter the fear of failure and materialize their dreams.

He said that development of youth was among the top most priorities of the PM Imran that is why the huge investment was being made. He said that days were not far when Pakistan would stand in the list of developed countries. He said that the government had also provided soft loans of Rs 30 billion to 25,000 entrepreneurs for the first time in the country's history.

Four killed
in Kharian

STAFF REPORT

LALAMUSA: Four persons including two women were killed in Kharian. Among those killed were Israr Murtaza, Rabia Israr, Zainab Bibi and Noman. DPO Gujarat reached the spot. Police were informed that a child was crying inside the flat.

When he cut the grill, he saw the bodies of two women and two men lying inside. Further investigation is underway. DPO Umar Salamati spoke to media.



ISLAMABAD: Ladies posing for a picture on the occasion of National Day of Romania. – DNA

Karachi is becoming a lively city with each passing day

Other foreign diplomats present at the inauguration included acting Turkish Consul General Uzay Ozturk, prominent TV actress Beena Chaudhri, besides diplomatic staff from the consulates of Russia and Indonesia

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Karachi is becoming a lively city with each passing day with many cultural and social events taking place daily. This city is among the most peaceful among the world. This is why it is an active happening town. These views were expressed by Japanese Consul General Toshikazu Isomura while inaugurating Hotel Mehran's newly refurbished restaurant, Killay.

The Japanese envoy said foreign diplomats posted in Karachi find it a relaxing city and lively town as numerous social gatherings and cultural events are held regularly. Mr Isomura said he was striving to enhance people to people contact between Pakistan and Japan, besides facilitating economic and trade activities. He added Killay would provide people with yet another recreational spot. The Japanese envoy said he was fond of biryani and mutton dishes.

The Bangladeshi Deputy High Commissioner, Mr Mohammed Atiqur Rahman said Pakistan and Bangladesh were brotherly countries sharing common values and history.

He said relations between both countries would reach new levels with the passage of time. He added that he had liked the cuisine

at Killay. Other foreign diplomats present at the inauguration included acting Turkish Consul General Uzay Ozturk, prominent TV actress

Beena Chaudhri, besides diplomatic staff from the consulates of Russia and Indonesia.

The Pakistani elite included famous dental surgeon Dr Mohammed Altamash, who said that the quality of food served in Hotel Mehran was second to none and the more than 25 dishes offered in Killay restaurant gave patrons a wide choice. Actress Bin Chaudhri said the desserts offered in Killay restaurant were second to none.

General Manager Hotel Mehran Rehan Peerzada, said the hotel ensured total comfort of its guests. He said the renovation of Killay restaurant and enhancing its buffet spread is part of their modernizing efforts. He said the hotel is a must visit place on people's social calendar. Manager Sales Yasir Ahmed said the hotel ensures the quality of food served in its restaurants is prepared under strict conditions. He added this is why the hotel is popular among diplomats and the residents of Karachi



Saqib Manan reviews ReD Covid vaccination campaign

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Secretary Archives Punjab Saqib Manan visited Faisalabad and presided over a high level meeting at DC Office and was briefed on the targets of Reach Every Door (Red) Corona Vaccination Campaign phase II. Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad, ADC HQ Muhammad Khalid, CEO Health Dr. Kashif Mahmood, CEO Education Ali Ahmed Sian besides Deputy District Health Officers, Medical Superintendents of THQ, owners of private schools and other officers were also present. The Secretary Archives Punjab said that he has been again appointed in charge of monitoring the targets of the vaccination campaign second phase in the district on the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab Sardar Usman Bazzdar.

He said that the Corona Vaccination Campaign on the doorstep is of great importance and targets should be achieved. He urged the district administration and the district health authority to play a proactive role in

making the campaign a success and use all means of publicity to vaccinate the citizens. He said that first and second dose would be administered to people and campaign would be continue till 31 December.

He asked that UCMOs should be engaged to reach the target and monitoring would continue till last date. Deputy Commissioner informed that during the campaign 800 out reach and fixed teams are active and all available resources are being utilized to achieve the goals. He also pointed out some of the problems faced during the implementation of the campaign. CEO DHA informed that 0.8 million people have vaccinated during first round of RED campaign and 79% target was achieved. He further informed that during the second round 2 million target was set and focus would be on educational institutes. During the visit, the Secretary Archives while talking to the media representatives, he appealed to the people to get vaccinated. He asked the citizens through the media to get vaccinated and protect their lives and the lives of their loved ones from co-

rona. He said that our commitment is a Pakistan free from corona and all out resources are being utilize in this regard.

DC checks road maintenance

Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad went to Samundri road to check the maintenance and repair of road and checked the quality work at Dalawal, Jahangir Mor and other spots. DD Development Rana Tahir briefed the DC about the current situation of the project. Deputy Commissioner directed the highways department to complete the project as early as possible and it's clear that no compromise in transparency.

He said that the necessary arrangements should be maintained for smooth flow of traffic and for easy way to travel the M&R of this important main road is utmost necessary. Earlier Deputy Commissioner also visited Rural Health Center Dijkot and took detail about under construction trauma center. CEO DHA Dr. Kashif Mahmood was also present. Deputy Commissioner asked the health and building officers for early finishing of important building.

Sacrifice of Akram Shaheed will always be remembered

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said on Sunday that great sacrifice of Major Muhammad Akram Shaheed for the defence of the motherland would always be remembered.

In a message, on the 50th Martyrdom anniversary of Major Akram Shaheed, Fawad said that the nation pays homage to Major Muhammad Akram Shaheed (Nishan-e-Haider), the brave son of Jehlum.

Fawad said that Major Muhammad Akram was martyred on December 5, 1971 while fighting against India in the East Pakistan.

During the 1971 war, he said Major Muhammad Akram fought the enemy with determination and courage in spite of all difficulties. Major Muhammad Akram Shaheed was the epitome of patriotism, intellect and human courage, said Chaudhry Fawad. – APP

"Sindhi Culture Day" celebrated in Hyderabad

DNA

HYDERABAD: "Sindhi Culture Day" was celebrated with traditional enthusiasm across the province including the cultural city of Sindh, Hyderabad on Sunday (December 05) as thousands of people dressed in the cultural attire poured on the streets in dozens of rallies to mark the day.

This day is being celebrated on the first Sunday of the month of December every year as "Aekta Day", a day of unity, since 2009. The objective of this day is to spotlight the centuries old rich culture of Sindh.

People wearing Ajrak, a block printed shawl, and Sindhi caps danced to the tunes of Sindhi songs as they moved in rallies.

Major hallmarks of cities and towns have been decorated with Sindhi Ajrak to highlight the cultural values of Sindh. People across Sindh exchange gifts of Ajrak and Topi at various ceremonies.

Ch Fawad
grieved over
Dina accident

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Sunday expressed deep grief and sorrow over loss of precious human lives in tragic accident of a Lahore private school trip coaster at Dina. The incident with innocent children was really tragic, Chaudhry Fawad said in a statement. The federal minister shared the grief of the families of teachers and students who lost their lives in the road mishap.

The minister prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed souls in eternal peace and give courage to the bereaved families to bear this loss with fortitude. The minister also prayed for speedy recovery of the injured. – APP

8 marquees
sealed
over SOPs
violation

FAISALABAD: Assistant Commissioners (ACs) have sealed 8 marquees and one restaurant on charge of violation of coronavirus SOPs.

A spokesman of local administration said on Sunday that Assistant Commissioner (AC City) Sahibzada Muhammad Yousuf and (AC Sadar) Mansoor Qazi conducted surprise checking of marriage halls, hotels and restaurants and found 8 marquees and one restaurant where coronavirus SOPs were being violated. Among them include Zoom Marquee, Koh-e-Noor Marquee, Victorian Banquet Canal Road, Lyallpur Gym Khana, four halls of Royal Palm Marquee and Victoria Marquee. Therefore, the ACs sealed premises of these marquees and restaurant and further action against their owners and managers was underway.

Govt
committed to
public service

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Forests, Environment and Wildlife Syed Muhammad Ishtiaq Urmar Sunday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government was committed to public service and in the same spirit number of projects in health and education, environment and forestry, water and energy and construction and repair of roads have been completed. He said that the dream of Green Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was being realized in a real sense while establishment of amusement parks in different districts was also among the priorities of the government. Health Insaf Card, Ehsas Program, Youth Skill Development Program are the people friendly projects of PTI government which will reduce the backwardness of the province and usher in a new era of development and prosperity.

Ishtiaq Urmar said that new employment opportunities would be created for the youth. In the past, national resources were ruthlessly plundered and no attention was paid to solve the problems and difficulties of the people, he added. – APP

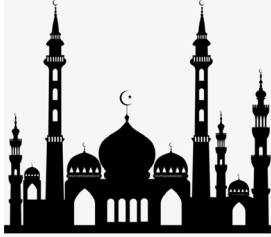


HYDERABAD: Youngsters participate in a ceremony to mark Sindhi culture day in Hyderabad. – DNA Photo by Jan Ali Laghari

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Fajr.....	05:29 am
Zohr.....	11:58 am
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Maghrib.....	04:59 pm
Isha.....	06:28 pm



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Islamabad Metropolitan

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



Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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Time to enhance the CPEC horizons, say experts

While speaking to the panel, Dr. Shabbir talked about the high economic stakes involved in the CPEC of both China and Pakistan. Keeping in view the stakes, Pakistan shifted its policy from Geo-strategy to Geo-Economics, said Dr. Shabbir

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution - IICR organized an online conference titled "CPEC Intra-Regional Cooperation Beyond South Asia". It was arranged to highlight and broaden the concept of CPEC in a broader aspect. The panellists included Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director Pakistan-China Study Centre ISSI, Amb. Naghmana Hashmi, Former Ambassador to China; Prof. Dr. Zhou Rong, Senior Fellow at Renmin University, Beijing and Mr. Dawood Butt, CEO K-Bot. Ms. Sabah Aslam, Executive Director, Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution - IICR, moderated the session. While speaking to the panel, Dr. Shabbir talked about the high economic stakes involved in the CPEC of both China and Pakistan. Keeping in view the stakes, Pakistan shifted its policy from Geo-strategy to Geo-Economics, said, Dr. Shabbir. He added further that there



IICR Online Conference

CPEC: Inter-Regional Opportunities Beyond South Asia



Amb. Naghmana Hashmi
Former Amb. to China



Mr. Hassan Daud Butt
CEO, KP-BOIT



Moderator
Ms. Sabah Aslam
Executive Director, IICR



Prof. Dr. Zhou Rong



Dr. Talat Shabbir,
Director China Study
Center, ISSI

are two more corridors under BRI from which Pakistan can benefit; one is China's Central and West Asia Corridor, and the other is New Eurasian Land Bridge. Talking about spoilers in CPEC, Dr. Shabbir said that the role of spoilers should never be undermined at any time of the project. In order to take more benefit from CPEC

and make it more lucrative for Pakistan, there shall be a comprehensive business plan related to CPEC, which Pakistan lacks at this moment, said Dr. Shabbir. Further, he said that it is time to expand the horizons of CPEC from economics to technology and tourism, which will enhance the People to People contact.

The next speaker on the panel was Amb. Naghmana Hashmi. She said that it needs to be remembered that CPEC is not a standalone program. It is very much an integral part of China's mega-project BRI. Adding further, she said that the whole idea of CPEC was to go beyond the region, and it does that by pro-

viding the shortest route to Africa other regions. It was the selling pitch of CPEC when it was started, and it remained central to it. Furthermore, she said that the whole idea of going beyond the region could not be fully practised unless the challenges of Afghanistan could not be solved. Afghanistan can only be the ground

of opportunities and avenues for CPEC if Pakistan has more to offer other than humanitarian assistance, said Ms. Hashmi. She also said that the geopolitical situation of the globe is changing rapidly, China and Russia are now strategic partners, and Pakistan is also proactively mending broken ties with Moscow. It shall not be forgotten that Russia is on its way to economic resurgence and will explore more opportunities. The next speaker was Prof. Dr. Zhou Rong. He said that China works on the philosophy of creating a better world and shared future of Humanity, and this has been implemented through BRI and CPEC so those friendly countries can have a better way of life. It is not hidden that the bond both countries share goes decades back; both played irreplaceable roles for each other, said Prof. Rong. He further said that Pakistani people need to understand China more to enhance the interaction between countries.

Tahir ul Qadri condemns Sialkot incident

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The founder of Minhaj-ul-Quran International and eminent scholar of Islamic world Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri condemned the Sialkot incident. It is said that the Sialkot incident damaged the peaceful identity of Islam and Pakistan. Meanwhile, Nazim-e-Aala of Minhaj-ul-Quran International Khurram Nawaz Gandapur has demanded that those responsible be given exemplary punishment through speedy justice system instead of the traditional method. According to a statement issued by Minhaj Media Cell, Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri said that the state should take serious steps to eradicate violent attitudes. Minhaj-ul-Quran's struggle is against extremism and narrow-mindedness. Addressing a meeting of the Central Working Council, Khurram Nawaz Gandapur said that the people and state of Sri Lanka stood by Pakistan in every hour of need. The people of Sri Lanka are in great distress and anxiety over the Sialkot incident. The government of Pakistan should feel the pain of the people of Sri Lanka and take immediate action to alleviate it.

Turkish poet releases song in memory of Ali Shah Geelani

MUHAMMAD ALI

ISLAMABAD: Eminent Turkish Songwriter and Poet Turgay Evren officially released a special song in the memory of IIOJK leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani reflecting his lifelong services for the Kashmir cause here in National Press Club (NPC) Islamabad today. The event was presided over by former Chairman Public Accounts Committee AJK Abdul Rasheed Turabi, hosted by Chairman Jammu & Kashmir Salvation Movement Altaf Ahmed Bhat. While prominent Journalist and Former President PFUJ performed the duties of stage secretary. Speaking on the occasion,

former chairman Public Accounts Committee AJK Abdul Rashid Turabi said that Pak-Turk friendship is everlasting and the Turkish government and people have raised their voice at every level to give Kashmiris the right to self-determination. He added that, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has raised his voice on the Kashmir issue for which we are grateful to him. The people of Kashmir are very grateful to the Turkish poet Turgay Evren. Chairman JKSM Altaf Ahmed Bhat said that the song written by Turgay Evren in tribute to Shaheed Syed Ali Geelani is very encouraging for Kashmiris living in IIOJK & all around the world. While the world will be aware

of the ugly face of India and the atrocities committed on Kashmiris through this song, we need to do follow-up stories regarding the atrocities and barbarism in Kashmir. Bhat added. In the form of his songs, Turgay Evren highlighted the oppression of Kashmiris at the hands of Indian Occupation Forces in the world. There is no precedent in the world today for this song to be so popular all over the world. Altaf Ahmed Bhat reiterated that, We all need to speak together about the incidents that took place in Occupied Kashmir 10 days ago. Journalists should tell the world about Burhan Wani, Neelofer, Asiya Andraabi, Yasin Malik, Shabir Shah in their columns and Stories. Chairman JKSM added

that, NPC has played its role as Base Camp for Kashmir Freedom Movement. Be it the martyrdom of Burhan Wani or the events of 2019, the National Press Club (NPC) played its role for Kashmir on every front and also told the government that we need to compete with India. Turkish poet Turgay Evren speaking on the occasion said that no human being can see the atrocities taking place in Kashmir as unarmed Kashmiris are being persecuted there. Innocent Kashmiris are being martyred through fake encounters, women are forced to live as half widows. Innocent children and unarmed Kashmiris have been blinded by the use of pellet guns.

Qatar's potential role in Pak-India dialogue discussed

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Exploring every possible avenue is critical for the Kashmiri freedom struggle leadership and activists to gather support from the world community, including Qatar's economic and diplomatic clout, which can help provide a potential channel for meaningful dialogue among the stakeholders. This suggestion holds water in the existing regional and global scenario where Qatar is emerging as an important regional player, especially after successfully facilitating the US-Taliban talks in recent years.



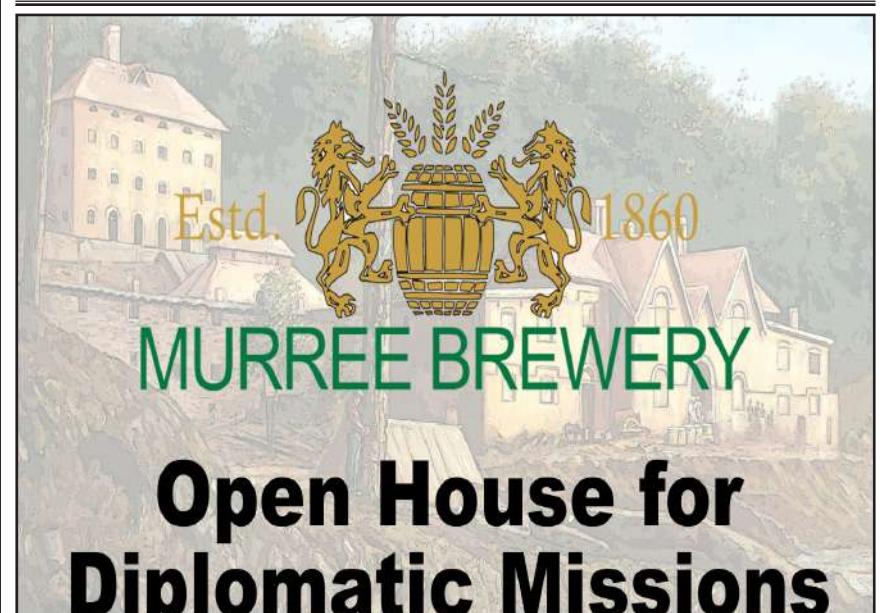
This idea was extensively debated during a meeting of the IPS' Working Group on Kashmir (IPS-WGK), a body of experts and opinion leaders on Kashmir affairs meeting regularly at the Islamabad-based think tank for the last two years after the

illegal revocation of the special constitutional status of Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir by the BJP-led Delhi regime on 5 August 2019. Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain, vice chairman, IPS chaired the session, which was addressed as keynote

speaker by Dr Farhan Mujahid Chak, a Kashmiri-Canadian scholar and associate professor, international relations, Qatar University, Doha. Irshad Mahmood, director-general, JKLC; Ambassador (r) Tajammul Altaf, senior research associate at IPS; Advocate Nasir Qadri, international law researcher and founder, LFOVK; Professor Dr Shaheen Akhtar, NDU, Mir Tahir Masood and Hasan al-Banna, officials of the APHC, and Dr Waleed Rasool, Kashmiri scholar and activist attended the meeting. Sabur Ali Syed, senior research officer at IPS, moderated the session.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying the flutes and spreading the tunes to attract the customers during Chrysanthemum, Marigold & Autumn Flowers Show, 2021 at Rose and Jasmine Garden arranged by Islamabad Horticultural Society and CDA. - APP



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UBG asks FBR to address concerns of stakeholders

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: S.M.Munir, former Chief Executive Office, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan and Patron-in-Chief, United Business Group said that the business community has expressed serious concerns over the new market value of immovable properties determined by FBR vide its SRO-1548(I)/2021, dated 1st December 2021 and asked the FBR to address all concerns of the stakeholders before implementation of new property valuation as this unilateral decision would cause big slump in the business activities of property and construction sector and create harmful consequences to the economy. He said this while addressing the business community during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI). S.M. Munir lauded the efforts of ICCI for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region as it would boost industrialization, attract new investment,

create new jobs and improve tax revenue of the region. He assured that if UBG came to power in FPCCI after elections in December this year, it would extend full support to ICCI for materialization of this important project. He said that if voted to power, UBG would work closely with the government to address the key issues of the business community and promote trade & exports to improve the health of the economy. He said that high interest rate, depreciation of rupee, hike in POL prices and utility tariffs have increased the cost of doing business manifold and caused uncertainty in the market, therefore, he stressed that the government should address these issues on priority to stabilize the economy. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI). S.M. Munir lauded the efforts of ICCI for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region as it would boost industrialization, attract new investment,

cent that would severely hit the sale/purchase business of property sector and badly affect the Naya Pakistan Housing Program of the government. He stressed that FBR should withdraw the new valuation of residential and commercial properties and sit with the stakeholders to find out a consensus solution of this problem. He thanked S.M. Munir for his support to set up a new industrial zone in the region as it would produce multiple benefits to the investors and the regional economy. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Mian Akram Farid Chairman Founder Group, Zafar Bakhtawari Secretary General UBG, Abdul Rauf Alam, Tariq Sadiq, Mian Shaikat Masud, Ejaz Abbasi, Sheikh Amir Waheed, Ch. Muhammad Naseer, Karim Aziz Malik, Malik Sohail Hussain, Ch. Muhammad Masud, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Ashfaq Chatha, Khalid Chaudhry and a large number of business community were present at the occasion.

Briefs

Two shops sealed for violating Covid SOPs

RAWALPINDI: Assistant Commissioner (AC) Cantt Nausen Israr on Saturday visited various cantonment markets and inspected the enforcement of coronavirus SOPs issued by district administration to ensure the implementation of the provincial government's orders. During checking, the AC sealed two shops and imposed a fine of Rs 45,000 over violation of COVID-19 SOPs. Nausen also distributed face masks among the shopkeepers and warned that stern action would be taken against those violating the SOPs. — APP

Excise dept registers 112778 vehicles in 2020-21

ISLAMABAD: The Excise and Taxation Department (E&TD), Islamabad has overall registered 112778 vehicles during the fiscal year 2020-21 as compared to the 55327 vehicles during the 2019-20, registering a significant increase.

According to an official source, during the year 2020-21, the departments has registered 49551 motor cycles, 42679 motor cars, 13381 jeeps, 4002 vans, 2857 pickups, 122 wagons, 68 trucks, 40 trucks/dumpers/trails, 32 ambulances, 16 mini buses, 10 mini trucks, 10 buses, five coasters, two tankers and two motor cabs and one motorcycle/scooter.

While during the year 2019-20, the department has registered 27912 motor cars, 18951 motor cycles, 4153 jeeps, 2405 vans, 1687 pickups, 51 vans, 33 mini trucks, 32 trucks/dumpers/trails, 30 trucks, 19 ambulances, 19 buses, 11 mini buses, seven coasters, six tractors, three mixers, three motor cabs, two tankers, two motor cycles/scooters, and one sports car. — APP

Skilled workforce engine of growth

ISLAMABAD: Substantial share in employment opportunities, sustainable economic growth and social development is closely linked with human resource development, market-oriented professional skills, relevant-to-industry technical education, and vocational training in the highly competitive environment.

No one can deny the importance of skilled workforce as both locally and globally they play a vital role in boosting the economy. The full-fledged and large scale technical education programs can multiply remittances by creating a promising skilled workforce. The demand of IT experts, advanced digital skills, and trained resource persons have been increased manifold.

Human resource development improves economic growth and productivity as the socioeconomic development is not possible without catering the bulging youth of the country with skill development programs. Therefore, the promotion of technical education and Information Technology has become imperative for sustainable economic growth, job opportunities and high volume of remittances. The global as well as the regional markets hire only skilled resource persons who can run factories, companies and industries. Pakistan, the fifth largest young country on map of the world with more than 63 percent population comprised of youth aged between 15 and 33 has no other choice but to utilize the untapped potential of the youngsters. The demographic power is the major driving force for economic growth and substantial social progress. The country has not yet fully utilized the potential of the youth. Instead of sending hard labors abroad, if Pakistan could dispatch skilled labor, the remittances would be doubled. — APP

French diplomats visit Murree Brewery



ISLAMABAD: Diplomats from the French embassy visited Murree Brewery and were welcomed by CECO Isphanyar Bhandara and Maj® Sabih-ur-Rehman. The diplomats found the visit amazing. They were given an introduction to the whole brewing process, from the brew house with copper kettles to the bottling line. They thanked Mr. Bhandara and all his team for their very warm welcome. — DNA

Nature lovers run through Trail-5 despite rain

DNA

ISLAMABAD: More than one hundred university students and nature lover participated in the hiking and cleanup drive at Margalla Hills Trail-5 despite inclement weather, organized by the Development Communications network (Devcom-Pakistan) and DTN in connection with its ongoing 11th Pakistan Mountain Festival, the annual flagship event to commemorate the UN's International Mountain Day (IMD). The event was organized in collaboration with the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (WMB), a subordinate organization of the Ministry of Climate Change, the Gym Club of the Quaid-e-Azam University, CS Adventure Club

of the Comsats University Islamabad Campus, GBC Council, Westminster Academy and Rawalpindi Women University. Before the nature walk and cleanup, the IWMB Assistant Director Sakhawat Ali briefed the participants about the biological diversity and natural heritage of the Margalla Hills National Park (MHNP). Sakhawat Ali said Margalla Hills National Park was established in 1980, it is the third-largest national park in the world with an area of 17,386 hectares (42,960 acres). And under the foothills of Himalaya. Tilla Charouni with a height of 1604m is the tallest peak in the park. The park is rich in biodiversity, especially rich in Sino-Himalayan fauna, most notably gray goral, barking deer and the Leopard. Combined MHNP is home to around 600 plant

species, 402 bird varieties, 38 mammals and 27 species of reptiles. He said under the new management recently the IWMB has taken many steps for the protection of the Park and visitors. Many cases of woodcutting and forest fires were averted. The renovated IWMB nature education centre is the hub of activities and awareness raising sessions. Later, Pakistan's young rising face of hardcore mountaineering Sirbaz Khan and former deputy mayor of Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation Zeshan Naqvi. Pakistan's well respected and recognized mountaineer Nazir Sabir was the chief guest at the certificate distribution ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, Nazir Sabir said mountaineering has become very technical and challenging in the changing climate. Unpredictable harsh weather has made this increasingly becoming an expensive sport. Many corporations are coming up globally to support their mountaineers except Pakistan. Many vibrant strategies are dusting in the public shelves. We need to get them out and launch them with a proactive agenda to develop a team of skilful mountaineers and to mainstream Pakistan's mountaineering facilities that have no match worldwide. He said Alpine Club of Pakistan needs to be revamped under the dynamic vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan. The Prime Minister should form a task force of 8-10 leading mountaineers and people promoting Pakistan's mountains to translate challenges into opportunities.

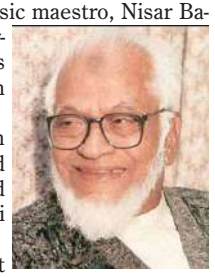


Nisar Bazmi's 97th birth anniversary celebrated

MULTAN: Pride of Performance music maestro, Nisar Bazmi, was well versed with use of orchestra which resulted into peerless and evergreen songs for Pakistan film industry.

Talking to APP in connection with 97th birth anniversary of celebrated musician, known composer Ustad Sagheer Ahmad said that Nisar Bazmi was master of using orchestra. "Bazmi sahib knew which instrument would be used after one and another while arranging music for a beautiful song", he said adding that the great musician contributed amazing songs for the industry through films like "Umrao Jaan Ada, Lakhon Main Eik, Naag Muni, Tehzeeb, Anjuman, Eik Gunnah Aur Sahi and the list goes on. Ustad Sagheer, who has been associated with music industry for the last over 45 years, reminisced that Bazmi sahib composed songs keeping in view the situations of the story of the films.

Nisar Bazmi was very melodious himself, he disclosed and added that he (Bazmi) had a command over "Raags". Born as Syed Nisar Shah, He was popularly known as Nisar Bazmi who was a musician par excellence, the music teacher said. Both of his parents were "Syed" by caste, he informed. He had great command over "club songs, Ustad Sagheer said and added that use of villain and sitar was amazing in songs composed by Bazmi sahib. "Aisa Bhi Hota Ha" was the film which became his identity, he maintained adding that "Ho Tamuna Aur Kia, Jaan-i-Tamuna Aap Hn" by Noor Jehan was one of the sweet numbers of the film and favourite of Bazmi sahib. He was a clamberer as a musician, Ustad Sagheer disclosed. Bhagun "Mun mandir ke Devat Rakhyo Hamrai Laaj" in Lakhon Main Eik" sung by Melody Queen, Noor Jehan and pictured on Shamiy Ara and others dancers is simply outstanding. He made his place among great music directors of his era including Rasheed Atray Station Director Radio Pakistan Multan, Asif Khan Khatraan stated that he was a matchless composer. He said that the history of Pakistan film music would be incomplete without name of Nisar Bazmi adding that he composed for about 75 Pakistani films. — APP



Police to take stern action against high beam lights

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has decided to take strict action against those involved in using high beam lights and Light-Emitting Diodes (LED) during the drive. Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Muhammad Omar Khan said that as per direction of Inspector General Police (IGP) Islamabad, Qazi Jamil ul Rehman, the decision has been made to ensure safe road environment in the city and avoid accidents. A total of 4,552 vehicles had to face action during the ongoing year having HID/LED lights while such lights were also impounded.

Special squads have been constituted to check use of LED/HID by motorists while police pickets would be erected at important boulevards of the city including Expressway, Srinagar highway (Kashmir Highway), Margalla Road, IJP road, Murree Road, 7th Avenue and 9th avenue. Night shift in-charges will lead this campaign to check use of high beam lights and LED/HID lights while education wing will aware the people about risks involved in using these lights. — APP

10th Avenue to be completed at cost of Rs 12 billion

RAWALPINDI: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Capital Development Authority (CDA) Affairs Ali Nawaz Awan Saturday said the Tenth Avenue road connecting Islamabad and Rawalpindi would be completed in record 18 months at a cost of Rs 12 billion. The SAPM was addressing the project foundation ceremony held here. Speaking on the occasion, he said that the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf government was committed to fulfill the promises made with the nation. He underscored that four major development projects were inaugurated in a week adding that more development projects were in the pipeline. Ali Nawaz Awan said that work on Margla Avenue, Golra Mor under pass, PWD underpass in full swing and would be completed soon. He said Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Asad Umar is taking keen interest in development projects. — APP

Documentary film on Buddhist Heritage of Pakistan

The Gandhara civilization represents human development, knowledge, religion, art, and history as the modern city of Taxila was a famous center of learning for art, architecture, medicine, and religion

ISLAMABAD: The documentary film, "Gandhara: The Buddhist Heritage of Pakistan", featuring rich Buddhist heritage has showcased the Gandhara civilization that flourished between the 1st century CE to 7th century CE in different parts of the country.

The documentary sheds light on historical roots of Gandhara civilization and captures the entire landscape of historical sites with the help of drone camera. It shows the lush green mountainous regions of the country and visible intact structures of Buddhist historical heritage sites with panoramic scenes of high altitude mountain peaks of Pakistan.

The architectural and artistic stone works of Gandhara such as statues, stupas, monasteries, temples, houses, and the zig-zag tracks leading to the historical sites of the remains make eye-catching view. Gandhara, literally mean the land of fragrance, the name of the region included Peshawar valley, Buner, Bajaur, and hills of Swat valley — the northwestern areas of present-day Pakistan. It was this region which gave birth to one the glorious and ancient world religion — the Gandhara civilization. Subsequently, the civilization has started spreading in all directions including Afghanistan and Potohar plateau in Punjab and Sindh.

The Gandhara civilization represents human development, knowledge, religion, art, and history as the modern city of Taxila was a famous center of learning for art, architecture, medicine, and religion. Similarly, according to archeologists, the city was a home to the world's oldest recognized universities as thousands of students used to come here for education from Greece, China, Sri Lanka, Syria, and other parts of the world to study philosophy, politics, music, dance, mathematics, commerce, law, art of hunting, archery, elephant lore, and warfare, etc.

The film was screened at Temple Trees on November 16 as a follow up on bilateral discussions between Prime Minister Imran Khan and Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. It was jointly produced by the High Commission of Pakistan in Sri Lanka and Siddhivinayak Cine Arts (Private) Limited in collaboration with the Ministry of Buddha Sasana, Religious and Cultural Affairs of Sri Lanka was launched in Sri Lanka on visual journey of the Gandhara Buddhist heritage sites of Pakistan.

The documentary also focuses on rich historical collection of Buddhist remains discovered from different parts of the country. The artistic work of stone crafting, relics, utensils, and other artifacts take the onlookers on a centuries old long visual journey to recapture the lifestyle of the civilization from the past. The civilization has left indelible on the historical landscape of the world history.

The documentary was launched at the Temple Trees (Prime Minister's office) by His Excellency, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, in the presence of Venerable Buddhist monks, honorable Speaker of Sri Lankan Parliament, Cabinet and State Ministers, MPs, ambassadors of Buddhist countries, as well as business, tourism and media fraternity of Sri Lanka.

One of the Tooth Relics of the Lord Buddha, discovered from the Gandhara region was preserved in Taxila Museum. It is the region where the Gandhara Buddhist civilization reached its pinnacle of glory from 1st century AD to the 7th century AD. The first anthropomorphic statue of Lord Buddha was created in the region now called Pakistan. Also known for one of the world's oldest Buddhist University, Takshashila, Taxila in Pakistan is home to some of the most sacred Buddhist artifacts found during archeological excavations around the 12th century. — APP



Bare minimum decree

THE Afghan Taliban interim government has issued their first-ever decree on women rights. The decree bans forced marriage of women in Afghanistan, an unfortunate custom that has prevailed due to bride prices and selling of women. The decree also adds that both women and men should be equal and that no one can force women to marry by coercion or pressure.

For the Afghan Taliban, who have had a poor history with women rights, this decree is certainly quite a change. If the Taliban really are true to their word and mean to implement this decree properly, it can have a huge difference on regressive trends. Marriages in most parts of Afghanistan are dictated by custom, more than a woman's choice. Widows are expected to marry into their late husband's family, daughters are sold off as investments, and young girls are married well before they are in a mature state to consent. Breaking this custom would require a lot of leg work from the Taliban, and it will be seen if they can make such a societal change.

However, the international community cannot be faulted for viewing this decree with suspicion. Banning forced marriage, while a big move for the Taliban, counts as bare-minimum when it comes to women rights. This seems like a diplomatic step the Taliban have taken to appease the international community and to convey to the world that they have changed. As winter comes around, and malnutrition threatens to devastate the Afghan population, Afghanistan urgently requires the release of funds from the international community. However, a more convincing indication that the Taliban truly have changed with regards to women would have been to remove the ban on women working and studying. Until these basic rights of education and work are not granted by the Taliban, the international community will keep viewing the government with suspicion. However, just this decree gives some hope that international pressure might work and push the Taliban to more cooperation.

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Mini budget

DETAILS about the government's mini-budget have been released and it seems as though tough times lie ahead of the average Pakistani. Promising the made fiscal adjustments and expenditure cuts worth Rs600 billion in total, the previous pro-growth approach is being replaced by one focused on revenue maximisation only. In the end, the success of this budget comes down to whether the government is able to tap into revenue collection streams successfully.

According to the authorities, this budget is going to set up the conditions to obtain the IMF's approval after which, \$1 billion will be released for the country. While the final approval is still at the discretion of the cabinet, the proposed terms of the budget are absolutely clear. The Public Sector Development Programme's spending will be cut down by Rs200 billion, tax exemptions worth Rs350 billion on mobile phones, stationary and packaged food items will be abolished, the scope of increasing tax collection from the real estate sector will include 40 major cities of the country and regulatory duty on the import of electric vehicles will be placed. The government is even set on increasing regulatory duties on non-essential and luxury items to discourage excessive importing. This essentially means that all of the government's attempts to promote different sectors have essentially been rolled back.

It is very clear that this mini-budget will work towards increasing the prices of goods and services across the board so that the government is able to generate more revenue. Focusing primarily on the imposition of taxes and the complete elimination of exemptions, there is a very real risk of the economy slowing down as purchasing will reduce substantially. With the public already struggling to make ends meet, such a hike in prices might bring more people to their knees.

As the government moves forward with this approach, it must also ensure that the budget at least fulfils the promises that it's making. Cooling the overheating economy and using revenue for reinvesting into the country is expected. Simultaneously, this can only be guaranteed if the authorities are able to ensure that revenue collection runs smoothly and that evasion of any kind is not condoned, overlooked or left unaccounted for.

Iran and Persian Gulf

Dr. M Akram Zaheer



Khomeini left Iran far different as he had taken it from the Shah. It was an economically devastated and internationally isolated country. It was the country whose population experienced a 50 percent reduction in their real per capita income

SINCE the Shah's regime, Iran has portrayed herself as a strategic independent state in the Middle East, particularly in Persian Gulf due to her demography, strategic location, and resources. Post-Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khomeini promoted the idea of strategically independent Iran and efficiently transformed the state from being marginalized in the region to an assertive geopolitical power. Tehran washed its hands of the Shah's foreign policy and figured out how to maintain a balance of power in the region through its engagements with Lebanon, Yemen, and Afghanistan. The Islamic Republic of Iran prioritizes its strategic independence while taking full advantages of her geographical location to increase her security and influence in the region as well as the world. It has established its own strategic policy that is in contrast to the Shah's strategic policy of gaining US support and guarantees of security in exchange for keeping watch over the Persian Gulf's security on the behalf of US. Khomeini left Iran far different as he had taken it from the Shah. It was an economically devastated and internationally isolated country. It was the country whose population experienced a 50 percent reduction in their real per capita income. The nation was exhausted from the consequences of revolution and war in a single decade. In July 1989, Ali Akbar Rafsanjani made economic reconstruction his priority and warned his headline ri-

vals to stop their extremism. The five year plan was for attracting foreign capital, importing technologies, increasing oil revenue, and borrowing \$27 billion on the international market. He began pursuing rapprochement with the West and improving relations with Iran's neighbors. This was a new posture after the revolution. These new directions of Iran's foreign policy were visible very soon in Persian Gulf affairs. Tehran hoped that the new policy would help to contain Iraq and succeed in rapprochement with the West. Now the champion of radical changes was advocating regional stability. This was the beginning of Iran's major role in the Persian Gulf. The 2013 presidential election was a clear vote against the previous government's policy towards its international and regional relationships. Rouhani's support for broader social freedom and the country's economic insecurity because of the imposition of sanctions by the Western world in response to Iran's nuclear program were key factors behind his victory. As a matter of fact, Rouhani did a lot to improve relations with the West.

In the past, Oman had good relations with Iran but during Ahmadnejad's regime and Rohani's, diplomatic relations were upgraded. On March 2014, the meeting of Rouhani and Sultan Qaboos was an example of détente in the Persian Gulf region. The Iranian President stressed the development of relations between these two countries in all fields and their interest in maintaining security in the Strait of Hormuz. Rouhani added that Iran attaches great importance to ties with Islamic countries, particularly the littoral states of the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman due to the significance of the Strait of Hormuz. Iran-Oman relations have significance for both of them and the other Persian Gulf states because they jointly control Strait of Hormuz. Any serious tension between them can lead to a blockade of the maritime transport of oil in the Strait of Hormuz and an oil crisis. Iran's relations with Saudi Arabia have been strained for a long time. Political and religious issues are the main reason for their delicate relation. Iran is a Shia-dominated population while Saudi Arab is defender of Sunni Muslims. For example, Bahrain and Syria have become obstacles to Iran-Saudi competition recently. In March 2014, Rouhani tried to improve relations with Saudi Arabia. During the meeting with the new Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Iran, Rouhani declared that the expansion of relations with regional Muslim countries, particularly with Riyadh, is a priority in Iran's foreign policy. Good relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia would halt the instability in regional countries and might prevent sectarian violence in the Persian Gulf. Lack of cooperation between these two countries will hinder any peace initiatives in the region. Tehran tried to take advantages of the Qatar-Saudi Arabia rivalry in the Gulf. Iran-Qatar rapprochement is an example of this new attitude.

The above activities and initiatives by the Rouhani Government are very positive and indic-

ative of the new Iranian foreign policy towards the Persian Gulf. Tehran's relations with Riyadh and Doha are still the biggest threat to regional cooperation and stability. Everything depends on the Shia-Sunni rivalry in the Middle East and Persian Gulf, negotiations concerning the Iranian nuclear program, and the IranSaudi Arabia attitude towards political and social changes in Arab States and Syria. Undoubtedly, Arab-Iran rapprochements have to be underlined in the Persian Gulf without the earlier normalization of political relations between Iran and the West, particularly Washington. The breakthrough with regard to the P5+1 and the process and the consequences of Iran-West negotiations seem to be essential if Iran really intends to cooperate. Iran and its neighbors in the Persian Gulf have had a confused relationship since the Islamic Revolution. Having emerged isolated and scarred economically by war, Tehran immediately looked for rapprochement with its neighbors. However, rapprochement has not been easy at any stage. On the one hand, Iran sees itself in terms of its ancient history, vast terrain, long coastline, and large population. It has a sense of superiority towards its neighbors in the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, the Arab states of the Persian Gulf have been influenced by Arab nationalism and distrusted their Persian neighbor.

A collective security arrangement between the littoral states of the Gulf without the presence of foreign forces had been at the core of Iranian policy. Tehran advocated this policy strongly after Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. During the Khatami regime, this policy became more pronounced. Tehran changed its behavior and attempted to improve relations with its neighbors in the 1990s in spite of their alliance with the United States. Iranian Persian Gulf policy is now purely pragmatic and free of any territorial ambitions. The Persian Gulf became important in its own right and Iran has been able to portray itself as the bridge between its southern and northern neighbors. Tehran's charm offensive was positively welcomed in the Persian Gulf capitals. Iran and the GCC were calling for a new era in their relationship but this did not succeed due to their different opinion on the Arab/Islamic awakening, especially the Syrian crisis and Persian Gulf states' fears of the Iranian nuclear program. The earlier development of Tehran's rapprochement with the West, particularly the US on the nuclear program, proved that it briefly managed to improve its foreign policy.

To sum up the Iranian policy towards its neighbors, it moved from being ideologically driven to pragmatic and based on geopolitics ever since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Tehran is increasingly interested in good relations with its neighbors in order to tension in the region. The main hurdle is distrust, which is difficult to overcome, but many serious efforts have been made from all sides since the revolution. - akramzaheer86@yahoo.com

Building ties with CAS for peace and trade

Munir Ahmed



Pakistan's support to Azerbaijan in the conflict with Armenia has been well appreciated on both sides. Such intervention shall culminate further social and professional ties among the people for collaboration and joint ventures. The military ties between Pakistan and Kazakhstan are very close. Both countries have had some strategic talks recently too

PAKISTAN'S foreign policy is beyond comprehension.

All its neighbours are on the back-burner or sidelined except China. Even the 'iron brother' has shown its annoyance on many occasions for Pakistan's misbehave and unfulfilled commitments. Central Asian Independent States (CAS) despite having enormous propositions of business and trade could not attract Pakistan more than India and other countries. Our 'iron brother' has better penetration in the CAS market, followed by India.

While others were exploring the CAS market, Pakistan spent all his resources and time in Afghanistan managing its conflicts. Four decades now since Pakistan is failing in managing the outfall of the US proxy war and the hardliners - the Taliban and the Mujahideen. Deep in the debt swamp, loss of credibility. Even our 'soul brother' - the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has increased the interest rate on the borrowings we gratefully received to manage our sinking economy. CPEC payments are long due. Firefighting is on and still in doldrums with no stable economic vision. Actions are a far cry. Unnoticed and unrealized red alerts are all around. Even the recent situation in Afghanistan is yet another red alert for Pakistan.

A stable government in Afghanistan is expected to lead to a peaceful region but no wisdom is seen to find a sustainable solution. No unconventional approach. Same US-influenced partners on the orthodox paths. All the players of uncertainty are wiser than any Aristotle. Unfortunately, they could not believe in the shared vision and common wisdom of all. Vested interest makes them apart. They have yet to realize what actually has happened to the region after the US and the Afghanistan army gave the Taliban a safe win in Afghanistan. The rising humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan would grip all the players in the region if immediate steps are not

taken for rationality.

Being a key player in the region in the Afghanistan context, Pakistan needs to win the trust of the neighbours and the like minded states for a solution-based strategic action plan for the regional peace and prosperity. Unfortunately, its own strategic and economic matters are shaky. The political leadership knows all that has turned up futile. Perhaps, we need to look up beyond the stereotypes. What about launching vigorous diplomacy efforts with the Central Asian States too, to engage them in the regional peace process leading to trade on war-footing. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is already playing its role for regional cooperation for trade, peace and prosperity. Pakistan's proactive role will add more value to the efforts.

Among others, the second largest in terms of population in the Central Asian Independent States, Kazakhstan is still struggling to have strong and meaningful bilateral relations with Pakistan even after three decades. World's largest landlocked country has a large potential of bilateral trade, security and defense cooperation, but is still looking for Pakistan's warmth. Many initiatives are in the pipeline for decades but getting nowhere. The MOUs and agreements signed are dumped in the cold storage. The total trade volume has not increased from US\$ 74 million for years. Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin is running pillar to post, following the footprints of his former colleagues, to expedite and expand bilateral trade. Many bilateral agreements are pending for a long - a big hurdle B2B agreements. Same is the case of Pakistan's low priority diplomatic engagement with other Central Asian States though Pakistan considers them all as friendly states.

Connectivity and transit is very important to further deepening Pakistan-Kazakhstan cooperation. A road network could be the best for Pak-Kazakhstan connectivity for trade if we have good understanding with Afghanistan. Until then what harms regular flights from both countries facilitating both passengers and cargo. Our ports can facilitate the Kazakh and other CAS markets to reach out to other parts of the world. Pakistan can get some good bucks for facilitating their trade. People-to-people social, cultural and professional networking with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and other three countries would enhance the business and professional exchange besides cordial relations among the people of all states. It would build mutual trust, harmony and understanding among the people, leading to more meaningful bilateral relations with each state in Central Asia.

Pakistan's support to Azerbaijan in the conflict with Armenia has been well appreciated on both sides. Such intervention shall culminate further social and professional ties among the people for collaboration and joint ventures. The military ties between Pakistan and Kazakhstan are very close. Both countries have had some strategic talks recently too. Kazakhstan is also interested to learn from Pakistan's experience of taking part in peacekeeping operations under the United Nations auspices. It's fine but connectivity is more important with all the CAS. While building the CAS bloc, Pakistan cannot forget the importance of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

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Used of "Nanotechnology" to improve meat quality

Dr. Imad Khan



Trace minerals have significant role in boosting the production performance and regulating the immune system in chickens

POULTRY production is a dynamic and well-organized sector in Pakistan contributing 1.3% to national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 6.3% to agricultural sector and 28% to total meat production. Poultry meat is a good source of protein, vitamins, and minerals but has a low total fat content and higher

unsaturated fatty acids; these features confer a beneficial effect on consumer health. However, the poultry sector plays an important role in minimizing the difference between supply and demand of energy/proteins requirement for common people across the country. In poultry feed, antibiotic growth promoters are used to enhance the production performance of birds but after the imposition of ban on antibiotics by the European Union, the researcher communities are focusing on safe, cheap, and alternative sources antibiotic growth promoters for maintaining the function of the gut and immune system of chicken.

Trace minerals have significant role in boosting the production performance and regulating the immune system in chickens. Trace minerals are commonly included in broiler feed within limitation of their narrow range between beneficial dose and toxicity. Nanomaterials are small size particles that provide large active surface area (emulsifier), expandable catalytic potency, more surface-active centers, and promising biological effects for both medication and nutrition. They are used in pharmaceuticals to surge the biological availability of drugs, transport-specific curative agents to specific organs, effectuate high uptake and showing greater absorption efficiencies. In poultry feed, nano-selenium supplementation has several biological effects like promoting the production performance, improved feed conversion ratios (FCR), carcass characteristic and immunological activity in chickens. Selenium nanoparticles supplementation in broilers nutrition enhance the growth performance, maintain

both the nutritional value and food quality by improving immune properties. Selenium is an important trace element exhibiting antiviral and antibacterial characteristics.

These health-promoting benefits of orally administered selenium nanoparticles can be further enhanced by loading them on biological carriers, which improves their stability and biological availability. Chitosan is a naturally occurring non-toxic, and biodegradable polysaccharide polymer derived from chitin. It can be used as a carrier to efficiently deliver the drugs and trace nano-minerals that otherwise have lower bioavailability in the gastrointestinal tract. Selenium nanoparticles can be loaded on the surface of chitosan thus producing the supplemental product (Selenium nanoparticles loaded to chitosan). This supplemental product has antioxidant activity, which has a significant impact on production performance, meat quality and biological activities.

Keeping in view the beneficial aspects of nanotechnology, I conducted an experiment under the kind guidance and supervision of Prof. Dr. Hafsa Zaneb, Chairperson, Department of Anatomy and Histology, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore. We prepared the selenium nanoparticles loaded to chitosan and studied their effects by adding them into the broiler's diet. We got very promising results especially in terms of an improvement in the attributes that indicates the meat quality. Hence, this research suggests that Selenium nanoparticles loaded to chitosan can be used in the broiler's diet to get healthy meat.

Briefs

Lankan man's wife pleads for justice

FROM PAGE 01

But despite all that, people kept shouting slogans and beating him up brutally. With six more arrests made last night (Saturday), the number of people taken into custody in connection with the incident so far now stands at 124, including 19 main suspects. Police have also arrested the man who took a selfie with Kumara's body besides those who brought stones with them as well as those who made the video of the horrific incident. The suspects had reportedly fled to their relatives and friends' homes out of fear.

In yet another development, it has emerged that the factory workers who had beaten the Sri Lankan citizen to death had been served 'show-cause notices' by him over 'indiscipline' and 'negligence'. This had made the workers harbor grudge against him. And now they were probably looking for an excuse to teach him a lesson. Another startling disclosure is that as soon as the mob started thrashing Kumara, the factory owners disappeared.

Priyantha Diyawadana Kumara's body was shifted from Sialkot to Lahore on Saturday night for its onward journey to Colombo. According to the postmortem report, injuries to the Sri Lankan citizen's brain as well as face had caused his death. His bones were fractured while 99 per cent of his body had been completely burnt. In his tweet, Prime Minister Imran Khan wrote that he had a telephonic conversation with Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and conveyed nation's anger and shame over vigilante killing of Sri Lankan national Priyantha Diyawadana in Sialkot.

Indian villagers...

FROM PAGE 01

insurgents in the area and killed six people. As irate villagers burned two army vehicles, the soldiers fired at them, killing nine more people, the officer said on condition of anonymity as he was not authorised to talk to reporters. Earlier the officer had said seven protesters were killed. One soldier was also killed in the clash with protesters, he said. An Indian army statement said it "deeply regretted" the incident and its aftermath, adding that "the cause of the unfortunate loss of lives is being investigated at the highest level and appropriate action will be taken as per the course of law." "Security forces have suffered severe injuries in the incident, including one soldier who succumbed to the injuries," it added. The statement said "credible intelligence" on insurgent movements indicated that a "specific operation was planned" in Mon district in Nagaland. Insurgents often cross into Myanmar after attacking Indian government forces in the remote area. Nyanmaw Konyak, a local community leader, said those killed were coal miners. India's Home Minister Amit Shah expressed anguish over the "unfortunate incident" and said the state government will investigate the killings.

Indian troops kill...

FROM PAGE 01

The army has been battling separatist militants in the north-eastern state of Nagaland for years. But it is not the first time Indian security forces have been accused of wrongly targeting innocent locals in their operations. The incident on Saturday night took place in and around Otting village in Mon district, which borders Myanmar, during a counterinsurgency operation, reports said. Soldiers from the Assam Rifles, an Indian army unit, opened fire on a truck carrying 30 or more coalmine labourers near their camp. "The troopers had intelligence inputs about some militant movement in the area and on seeing the truck they mistook the miners to be rebels and opened fire killing six labourers," a senior police official told Reuters. As news spread of the killings, hundreds of locals surrounded the camp before burning vehicles belonging to the Assam Rifles and clashing with troopers.

PAF wins CAS Challenge Cup Polo Tournament

"Diplomats, high ranking military & civil officials and polo enthusiasts witnessed the match. CAS Challenge Cup Polo Tournament was introduced in 1985,"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PAF won the 30th Chief of Air Staff Challenge Cup Polo Tournament, which was played at the lush green Islamabad Polo Club. PAF won the final match by defeating PAF Blue with five to four goals. Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The Chief Guest gave away prizes amongst the players and awarded the CAS Challenge Cup Polo to the winning team. The Air Chief congratulated the winners and appreciated the club management for

successful conduct of the event in order to promote sports in Pakistan. The chief guest also emphasized upon the significance of sports for mental as well as physical health of the youth. The tournament commenced on 29 November, 2021 and 08 teams (PAF, PAF Blue, PAF White, Asean Kalabagh, Boquival, Buraq ASC, Hakuna Matata and PBG) participated in the tournament. Diplomats, high ranking military & civil officials and polo enthusiasts witnessed the match. CAS Challenge Cup Polo Tournament was introduced in 1985 and ever since it has been a regular feature in the PAF Sports Calendar.



Bayern down Dortmund to go four points clear

DNA

BERLIN: Robert Lewandowski scored twice as Bayern Munich opened up a four-point lead at the top of the Bundesliga with a 3-2 win at second-placed Borussia Dortmund on Saturday. Julian Brandt and Erling Haaland scored Dortmund's goals at Signal Iduna Park, but Lewandowski netted and converted the winning penalty, either side of a Kingsley Coman goal. Dortmund coach Marco Rose was shown a red card for arguing with the referee after a Mats Hummels handball led to Lewandowski converting the key spot-kick 12 minutes from time. "In the first half, we should have led by more and in terms of how we played, I'm not sure we deserved to win," said Bayern forward Thomas Muller. "But in terms of fighting, we were there." This was Bayern's seventh straight win



over Dortmund, including five Bundesliga victories and two German Super Cup triumphs. Dortmund were unhappy to not be awarded a penalty after Marco Reus appeared to be fouled just before Lewandowski's crucial spot kick. "We always had the feeling that we could win. That's why it's doubly bitter that we lost like that," fumed Reus. Dortmund forged ahead in the fifth minute when Brandt, who was later

stretched off after a clash of heads, slammed in a superb shot. A Hummels mistake led to Lewandowski equalising four minutes later against his former club when the Poland striker muddled onto a Thomas Muller pass and fired home. Bayern capitalised on another Dortmund error when Coman's excellent strike put the visitors in front before half-time. Just 120 seconds after the break, Dortmund were level when

Haaland shot past diving Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer after Dayot Upamecano cheaply gave away possession. Dortmund were unlucky not to be awarded a penalty when their captain Marco Reus appeared to be fouled by Lucas Hernandez. At the other end, Hummels was again at fault when VAR confirmed his handball, to Rose's fury, and Lewandowski made no mistake. It was Lewandowski's 22nd goal in 15 Bundesliga games against Dortmund, who he left in 2014. Bayern midfielder Corentin Tolisso fired wide of an open Dortmund goal during 10 tense minutes of stoppage time. Earlier, Czech Republic striker Patrik Schick scored four second-half goals as third-placed Bayer Leverkusen romped to a 7-1 thrashing of bottom club Greuther Fuerth. Schick became the first Leverkusen player to score four goals in one half of a Bundesliga match.

Owen becomes part of Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive

ISLAMABAD: Former British footballer and Liverpool star Michael Owen has announced that he has joined the Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive on behalf of Global Soccer Ventures (GSV) 'to mobilize the youth of Pakistan for football'. Michael Owen said in a video message which he captioned, "I am proud to partner with @ImranKhanPTI Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive on behalf of @GSVofficial1 to mobilize the youth of Pakistan for football." In his video message, the former British football star, who played for the English national team as well as football clubs like Manchester United, Real Madrid and Liverpool, said, "I am delighted to share the same stage with one of the world's great cricketers who today stands tall and proud as a visionary leader of Pakistan, Prime Minister Imran Khan." "Pakistan is a young country with 68 per cent of its population under 30 years old. And I want to focus on the youth of Pakistan by helping to develop a local to global plan for football." "I will try and connect with as many of you in Pakistan with Kamyab Jawan program which is a great initiative of Prime Minister Imran Khan and his special adviser on youth, Usman Dar. So hats off to them and their team." "As the ambassador of Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive for football in Pakistan. I want to help create new opportunities for the youth of Pakistan to prosper a new future in football. Together, we will be rolling out national trials in a talent hunt program designed to fast track talented young footballers. "I want to see some of you in England being developed as professional players and so the journey on the road to England has begun. I want to play an instrumental role in developing a new soccer city concept for Pakistan which will be coming soon. Kamyab Jawan! Kamyab Pakistan!" The nationwide grass-roots talent hunt programme, Kamyab Jawan Sports Drive, will be launched in Islamabad on Monday (tomorrow) which aims to revive the sports culture. - DNA

FM Qureshi to visit Brussels from Dec 6-8

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mutual respect and close cooperation, according to Office of the Foreign Office Spokesperson. Over the years, the partnership has grown stronger in diverse fields, including political, economic, trade, education and culture, and people-to-people contacts. With a trade volume of US \$982 million, Belgium is the fifth largest trading partner of Pakistan in the EU. As a key component of the visit, the Foreign Minister will co-chair the 6th round of Pakistan-EU Strategic Dialogue with EU High Representative and Vice President Josep Borrell. The European Union is one of the largest trade and investment partners of Pakistan and the current volume of bilateral trade stands at US \$ 10.883 billion. Pakistan's relations with EU are manifest in frequent and close engagements through structured dialogues. The two sides signed the Pakistan-EU Strategic Engagement Plan (SEP) in June 2019, which provides solid framework and blue print for future Pakistan-EU cooperation. This would be the first in-person session of the Strategic Dialogue since the signing of the landmark SEP. It has been preceded by the 7th round of Pakistan-EU Political Dialogue, co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood and Deputy Secretary General Enrique Mora, and held online on 3 December 2021.

Nations warn...

FROM PAGE 01

The short joint statement was issued by the US and signed by the UK, European Union and a further 19 countries. It outlined their deep concerns over the report's findings and called on all cases of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances to be fully investigated. "We will continue to measure the Taliban by their actions," the statement concluded. The Taliban once again denied the allegations, but did say they would be willing to allow an independent investigation into the allegations to happen. "There is no evidence showing anything like this happened," the Taliban said in a statement. "We are willing to allow an independent investigation into these allegations and we will fully co-operate with it," it said, adding that the group's hope is that the international community will not base decisions regarding Afghanistan on the allegations.

Pakistan to host OIC...

FROM PAGE 01

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi told reporters in Lahore on Saturday that representatives of countries including Germany, Japan and others would also be invited. The December 19 meeting in Islamabad would be the largest international gathering on Afghanistan since Kabul fell to the Afghan Taliban on August 15. Pakistan has been spearheading efforts to garner support for the Taliban government in view of the worsening humanitarian and economic crises.

Pakistan vs Bangladesh: Play called off due to rain in Dhaka Test

DHAKA: Rain again interrupted the second Test in Dhaka between Bangladesh and Pakistan on Sunday with only 6.2 overs played and the tourists extending their lead. Play did not get under way until after lunch with Pakistan reaching 188-2, adding 27 from their first day total. Overnight unbeaten batsman Azhar Ali struck back-to-back off pace of Hossain to 34th Test fifty match officials. Ali struck boundaries bowler Ebad-complete his before called off play at 3:00 pm local time. Ali was batting on 52, alongside skipper Babar Azam, who added 11 runs, including a boundary off the first ball of the day, to stay unbeaten on 71. Pakistan lead the two-match series 1-0 after winning the first Test in Chittagong by eight wickets. - DNA



Aldo sets sights on TJ Dillashaw fight

LAS VEGAS: The former featherweight champion took a big step towards his goal of becoming a two-weight UFC champion with a convincing decision victory over Rob Font. But he admitted he was unlikely to be given a title shot in his next contest. "I want to fight for the title but we don't know what's going to happen with that," Aldo said. Interim belt holder Petr Yan and current champion Aljain Sterling are pencilled in to contest the next title fight in early 2022 and Aldo has set his sights on fighting former champion Dillashaw next. "So Dillashaw is right there just sitting. I want to fight Dillashaw," he said. "That would be my best opponent next." Dillashaw (17-4) is currently recovering from a knee injury and has been unable to find his best form since a return from a lengthy doping ban in 2021. He won his comeback fight against Cory Sandhagen in July, but it was a controversial split decision win with many onlookers scoring the bout for Sandhagen. Aldo, on the other hand, picked up the 31st win of his career in Las Vegas and has recovered superbly from suffering three defeats in a row. Losses at bantamweight to Yan and Marlon Moraes and at featherweight to Alexander Volkov had appeared to spell the end of 35-year-old Aldo's illustrious career, but the Brazilian feels he has discovered a new version of himself after putting together an impressive winning streak. "I trained for this," Aldo said. "I want to be a champion in this division and I'm working for that. "Rob Font's a tough opponent. I respect him a lot but nobody's going to stop me. "We trained to become a complete MMA fighter. I want to be as complete as I can - this is the new Aldo that you're seeing." - Agencies



Economic stability: Romanian envoy praises Pakistan govt

CONTINUE FROM PAGE 1
On 1st of December 2021 we celebrate the 103 years since the realization of our Great Union. One hundred and three years back, the century long ideal of national unity has been achieved, building the foundation of the modern Romanian state. The anniversary of the Great Union has given us the opportunity to honour the memory of the sacrifices made for laying the foundation of new Romania which ultimately placed us in the midst of great European family. The end of the First World War and the armistice concluded in 1918, represents a crucial moment in the history of mankind causing deep changes both in international relations, and at socio-cultural level. Like every year on this occasion I would like to emphasise that we, in Romania and in Europe, will always remember that 1.1 million soldiers from the subcontinent had fought courageously and heroically in different battle fields of the WWI and 60,000 of them, mostly from today Pakistani Pun-

jab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, had paid the ultimate price in defending the ideals of peace, freedom, liberty, dignity, democracy and fundamental human rights. Today we pay tribute and

honour them as much as we honour our heroes! More than 100 years after the Great Union, Romania reaffirms its attachment to the principles of international law, promotion of mutual

respect and good understanding, to dialogue and to multiculturalism, values that are the basis of its international profile and external action. Today, Romania is a security provider and enjoys

unprecedented development, security and welfare. Our collective duty is to protect these values and secure them in the medium and long term, as well to prepare for challenges ahead.

The key word of the Romanian European policy is union and with this call to unity we successfully exercised two years back our first ever mandate at the Presidency of the EU Council. Romania

takes every possible opportunity to show that our profound European vocation is bringing a tangible contribution to a powerful, credible and inclusive Europe. We are attaching a great value to the idea of cohesion, a common European value, reflecting the imperious need for unity and cooperation among the EU Member States, as well as the need for more economic, social and territorial cohesion as enshrined in the EU Treaties. The anniversary of the Great Union is a good reminder and an incentive towards Romania pleading for more unity at the European level. As a responsible member of the European Union, we fully proved our capacity to build consensus and find efficient and viable solutions for our common European future. In concluding my short remarks, I would like to express my gratitude to all of you present here for so graciously accepting to respond to our invitation and celebrate together this glorious event in our history. Many thanks to all friends who contributed in more than one way to the success of tonight reception.



Briefs

Thousands protest against mining project

NEWS DESK

BELGRADE: Thousands of demonstrators blocked major roads across Serbia Saturday as anger swelled over a government-backed plan to allow mining giant Rio Tinto to extract lithium from the Balkan nation. In the capital Belgrade, protesters swarmed a major highway and bridge linking the city to outlying suburbs as the crowd chanted anti-government slogans while some held signs criticising the mining project. Smaller protests were held in other Serbian cities, with small scuffles between demonstrators and counter-protesters in Belgrade and the northern city of Novi Sad, according to local media reports. "They allowed foreign companies to do whatever they want on our land. They put us on a platter for everyone who can just come and take whatever they want," Vladislava Cvoric, a 56-year old economist, told AFP during the protest. Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic shared a photograph of the protest on Instagram and commented that "clean air, water and food are keys to health".

Incomplete mosque lays bare Iraq divisions

BAGHDAD: It was meant to compete with the Taj Mahal in grandeur, but former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's monumental Al-Rahman Mosque project was never completed. Instead, the half-finished edifice of grey concrete stands in the heart of Baghdad as testimony to the sectarian and political strife that has shaped much of Iraq's modern history. The aim was for the mosque, with a capacity for 15,000 worshippers, to be one of the largest in the Middle East. Launched in the 1990s in the midst of a crippling Western embargo over Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, the construction of the mosque was designed to be a snub to Washington. But the dictator's dreams of grandeur - along with them his iron-fisted rule - would come crumbling down with the 2003 US-led invasion. Today, a vast hole gapes at the sky from where an 84-metre-tall (280-foot), gold-adorned ceramic dome was supposed to cover the central prayer hall. Around it, eight secondary domes 28 metres high, each flanked by eight smaller domes, stand in a suspended state of near completion. Several cranes are frozen in time above the edifice, which towers over the upscale Mansur district of the capital. - Agencies

Pope to visit asylum seekers in Greece

LESBOS ISLAND: Pope Francis will on Sunday return to the island of Lesbos, the migration flashpoint he first visited in 2016, to plead for better treatment of refugees as attitudes towards immigrants harden across Europe. On the second day of a landmark trip to Greece Francis will tour the temporary camp of Mavrovouni, where nearly 2,200 asylum seekers currently live.

Francis has long championed refugees, whom he called the "protagonists of a terrible modern Odyssey" in a speech to Greek officials and EU vice-president Margaritis Schinas on Saturday. He was speaking in Athens which had gone without a papal visit for 20 years. Ahead of the Lesbos visit, 31-year-old Cameroonian camp resident Christian Tango said he hoped the pope would "carry the voice (of refugees) to the whole world". As with other residents, Tango is only allowed to leave the camp once a week but on Sunday, he will get to speak to the pope. The Mavrovouni tent camp was hurriedly erected after the sprawling camp of Moria, Europe's largest such site at the time, burned down last year. - APP

Palestinians, rights groups slam Jerusalem 'execution'

The United Nation's Human Rights Office (OHCHR) said it was "shocked by the apparent extra-judicial execution"

AGENCIES

RAMALLAH: Palestinian officials and human rights groups have condemned the killing of a Palestinian man after he carried out a stabbing attack in occupied East Jerusalem. Israeli police have released surveillance video from the site of the attack near Jerusalem's Old City on Saturday. In the footage, the Palestinian, identified as 25-year-old Mohammad Salima, appears to stab an ultra-Orthodox Jewish man and then approaches an Israeli police officer before being shot and falling to the ground.

Other footage shot by bystanders appeared to show Israeli police officers continuing to shoot Salima from point-blank range while he was lying on the ground and not appearing to pose a threat. Israel's Magen David Adom emergency service said the stabbing victim was a 20-year-old man who was taken to hospital in "moderate to severe condition". The United Nation's Human Rights Office (OHCHR) said it was "shocked by the apparent extra-judicial execution". "Footage shows Mr Sleemah attacking a passerby and police officer with a knife before being shot and subdued. While on the ground and injured, Israeli forces shot Mr

Sleemah twice, apparently killing him," it said in a statement. "Extra-judicial killings such as this are the consequence of the regular resort to lethal force by well-armed and well-protected Israeli security personnel against Palestinians, and the almost total lack of accountability for killings and injuries of Palestinians by Israeli forces. Will there be accountability in this case? The UN Human Rights Office is monitoring the case further." Israel's justice ministry said two police officers were brought in for questioning over the killing, according to Israeli media. The ministry's police investigations unit said the police officers were ques-

tioned shortly after the incident and released without conditions. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said he "fully backs" the officers, saying in a statement they "operated as expected of Israeli officers". The office of Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas said the shooting "was a continuity of Israel's ongoing aggression on the Palestinian people that should not be tolerated". PA Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh condemned it as a "crime of execution" and called for it to be added to the International Criminal Court's (ICC) investigation file into Israeli war crimes.



JEDDAH: French President Macron with Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Suleman during his recent visit to Saudi Arabia. - DNA

Indonesia volcano death toll rises to 13

LUMAJANG: The death toll from a sudden, spectacular eruption of Indonesia's Mount Semeru has risen to 13, disaster officials said Sunday, as rescuers searched villages blanketed in molten ash for survivors. The eruption of Java's biggest mountain caught locals by surprise on Saturday, sending thousands fleeing its path of destruction and forcing hundreds of families into makeshift shelters. It left at least 11 villages of Lumajang district in East Java province coated in volcanic ash, submerging houses and vehicles, smothering livestock and leaving at least 900 evacuees seeking shelter in mosques, schools and village halls. Dramatic footage showed Semeru pumping a mushroom of ash into the sky, looming ominously over screaming residents of a nearby village as they fled. "The death toll is now 13 people. Rescuers found more bodies," national disaster mitigation agency (BNPB) spokesman Abdul Muhari told AFP, without specifying the cause of death. Two of the victims have been identified, he said in a later statement. At least 57 people were injured in the eruption, of whom 41 suffered burns and were hospitalised, the BNPB said in a press release. As many as 10 trapped people were rescued from the surrounding areas in Lumajang, Muhari said, as villagers and rescuers worked through the night to find anyone

trapped or retrieve bodies. Local broadcaster Kompas TV reported those rescued were local workers at a sand mining site. Evacuations were temporarily suspended on Sunday due to hot ash clouds, Indonesia's Metro TV reported. There is also a risk of heavy rain causing ash sediment to form a new river of hot lava, the country's top volcanologist Surono told the station. Lava mixed with debris and heavy rain had already destroyed at least one bridge in Lumajang, preventing rescuers from immediately accessing the area. But emergency service footage on Sunday showed a desolate scene in one village swallowed by the eruption, with roofs of houses protruding from the coat of mud that destroyed them. Rescue workers dressed in bright orange uniforms worked against a dark-grey backdrop, a scene of ruin surrounded by buckled buildings and fallen trees. In others, villagers tried to salvage their belongings from wrecked homes. Some held mattresses and furniture on their shoulders while others carried goats alive in their arms. The rescue teams were using heavy loaders to remove debris and clear roads, Muhari said. Locals have been advised to not travel within five kilometres (3.1 miles) of Semeru's crater, and the air around it is highly polluted and could affect vulnerable groups, he added. - APP

Russia labels new Belarus sanctions 'inhumane'

"We firmly condemn the new restrictive measures against Belarus," foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said

MOSCOW: Russia criticised the West on Saturday for imposing fresh sanctions against Belarus over accusations the former Soviet nation has stoked a migration crisis on its borders with European Union (EU) countries. The United States, Canada, Britain and the EU on Thursday stepped up pressure on the regime of Belarus leader Alexander Lukashenko with the targets of new sanctions including his family, security officials, media figures and travel firms. "We firmly condemn the new restrictive measures against Belarus," foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said, adding they were "inhumane by nature, due to the negative impact they will have on ordinary Belarus citizens".

The European Union says Lukashenko has orchestrated an influx of migrants to its borders with Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, in response to earlier sanctions imposed over a brutal crackdown on protesters against his disputed re-election last year. The crisis escalated last month as increasing numbers of migrants - including pregnant women and children - arrived to try to cross over into Poland. Belarus has denied the allegations and accuses its neighbour of violently pushing back migrants. At the peak of the crisis, some 2,000 migrants were forced to camp out in the freezing cold on the border, before border guards cleared out the makeshift camp and the migrants

were moved to a logistics centre. Polish media say at least 12 migrants have died in the border area since the summer. But the situation has calmed down in recent weeks after discussions between European officials and Belarus, and hundreds of migrants have been flown home. Minsk airport on Saturday said a new plane carrying 400 passengers had left bound for Iraq, bringing to 2,700 the number of Iraqis who have been repatriated since mid-November. Most of the Iraqis who were stranded on the border have said they have spent their savings, sold valuables and even taken out loans to escape economic hardship in Iraq and start a new life in the European Union. - APP



TEHRAN: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Iran Ali Alizda Hadmet with Ali Nikzad, the 1st Vice-Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly Parliament of Iran and discuss the matters of our bilateral inter-parliamentary relations and cooperation. - DNA

Indian fake network exposed in UK research

The report said, the CIR says the fake accounts, which claimed to be the real Sikhs, produced content such as texts and memes which are aimed to delegitimise the farmers' movement and shift the debate away from the controversial farm laws

ISLAMABAD: The UK-based Centre for Information Resilience (CIR) in its investigative report has exposed a fake Indian social media network with profiles of Sikh influencers created to target the farmer protests in India as well as the Khalistan Movement. A report released by Kashmir Media Service recently said, the CIR in its report "Analysis of the #RealSikh Influence Operation" exposed a network of 80 accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram which were supported by "a large network of authentic accounts which primarily identify

as Hindu nationalists". All these accounts used repetitive hashtags such as #RealSikhAgainstKhalistanis #Khalistanis #SikhRejectKhalistan. The CIR is a non-profit social enterprise dedicated to identifying, countering and exposing influence operations. It said, "A coordinated influence operation on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram is using fake personas acting as influencers within the Sikh community to discredit the push for Sikh independence, label Sikh political interests as extremist, stoke cultural tensions within India and international

communities, and promote Indian Government content," the CIR report says. The report said, the CIR says the fake accounts, which claimed to be the real Sikhs, produced content such as texts and memes which are aimed to delegitimise the farmers' movement and shift the debate away from the controversial farm laws. The narrative promoted by these accounts was similar to the statements made by some of the Bharatiya Janata Party leaders and mainstream news channels with regard to the farmer protests, it adds. The report maintains that some

of the fake network's messaging included statements calling for action such as Indian "Nationalists shouldn't remain watching silently" and that they "need to counter and expose them [the Khalistani Movement for Sikh independence]" to "save India" from "Pakistan, Canada, UK, and US". The report points out that the network stepped up its activities since the commencement of the farmers' protests in India. "Both the farmers' protests and the Khalistan independence movement have been the two most frequently targeted subjects of the core network of fake accounts.

The content produced by these accounts was also endorsed by various verified accounts who worked with these accounts, suggesting that there was a coordinated government backed activity," it says. It says that many high-profile accounts were found to be involved in focused targeting of Sikhs For Justice's General Counsel Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, who is running the Khalistan Referendum campaign for the separation of Punjab from India. All these accounts that published Pannun's cartoon memes called him a Pakistani agent, fake Sikh and enemy of India and Sikhs. - APP

US school shooter parents plead not guilty

WASHINGTON: The parents of a 15-year-old who shot dead four students at a US high school with a gun bought by his father pleaded not guilty to involuntary manslaughter Saturday, as a Michigan judge set a combined million-dollar bond for their release.

James and Jennifer Crumbley, the parents of shooting suspect Ethan Crumbley, were arrested overnight after police tracked them down in an industrial building in Detroit - 40 miles (65 kilometers) from the shooting in Oxford.

The pair were considered fugitives - having reportedly withdrawn \$4,000 in cash and switched off their phones - although the Crumbleys' lawyers told the court their clients "were absolutely going to turn themselves in." But Sheriff Michael Bouchard of Oakland County - where the shooting took place - told reporters during a news conference Saturday that it appeared the couple had help in "hiding" from police.

"They weren't looking toward surrendering at that point," he said. "We believe they were assisted in that location, to get there, to get in," Bouchard said. "Clearly somebody helped them into that location and made it available to them," even after there was a warrant out for their arrests, he said. At their arraignment Judge Julie Nicholson set bond at \$500,000 for each parent, calling the charges "very, very serious" and saying "the court does have some concern about the flight risk." - Agencies

France's far-right Zemmour holds 1st rally

PARIS: Far-right polemicist Eric Zemmour was preparing his first political rally as an official contender for the French presidency Sunday, after last week's controversial campaign launch.

Police and other observers fear that his rally, at an exhibition centre in Villepinte north of Paris, could be marred by clashes with counter-demonstrators. The meeting comes five days after he finally declared himself a candidate with a campaign video loaded with anti-immigrant rhetoric and doom-laden warnings about the future. On Saturday, his team unveiled the campaign's official slogan: "Impossible is not French", a quote attributed to Napoleon. Zemmour, a 63-year-old writer and political commentator on television, is counting on a strong turn-out Sunday to show he is a credible contender to unseat President Emmanuel Macron.

He has been working hard to outflank veteran far-right leader Marine Le Pen. And as the right-wing Republicans chose moderate Valerie Pécresse as their presidential candidate Saturday, he got to work wooing those among its members who had backed a more hardline leader.

In an open letter to supporters of the Republicans' defeated second-round candidate Eric Ciotti, he invited them to join him at Sunday's rally. "We are so close and have so much in common," he wrote. - APP

Malaysia reports 4,896 new infections

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia reported another 4,896 new COVID-19 infections as of midnight Saturday, bringing the national total to 2,654,474, according to the health ministry.

Data released on the ministry's website showed 18 of the new cases are imported, with 4,878 being local transmissions. Another 36 more deaths have been reported, bringing the death toll to 30,574. A total of 4,678 patients have been released after recovery, bringing the total number of cured and discharged to 2,561,232. There are 62,668 active cases, with 490 being held in intensive care and 269 of those are in need of assisted breathing. The country reported 67,701 vaccine doses administered on Saturday alone and some 79.2 percent of the population have received at least one dose and 77.9 percent are fully vaccinated. - APP

Briefs

Germany's Merkel to hand over power

BERLIN: She was called "the leader of the free world" against authoritarian populists on the march in Europe and the United States, but Angela Merkel is wrapping up a historic 16 years in power with a mixed legacy at home and abroad. In office so long she was dubbed Germany's "eternal chancellor", Merkel, 67, leaves with her popularity so resilient she would likely have won a record fifth term had she sought it.



Instead, Merkel will pass the baton as the first German chancellor to step down entirely by choice, with a whole generation of voters never knowing another person at the top. Her supporters say she provided steady leadership through countless global crises as a moderate and unifying figure. Yet critics argue a muddle-through style pegged to the broadest possible consensus lacked the bold vision to prepare Europe and its top economy for the coming decades.

What is certain is that she leaves behind a fractured political landscape, with her own CDU party divided as it struggles to emerge from her long shadow. — APP

PDM steering committee supports resignations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The steering committee of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) on Sunday prepared recommendations in favour of the long march and resignations from assemblies to protest against the incumbent government and rising inflation.

The meeting was chaired by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and former premier Shahid Khaqan Abbasi. According to the Express News, the meeting agreed to hold conventions and protest rallies in all four provinces across the country before the long march. However, the time and dates for the march and resignations are to be decided at the upcoming PDM summit. The recommendations of the steering committee will be presented today (Monday) at the PDM summit, which will be chaired by the movement's chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman. The summit will be held in Islamabad.

PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif on Friday announced that the PDM would decide the details regarding the long march in the December 6 meeting, rejecting the notion of a rift between opposition parties. He cited soaring inflation and unemployment as two major issues, threatening the very existence of Pakistan.

Covid claims six more lives

LAHORE: Pakistan has reported 6 deaths in the last 24 hours by novel coronavirus as the number of positive cases has surged to 1,286,825. The nationwide tally of fatalities has jumped to 28,767 on Sunday.

According to the latest figures by the National Command and Operation Center (NCO) 372 persons tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 24 hours.

Punjab remains the worst-hit province in terms of deaths followed by Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Till now 13,037 individuals have lost their lives to the epidemic in Punjab, 7,626 in Sindh, 5,858 in KP, 958 in Islamabad, 742 in Azad Kashmir, 360 in Balochistan, and 186 in GB.

Furthermore 476,674 coronavirus cases have been confirmed in Sindh, 443,453 in Punjab 180,316 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 107,887 in Islamabad, 34,576 in Azad Kashmir 33,506 in Balochistan and 10,413 in Gilgit-Baltistan. — APP

Fawad traces historical, religious Pak-Thai linkages

Information Minister says many Pakistani taking active part in Thai politics; Ambassador of Thailand Chakkrid Krachaiwong took the audience 60 years back when his Royal Highness visited Pakistan and planted a mango tree in Lahore

AB KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Chakkrid Krachaiwong, ambassador of Thailand in Islamabad acted wisely by celebrating the National Day of Thailand falling on 5th December, birthday anniversary of King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great and Thailand's Father's Day all on the same day and invited a very limited number of guests at his residence adjacent to the newly constructed Royal Thai Embassy. As guests arrived at the venue, they were swayed away by the architecture and the décor of the building which was illuminated with colorful lights marking Thailand-Pakistan 70 years of diplomatic relations. Bright colors, rich ornamentation, multi-tiered roofs immediately connected the guest to the magnificent palaces of Thailand. The ambassador along with his diplomatic colleagues greeted each and every guest clapping the hands together and saying "sawadee-kah".

The ambassador in his welcoming speech, took the audience 60 years back when his Royal Highness visited Pakistan and planted a mango tree in Lahore which has borne many delicious mangoes over the following decades. The current serving King of Thailand too had visited Pakistan three times as in the capacity of Crown Prince and it was the serving king who had laid the foundation of the Thai embassy in Islamabad in 2012 which not only is one of the largest but also the most beautiful Thai embassies located all over the world, he informed. The ambassador said many of his colleagues at the foreign ministry in Bangkok became very envious of him when he informed them on his posting to Islamabad. In his address he also emphasized the importance of bi-



lateral relations and continuously increasing trade volume between the two countries.

It is not the beaches of Thailand or the majestic mountains of Pakistan that has tied this bond of friendship between the two countries but people to people relations played the most important role, said the ambassador very proudly. Due to the religious Buddha sites in Taxila, Pakistan is a second home many Thai citizens making their pilgrims round the year and for the Pakistanis, beaches of Thailand play an important role as tourist destination? The government of Thailand is also planning a big monument at Taxila very soon and it will be a great addition to the Buddhist site", he ended his speech with the quote of Quaid-Azam saying that Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah once said that with faith discipline and Unity

there is nothing worthwhile that can't be achieved. So let's follow his example and achieve the unachievable.

Fawad Chaudhry, minister for Information & broadcasting also narrated interesting stories about his visit to Thailand impromptu and also took support from the pages handed over to him by Foreign Office to read from. Mr. Chaudhry narrated his last visit to Thailand which was in 2015 when he went to the tiger's hub and took during pictures with them. On his return he said I got a dressing down from my mother for being so careless. She was furious for his acting so brave after seeing the photos, he informed the audience laughingly. The minister also emphasized on the centuries old historical cum religious relationship between the two countries which actually go back to 2500 years of king Ashoka

time when he wanted to establish Buddha empire in Taksila now known as Taxila. He also showed his pleasant surprise that there are around 5000 Pakistanis living in Thailand and it does not stop here. Thai-Pakistanis are playing an important role in politics in Thailand and most of them are pathans. He informed the guests that six Thai-Pathans are members of the parliament whereas two are members of the Thai Senate ruling government. Taking a jibe at Mr. Atif Khan Senior Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the minister said it's nice to know that Pathans are ruling all over the world. It was a three-hour event but time flew in a blink of an eye it seemed. The host had arranged very short duration documentaries, Mi-Tai performance, dance performance which kept the audience spell

bound. A delicious Thai menu was also on display and I was informed by one of the friends that the ambassador's wife has spent all day in the kitchen supervising the Thai delicacies which included chicken Satay in appetizers, Tom Yum Soup with Prawns and for main course, Beef Massaman Curry, steamed rice and Stir Fried mixed Vegetables. The dessert was no doubt the show-stopper of the evening. It was called Sago Melon in Fresh Milk and it's fan club is not only limited to Thailand but reaches as far as Singapore, Taiwan, The Philippines. Sago is made from a starch extracted from the pith of tropical palm trees. Sago pearls on the other hand come from cassava starch. One can use any fruit with them but mango and melon are the most popular ones informed a Thai diplomat as we carved for more.

Pakistan gets another 2.2 million Pfizer doses

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has received 2.2 million more doses of Pfizer vaccine via the COVAX mechanism, the United States Embassy in Islamabad said in a Twitter statement. The US Embassy has stated that 2.2 million additional doses of the American vaccine has arrived in Pakistan on

Sunday. "Our commitment to COVID-19 response efforts in #Pakistan continues. Today the U.S. donated an additional 2.2 million Pfizer vaccine doses to Pakistan via the #COVAX mechanism. This donation will complement the impressive campaign to vaccinate all Pakistanis. #USPAK" Pakistan has been determined to defend the country from Covid-19 and

this donation will complement the impressive campaign to vaccinate all Pakistanis, the US embassy said. In October the US mission stated that the total number of COVID-19 vaccines donated by the US to Pakistan reached to 15.8 million. The US is the single largest contributor supporting COVAX efforts toward global COVID-19 vaccine access, added the embassy.



LAHORE: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi along with diplomats of various countries attending a function in Lahore. — DNA

Biden-Putin talks set for Tuesday amid tension

Washington and Kiev say Moscow has massed troops near Ukraine's borders and accuse Russia of planning an invasion



MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin and his US counterpart Joe Biden will hold talks by video conference on Tuesday, the Kremlin and Washington said, as tensions rise over Ukraine. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Saturday the conversation would take place in the evening Russia time and the two leaders would determine its duration, according to Russian news agencies. A statement from the White House also confirmed the talks, saying the leaders would discuss a range of issues by a secure video link. "President Biden will underscore US concerns with

Russian military activities on the border with Ukraine and reaffirm the United States' support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine," press secretary Jen Psaki said in the statement. President Biden said Friday he would make it "very, very difficult" for Russia to launch any invasion of Ukraine, which had warned that a large-scale attack may be planned for next month. Washington and Kiev say Moscow has massed troops near Ukraine's borders and accuse Russia of planning an invasion. Russia has denied any bellicose intentions and accused the West of provocation, particularly with military exercises in the Black Sea, which it sees as part of its sphere of influence. President Biden and President Putin had been expected since Friday to hold a video call. — APP

UNHCR seeks aid for 3.5 million Afghans

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has launched a global fundraising winter campaign to help forcibly displaced families to avert a "crisis of hunger and starvation" in Afghanistan as winter sets in. "People don't have enough to eat, and it's very visible," UNHCR Spokesperson Babar Baloch said in Geneva following his recent return from Kabul.

Baloch said a lack of insulated shelters, warm clothes, insufficient food, fuel for heating, and medical supplies are just some of the deprivations confronting people who have been forcibly displaced. With temperatures "expected to drop to -25C, many displaced families lack proper shelter a primary requirement if they are to survive the bitter cold," he warned. UNHCR is appealing for increased support for 3.5 million people displaced by conflict inside Afghanistan, including 700,000 from 2021 alone. According to Baloch, nearly 23 million people, or 55 per cent of the population, are facing extreme levels of hunger nearly nine million of whom are at risk of famine. — APP

Upon arrival, Pakistan Navy Ship ALAMGIR visits Dakar, Senegal and established free Medical Camp as good will gesture. Mission Commander along with Commanding Officer of PNS ALAMGIR called on Minister of Defence of Senegal, Chief of Naval Staff of Senegal Navy and Chief of Air Staff of Senegal. During the interactions, matters of mutual interests were discussed and enhancement of bilateral ties in all spheres was reaffirmed. Taking the opportunity, Mission Commander conveyed good wishes of Chief of the Naval Staff for the people of Senegal in general and the Senegal Navy in particular. As a goodwill gesture and to extend humanitarian assistance, free Medical Camp was established in city of Dakar by Pakistan Navy. A specialized team of Pakistan Navy doctors and paramedics provided medical treatment and medicines to over 2000 patients. The implementation of COVID-19 SOPs was ensured during the Medical Camp. Establishment of free Medical Camp by Pakistan Navy was widely appreciated by the local populace. Upon completion of port visit, PNS ALAMGIR conducted bilateral passage exercise with Senegal Navy Ship to enhance interoperability between the two navies.

PNS ALAMGIR visits port of Senegal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ship ALAMGIR visits Dakar, Senegal and established free Medical Camp as good will gesture.

Upon arrival, Pakistan Navy Ship was received by the officials from Ministry of Health of Senegal, Naval Officials and Defence Attache of Pakistan. During the port visit, Mission Commander along with Commanding Officer of PNS ALAMGIR called on Minister of Defence of Senegal, Chief of Naval Staff of Senegal Navy and Chief of Air Staff of Senegal. During the interactions, matters of mutual interests were discussed and enhancement of bilateral ties in all spheres was reaffirmed. Taking the opportunity, Mission Commander conveyed good wishes of Chief of the Naval Staff for the people of Senegal in general and the Senegal Navy in particular. As a goodwill gesture and to extend humanitarian assistance, free Medical Camp was established in city of Dakar by Pakistan Navy. A specialized team of Pakistan Navy doctors and paramedics provided medical treatment and medicines to over 2000 patients. The implementation of COVID-19 SOPs was ensured during the Medical Camp. Establishment of free Medical Camp by Pakistan Navy was widely appreciated by the local populace. Upon completion of port visit, PNS ALAMGIR conducted bilateral passage exercise with Senegal Navy Ship to enhance interoperability between the two navies.

Tamgha-i-Shujaat for Malik Adnan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan saluted the moral courage and bravery of Malik Adnan who tried his utmost to shelter and save Priyantha Diyawadana from the vigilante mob in Sialkot, endangering his own life by physically trying to shield the victim. The Prime Minister announced Tamgha-i-Shujaat for Malik Adnan. In a tweet on social media platform Twitter on Sunday, he said, "On behalf of the nation I want to salute moral courage & bravery of Malik Adnan who tried his utmost to shelter & save Priyantha Diyawadana from the vigilante mob in Sialkot, endangering his own life by physically trying to shield victim. We will award him Tamgha-i-Shujaat."

Pak-KSA agree on certifying skilled workforce

The Agreement signing ceremony took place at Ministry of Human Resources & Social Development, Saudi Arabia and it was witnessed by senior officials of both countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Saudi Arabia signed a landmark momentous agreement for certification and employment of Pakistani skilled workforce through Takamol and National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) yesterday. The Agreement was signed by Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Shafqat Mahmood from Pakistan side and Dr. Ahmad Jabbar Al Yamni, from Saudia Arabia Takamol side. The Agreement signing ceremony took place at Ministry of Human Resources & Social Development, Saudi Arabia and it was witnessed by senior officials of both countries.

This important cooperation between both countries has far-reaching impact for enhancing the employment opportunities for skilled Pakistani work force by joint certification and testing by Takamol Saudi Arabi and NAVTTTC National Vocational and Technical Training Commission Pakistan. This will also safeguard the existing Pakistani work force in Saudi Arabia. In order to facilitate Pakistani expatriate workforce, NAVTTTC under the leadership of Shafqat Mahmood, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Chairman NAVTTTC Syed Javed Hassan and Executive Director NAVTTTC Sajid Baloch worked hard to achieve this landmark far-reaching Agreement be-

tween NAVTTTC and Takamol. It is expected that millions of Pakistani skilled workers will get gainful employment opportunities with higher earning as a result of the efforts of the Government of Pakistan. Under this partnership, NAVTTTC, National Vocational and Technical Training Commission Pakistan and Takamol, a subsidiary of Government of Saudi Arabia are establishing the testing regime under the Skills Verification Program, by exchanging the NOS (National Occupational Standards) and to facilitate skill verification of candidates through competency-based assessment (Theory & Practical) at exam Centers in Pakistan for candidates desirous of working

in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This will enable Pakistani skill workforce to have authentic and internationally recognized joint certification by both Takamol Saudi Arabia and NAVTTTC Pakistan, through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment. The Ministry of Human Resource and Social Development of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has introduced Skill Verification Program (SVP) implemented from July, 2021 in order to regulate its labour market. After implementation of SVP in KSA, the skill verification has become necessary for the Pakistani skilled workers, who intend to have employment in Saudi Arabia. It is important to note that the largest number of Pakistani ex-

patriate workforce is based in Saudi Arabia, who contribute substantially to Pakistan's economy through foreign remittances. Most of the present Pakistani workforce in KSA fall in the category of unskilled or semi-skilled labour, which means reduced remunerations and it also impacts remittances negatively. Moreover, in the changing scenario of labour laws and dynamics of the labour market overseas, a large number of Pakistani skill workforce require skills certification as presently they face non-recognition of their qualifications, skills and certification. This cooperation will help a large number of these workers, also leading to national productivity and development.