



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Corruption breeds exploitation, pilferage of money: ED UNODC

Detailed News On Page-08

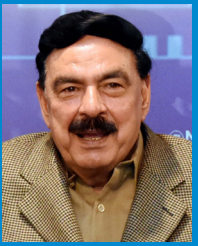
No room for extremism in country

Detailed News On Page-01



Pak to start Asia's first E-passport

Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

Olaf Scholz takes oath as Chancellor

DNA

BERLIN: Olaf Scholz has been sworn in as Germany's new chancellor, formally taking power after Angela Merkel's historic 16 years as leader. He promised he would do all he could to work towards a new start for Germany. As she left the chancellery in Berlin, ending a 31-year political career, Mrs Merkel told her former vice-chancellor to approach the task "with joy". His centre-left Social Democrats will govern alongside the Greens and the business-friendly Free Democrats.

'Anti-Inflation Movement' from Dec 10

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Wednesday announced an 'Anti-Inflation Protest Movement' from Saturday, December 10. The PPP Chairman addressed a press conference at Bilawal House in Karachi, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and other party leaders were also flanked with him. Announcing the protest schedule, Bilawal said the PPP would hold an anti-inflation protest on December 10, a protest against the gas crisis would be held on December 17 and later, a big rally at Garhi Khuda Baksh on December 27.

Health card helping 18 mln families

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Dr. Faisal Sultan Wednesday said that about 18 million families across the country are being provided free medical treatment through the Health Card facility. Talking to media persons while inaugurating the OPD Pilot project for Beneficiaries of Health Facility Program here, the SAPM said the present government is committed for ensuring universal health coverage.

Top Indian General dies in air crash

An IAF Mi-17 V5 helicopter met with a tragic accident in Tamil Nadu. Gen Rawat, his wife and 11 other died



Pakistan military leadership offers condolences

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Army has expressed condolence over the death of Indian defence chief General Bipin Rawat and 12 others in a helicopter crash, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. In a message from its Twitter handle, the ISPR stated that Chairman Joint Chiefs of the Staff Committee (CJCS) General Nadeem Raza and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa expressed condolences on the tragic death of Indian defence chief General Bipin Rawat, his wife and loss of precious lives in a helicopter crash in India.

Separately, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, NI(M) Chief of the Air Staff Pakistan Air Force; has also expressed his condolences on the tragic death of Indian CDS Gen Bipin Rawat, his spouse, and 11 other passengers/crew members in the helicopter crash, according to a Navy press release. Chief of the Naval Staff Pakistan Navy Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi expressed condolences on the tragic death of Indian Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat, his wife and loss of precious lives in a helicopter crash in India.

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Military top brass vow zero tolerance for extremism

Corps Commanders Conference reviewed the global, regional and domestic security milieu

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Taking note of the lynching of a Sri Lankan manager in Sialkot, the Corp Commanders Conference on Wednesday "unequivocally affirmed zero tolerance for such elements" for the eradication of "extremism and terrorism" in the country. "Taking note of the heinous lynching incident in Sialkot, forum unequivocally affirmed zero tolerance for such elements so as to eradicate extremism and terrorism from the country," said the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). The military's media wing shared that the top brass of the army took notice of the Sialkot lynching during the two-day 245th Corps Commanders' Conference. The meeting was chaired by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the General Head Quarters.

Continued on Page 06



Pakistan Navy conducts live weapons firing

DNA

KARACHI: In an impressive Live Weapon Firing ceremony, Pakistan Navy units successfully demonstrated combat readiness and war fighting potential through

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad and Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin cutting a cake along with other guests to commemorate 30th anniversary of Kazakhstan's Independence Day. – DNA

French film screening at PNCA today

Film features female cast from France, Pakistan and Morocco

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of France in Pakistan has reconnected with Islamabad's cultural scene through this wonderful exhibition that brings together a talented all-female cast from France, Pakistan and Morocco. In these uncertain times we are living in, with the world going through a pandemic, the theme of the show Lumieres could not be more symbolic and timely. The works of art displayed in this exhibition reveal how the artists' perception of light and artistic process have evolved at a time of pandemic and lockdowns.

Lumieres reminds us that light gives life to art. It is the artist's main tool of composition. It directs the gaze. This exhibition also reminds us that women artists have played a central part in the history of art in France and Pakistan, not least in contemporary art. While Lumieres reveals similarities and differences in artistic processes, it is once again the universality of contemporary art that shines through this exhibition. Lumieres, opening this December in Islamabad, is an exhibition curated by two women curators, Zara Sajid (Pakistan) and Stephanie Borsa (France) featuring 6 women artists; Marium Agha, Farida Batool and Risham Syed from Pakistan, Safaa Eruss from Morocco, Christine Ferrer and Genevieve Gleize from France. Supported by the French Embassy in Pakistan and the Pakistan National Council of the Arts, the project was conceptualised over a year ago amidst the various lockdowns due to worldwide pandemic, the exhibition shall be on display and open for public viewing from Dec 9th to the 20th, 2021. The curatorial note 'Reflection' for the exhibition has been written by Odile Guichard, Curator, Musee Voulant, Avignon, France. The second part of the project is an exhibition in France in 2023 featuring the same artists. Practical details: Date: Dec 9 - 20, 2021 Venue: PNCA, Islamabad Supported by: French Embassy in Pakistan Opening event: Thursday, Dec 9th, 2021, 5:00 - 8:00 pm.

'Pak, Kazakhstan need to work closely for global peace'

Info Minister Fawad Ch. felicitates Kazakhstan on Independence Day

CENTRELINE REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Wednesday said Pakistan and Kazakhstan were needed to work closely at different fora to ensure peace and stability in the world especially within the region. He said both the countries were members of important international fora including the United Nations, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Economic Cooperation Organization. Addressing a ceremony held here in connection with the national day of Kazakhstan, he said the world including Kazakhstan must come forward to help mitigate the sufferings of Afghan people on humanitarian basis. Peace and stability in Afghanistan was vital for the entire region including Pakistan, he added.

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Kazakhstan wants deeper ties with Pakistan: envoy

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin has said his country greatly values ties with Pakistan and is looking forward to diversifying these relations. He expressed these views on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the Independence of Kazakhstan. The Ambassador further said Kazakhstan is the biggest economy in Central Asia and our strategic goal is to secure leading positions in the region and strengthen our niche in the world economy.

– Detailed coverage in tomorrow's edition

EU monitoring rights' situation in IIOJK

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: Vice President of the European Commission Josep Borrell has said that European Union (EU) is closely following the human rights situation in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir and stressed resolution of the dispute through dialogue. Borrell underscored the need for restraint, de-escalation of tensions and called for constructive political and diplomatic engagement. Josep Borrell said this while co-chairing the sixth round of EU-Pak Strategic Dialogue along with Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in Brussels on Tuesday. Foreign Minister Qureshi reiterated Pakistan's deep concerns about human rights violations by India in Jammu and Kashmir, and efforts to change the de-



mography of the disputed territory in violation of UNSC resolutions. Josep Borrell welcomed as an important step, in the interest of regional peace and stability, the agreement of February 2021 between India and Pakistan for observance of ceasefire understanding at the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir.

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We need women in higher judiciary of Pakistan: Nilofar – Page 03

National narrative promotes shared identity: Wajeeha – Page 04

Israeli racism and violence are symptoms of a 'sick' society – Page 05

Pak whitewash Bangladesh after a remarkable victory – Page 06

Baku lauds OIC support for lasting regional peace, security – Page 07

Corruption breeds exploitation, pilferage of money: UNODC – Page 08

Pakistan set to host OIC session on Afghanistan

Over the years, the OIC has extended consistent support to people of Afghanistan. Today, more than ever before, the Afghan people need support of the international community including OIC

CURTAIN RAISER

Shujaat Hamza

ON 29 November, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - the OIC Summit Chair - took the important initiative to convene an Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, to consider the situation in Afghanistan. Pakistan has strongly welcomed this initiative. Following Pakistan's offer to host, the meeting will be held in Islamabad, on 19 December 2021. UN system, IFIs, some international and regional organizations and non-OIC members are among other invitees. The backdrop of this meeting is the serious humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. According to UN estimates, 60% of Afghanistan's 38 million people face "crisis levels of hunger" and that situation is getting worse every day. World Food Pro-

gramme has warned that 3.2 million children are at risk of acute malnutrition. According to UNHCR, 665,000 people have been newly displaced within Afghanistan between January and September 2021 - in addition to the 2.9 million people already internally displaced in that country. The advent of winter has further exacerbated the situation. If left unattended, the situation could aggravate into a major humanitarian crisis. Afghanistan is a founding member of the OIC. As part of the Islamic Ummah, we are bound by fraternal bonds of amity and brotherhood with the people of Afghanistan. Over the years, the OIC has extended consistent support to the people of Afghanistan. Today, more than ever before, the Afghan people need support of the international community including the OIC. On its part, Pakistan has been engaged in intense diplomatic outreach, illustrated by the Prime Min-

ister's contacts with world leaders, Foreign Minister Qureshi's numerous bilateral interactions, and visit to 4 neighbouring countries of Afghanistan (Iran, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan), establishment of the 6 neighbouring countries platform at Pakistan's initiative, participation in the Moscow format meetings, hosting of Troika Plus meeting and other visits/engagements. The international community is concerned over the situation in Afghanistan. Afghanistan's international partners also want to help. As the collective voice of the Islamic Ummah, the OIC can and must play its part in addressing the humanitarian needs of our Afghan brethren. OIC's leadership would also help galvanize other international actors to come forward and extend a helping hand to the Afghan people.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan turns down US invitation

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday turned down United States' invitation for participation in the Summit for Democracy, a virtual event set to take place on December 9-10, 2021. According to a statement issued by the Foreign Office in this regard, Pakistan thanked the US for the invitation but said that it would engage with the country on a wide range of issues "at an opportune time in the future." "Pakistan is a large functional democracy with an independent judiciary, vibrant civil society, and a free media," the statement said. "We remain deeply committed to further deepening democracy, fighting corruption, and protecting, and promoting the human rights of all citizens. In recent years, Pakistan has instituted wide-ranging reforms aimed at advancing these goals. These reforms have yielded positive results." The statement further said that Pakistan values its partnership with the US and wishes to expand it both bilaterally as well as in terms of regional and international cooperation. "We remain in contact with the US on a range of issues and believe that we can engage on this subject at an opportune time in the future," the statement read. – APP

Briefs

35 dengue cases reported in Punjab

LAHORE: Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department (P&SHD) Secretary Imran Sikandar Baloch Wednesday said that during the last 24 hours, 35 cases of dengue were reported from the province out of which 27 confirmed cases were from Lahore. In a press statement issued here, he explained that two dengue patients were reported from Rawalpindi, Kasur and one each from Gujranwala, Muzaffargarh, Vihari and Sargodha. He said that so far this year as many as 155 deaths due to dengue fever were reported from all over Punjab. In last 24 hours one death was reported from the province. He said that 25,822 confirmed cases of dengue were reported across the province while 18,260 confirmed cases of dengue were from Lahore and a total of 358 patients were undergoing treatment across Punjab out of which 292 patients were in Lahore hospitals and 66 were under treatment in other districts of Punjab. In the last 24 hours, 422,221 indoor locations and 97,159 outdoor locations were checked across the province, and larvae was destroyed from 231 locations. In Lahore 44,461 indoor places and 7,475 outdoor locations were checked for dengue larvae and 188 containers were destroyed. — APP

Karachi IT Park to house 210 companies

ISLAMABAD: The Information Technology (IT) Park, which is being established in Karachi at an estimated cost of Rs 31 billion, would house around 210 companies operating with their 8,400 employees. "This facility is the part of government strategy to develop IT zones and software parks besides setting up purpose-built software technology parks in major cities of the country," a senior official of the Ministry of Information Technology told APP. The project includes a multi-storey office building. The park would be spread over an area of 106,449 square metres with eight floors above the ground and three basement floors. It will offer a platform to the industry and local universities to establish synergies. It will also attract international business collaboration and global IT companies as anchor tenants and investors. He said the park would improve the provision of work space and allied infrastructure facilities for IT and IT-enabled services (ITes) companies and promote growth of the IT industry. The project would also help improve the formation of IT clusters, increase export revenues and showcase Pakistani innovations and services in the IT sector before the international audience and customers. The IT park building would have offices, daycare centre, amenities, parking, etc. It will have an ICT system, security features and a data centre. "There will be post-project operational support for the IT park management two years after its completion," he added. He said that a special technological zone was recently set up in Islamabad to promote Pakistan's IT sector. — APP

SHO suspended

FAISALABAD: City Police Officer (CPO) Dr Abid Khan suspended a station house officer (SHO) Sahianwala on the charge of negligence and delinquency. Police said here on Wednesday that the CPO received several complaints against SHO Sahianwala Inspector Tahir Mehmood Jatt that he failed to curb crime in his jurisdiction. The CPO directed Tahir to explain his position before him in person but he did not appear. On this, the CPO ordered immediately suspension of SHO Sahianwala, while further action against him was underway, the spokesman added. — APP

Pakistan needs strong trade and commerce group

"For exports Faisalabad has also efficient rail, road and air links", he said and added that Faisalabad is contributing 65% share towards total textile export of Pakistan while in overall economy its share is around 22%

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Pakistan needs a strong and proactive trade and commerce group to steer Pakistan out of global turmoil and stabilize its economy on a sustained basis, said Mr. Imran Mahmood Sheikh Senior Vice President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI). He was addressing the participants of the 28th specialized training program of the Pakistan Institute of Trade & Development (PITAD). This delegation was on a study tour of Faisalabad under the leadership of Madam Nazish Sami director training PITAD. Mr. Imran Mahmood Sheikh gave a brief of Faisalabad and FCCI. He also expressed his views about the prevalent economic situation in addition to responding to the questions of the probationers. He said that Faisalabad is strategically located in the heart of Pakistan from where access to every part of Pakistan was quite easy. "For exports Faisalabad has also efficient rail, road and air links", he said and added that Faisalabad is contributing 65% share towards total textile export of Pakistan while in overall economy its share is around 22%. He said that economies across



the globe contracted due to corona but Pakistan remained comparatively safe due to its smart lockdown policy. About textile exports, he said that we have to spend 80% on the import of raw material for textile exports, hence we must adopt a futuristic vision to manufacture imported raw material locally within the country during the next ten years. He said that our cotton production also remained poor and last

year we have to import approximately 7 million bales with 4 billion dollars which had a negative impact on our foreign exchange reserves. He termed the SME sector as the growth engine and said that we have only one hundred composite industrial units with 3500 major exporters. "Government must take appropriate measures so that small units could grow as medium and medium units could get their

birth in the large units", he added. However, in this connection Research & Development is imperative and exporters must be supported with the Export Development Fund (EDF) to improve the quality of their products by adopting innovative technologies. He said that the textile sector was investing 500 million dollars to import air jet looms and modern spinning machinery which will in return add

at least 5 to 6 billion dollars in our exports. Responding to a question about diversification, he said that no doubt textile is an iconic representation of Faisalabad but other sectors are also making steady progress. In this connection, he particularly mentioned steel, car assembling plants and mobile phone manufacturing units which will entirely change the industrial landscape of Faisalabad. Madam Nazish Sami director training PITAD said that probationers are visiting Faisalabad in view of its economic importance which will help them to play their role in enhancing exports in order to stabilize the national economy. The probationers also introduced themselves and participated in a question-answer session. Earlier a comprehensive presentation was given to them about Faisalabad and FCCI. Vice President FCCI Rana Fayyaz Ahmad offered vote of thanks while SVP Mr. Imran Mahmood Sheikh presented FCCI shield to Madam Nazish Sami director training PITAD. She also gave away a memento of PITAD to Mr. Imran Mahmood Sheikh. Madam Nighat Shahid President Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry was also present during this meeting.

Power shut down in Kharian city

M NADEEM

KHARIAN: Schedule of GE-PCO Kharian sub division has been issued. According to a news shared by the office of SDO Farhan Akram there will be an electricity shut down due to annual line repairs. In this regard Kharian city, main bazar, IJ colony feeders on 13, 20, 28 December Karyala and Saeed Shaheed feeders on 8,15,23,30 and Jandanwala feeder on 29 December will remain closed from 10 AM to 4 PM.

FESCO issues shutdown program

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) has issued shutdown program for Thursday for necessary repair, maintenance and expansion of electricity lines. According to the program issued by the company, power supply from new Khannuana feeder emanating from 132-KV Khannuana grid station, 7JB feeder originating from 132-KV Chiniot Road grid station, Mansooran feeder emanating from 132-KV Industrial Estate grid station, Quran Academy Road, Jhumra Road and Hamdard-I feeders originating from 132-KV Steam Power grid station, Yousuf Abad feeder emanating from 132-KV Nishatabad grid station, S-II feeder originating from 132-KV Scarp Colony grid station, Arkana, Katchery Road, Lahore Road and new Awagat feeders emanating from 132-KV Jaranwala grid station, Murree SEL feeder originating from 132-KV Shahkot grid station, Lalian City feeder emanating from 132-KV Lalian grid station, Pipal Bhatta feeder originating from 132-KV Barana grid station, College Road feeder emanating from 132-KV Chenab Nagar grid station, al-Mustafa Shaheed feeder originating from 132-KV Sitiana grid station, Pakka Anna, Nia Lahore-II, Saeed Abad, Saeed Abad-II, HAR Textile Mill and Shah Pur feeders emanating from 132-KV Nia Lahore grid station, Tata Bazaar and Muhammadi Chowk feeders originating from 132-KV Factory Area grid station, new Sabzi Mandi, FIG, Loona, al-Fareed, Kamal Fabrics, Hussain Abad, Mujtaba Saood, Malik Abad and Bhola Pir feeders emanating from 132-KV Thikriwala grid station, Qudrat Abad feeder originating from 132-KV University grid station, Afghan Abad feeder emanating from 132-KV Jhang Road grid station, Sindhu and Madina Abad feeders originating from 132-KV Narwala Road grid station, People's Colony feeder emanating from 220-KV Jaranwala Road grid station, Gojra Road, new al-Barkat/Gojra Road, Maan Pur and Dijkot City feeders originating from 220-KV Samundri Road grid station, Hilal Road feeder emanating from 132-KV City grid station, al-Faisal grid station will observe shutdown from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday (December 09). — APP

Scientific methods imperative to ensure food security: Shibli



FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology Syed Shibli Faraz along with Federal Secretary Science and Technology Dr. Akhtar Nazir, PCSIR Chairman Dr. Syed Hussain Abidi visits UAF. — DNA

FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Senator Syed Shibli Faraz Wednesday said that innovative, scientific interventions are imperative in agriculture sector to ensure food security by enhancing per acre yield. He expressed these views during a meeting with UAF Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan at the meeting room of University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF). Federal Secretary Science and Technology Dr. Akhtar Nazir, Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR) Chairman Dr. Syed Hussain Abidi, Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr. Anas Sarwar Qureshi and all the deans were present. Syed Shibli Faraz said that instead of being an adornment of the library, researchers should introduce new technologies to solve the problems of farmers and agricultural sector. He said that farmers were facing difficul-

ties due to poor quality seeds but the proposed certified seed project of the UAF would prove a milestone in tackling this challenge. He assured of the federal government would extend full support for the success of this project. He said that UAF was rendering remarkable services for development of agriculture sector. He said that agricultural scientists should introduce IT applications for the promotion of modern trends in agriculture with the help of information technology so that the farmers could get up-to-date information immediately. He said the academia, industry and the government must make joint efforts to attain the new height of the prosperity. He said that the government was promoting the culture of need based and applied research for uplift of agriculture sector. He also underlined the need to create awareness among the farmers about the latest trends including hydroponics. Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan said that

only 30-35% of the farmers in the country could benefit from certified seeds. He said the UAF seed project would come up with the valuable results. He said that agriculture was facing problems including low productivity, fertility of land, shrinking agricultural area, water, unavailability of certified seeds. He said that nature has enriched Pakistan with natural resources but unfortunately we had not used them wisely. "Health problems are arising due to malnutrition. If we make flour from a mixture of wheat and corn, it will also improve the quality of food," he said. He said that the average wheat yield of Pakistan per acre is 31 maunds while progressive farmers are getting up to 60 maunds. He said that due to lack of resources in our country, the farmer were facing difficulty in obtaining agricultural inputs due to which there was a problem of reduction in overall yield per acre. He said that machine picking of cotton will increase production. — APP

Upgradation of customer service centres under way

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) Engr. Bashir Ahmed visited the Special Facilitation Desk established on the special directives Prime Minister of Pakistan and Ministry of Energy (Power Division) at FESCO Headquarters for the overseas Pakistanis and handicapped. During the visit, CEO directed the staff of Facilitation Desk to provide maximum support to the overseas Pakistanis and their representatives to solve the electricity related issues. He also directed to solve the electricity related problems of the overseas Pakistanis on priority basis because they are earning precious foreign exchange for Pakistan and playing an unforgettable role in the economic development of the country. Focal persons of Special Facilitation Desk, Director Commercial Ch Khalid Mehmood briefed the CEO about the facilities/services at the Facilitation Desk for overseas Pakistanis and told that they are handling the overseas Pakistanis applications for new residential, commercial and industrial electricity connections on priority basis and he is personally monitoring the performance of Facilitation Desk on daily basis.

TVET SSP launches initiative to assist expats' settling

LAHORE: In order to consolidate the Punjab government's endeavours to ensure sustainable economic development, the TVET Sector Support Programme (SSP) has launched a special initiative to assist 15,000 local individuals including the Pakistanis returning from foreign countries to gain socio-economic settling. Under this formally launched initiative 'Reintegration of Returnees in Pakistan' these 15,000 in-

dividuals will include 6,500 returnees from Germany, Europe and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries through various support measures including career and entrepreneurship advisory services, Competency-based Training & Assessments (CBT&A), recognition of prior learning, and employment promotion. The TVET SSP is funded by the European Union, Germany and the Norwegian Embassy. — DNA

Embassy of Korea, University of Peshawar organize seminar

The Ambassador recalled the recent visit of Ramiz Alakbarov, the Deputy Special Representative, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan to Islamabad where he briefed that as per the UN's calculations, \$8 bln are required

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Embassy of the Republic of Korea and the University of Peshawar jointly organized a seminar on the Current Situation in Afghanistan and the Regional Plans for Peace-building on the 8th of December at the University of Peshawar Campus. The panel of speakers comprised of notable former military officials and academics such as Lt.Gen (R) AsadDurrani, Brig (R) Mehmood Shah, Dr. Sumeira Iqbal of National Defense University, Prof. Zahid Anwar and Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Idrees of University of Peshawar. The Ambassador recalled the recent visit of Ramiz Alakbarov, the Deputy Special Representative, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan to Islamabad where he briefed that as per the UN's calculations, \$8 billion are required to fund the essential services and commodities in Afghanistan in order to avert another crises and further instability. The Ambassador added that the Republic of Korea is cognizant of the



crises in Afghanistan and is supporting the Afghan people through funding various agencies of the United Nations. He further appreciated the role Pakistan was undertaking with Afghanistan's neighbors.

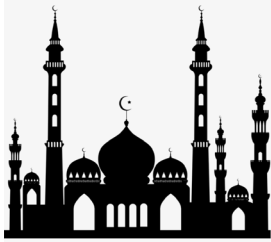
The panelists were of the common view that right now the biggest challenge that Afghanistan faces is humanitarian in nature and that all nations must put asides their political expectations from Afghanistan

and save the Afghan people. More than 200 Masters and PhD students attended the seminar and held interactive discussions over lunch with the Ambassador of Korea H.E. Suh Sangpyo and the panelists.

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We need women in higher judiciary of Pakistan: Nilofar

The participants of consultation made recommendations to the members of the Islamabad Bar Council and to various Bar Associations representatives, to enhance women’s representation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) organized a consultation on ‘Increasing Women’s Representation in the Justice Sector’ in Ramada hotel, Islamabad, in collaboration with Group Development Pakistan (GDP). The event gathered women and men from the legal fraternity, bar associations, bar councils, academia, law and gender students, representatives of the civil society and media. The Chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar, welcomed the guests and underlined how increasing women’s representation was directly linked to improving women’s access to justice and achieving SDG 5 and 16.2. She said “We need women in strong positions in the higher judiciary of



Pakistan. It is a key requirement for bringing change and end VAWG.” The participants made recommendations to the members of the Islamabad Bar Council and to various Bar Associations representatives, to enhance women’s representation such as: mandatory representation of women in bar associations elections, at least one seat for women in Islamabad High Court bar association elections, selection of

candidates should be merit-based and confidential, creation of anti-harassment committees in the bar councils, women lawyers should be encouraged to practice areas other than family law, create awareness among young lawyers (especially women for candidacy requirements to stand in bar elections), actively include women panelists in all debates and efforts of bar for reform of judicial nomination process, bars to have

a clear “0 tolerance” policy against harassment at workplace and the policy to be displayed in all its premises/offices, and finally, setting up inquiry committees with more women as members and chairpersons. Moreover, participants thought that parliamentarians ought to be sensitized to support legal reforms to better prevent harassment at work and remove the age bar for women to take their LLB/LLM and join the legal

profession, that law firms should take affirmative actions to establish more gender-sensitive chambers and that public-private partnership should be reinforced. Nida Usman Chaudry, founder of the Women in Law Network Initiative Pakistan, during her address with the audience, emphasized on the need to have more affirmative actions for ensuring fair representation in the justice sector. Honorable Secre-

tary MOL&J informed the participants that a female judge had recently been nominated to be appointed in the Islamabad High Court, which he termed “an encouraging sign”. Honorable Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr.Qasim Suri, in his special address, stated that “women have always played a major role in our society and are key assets of our country”. Concluding the dialogue, the women lawyers and Chairperson (NCSW), Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar presented the charter of demands collectively developed during the consultation to the Honorable Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr.Qasim Suri, for taking up the recommendations to increase women’s representation in the justicesector with the legislators & parliamentarians for ensuring meaningful policy reforms.

IESCO issues power suspension programme

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Wednesday issued a power suspension programme for Thursday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 08:00 AM to 03:00 PM, Sanghoi, Nathwala, Safdar Shaheed Feeders, From 08:00 AM to 05:00 PM, Batter Feeder, From 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Kalyal, Gulshanabad, Dhok Noor, 502 Workshop, Adiala, Askari-14, Humayun, Humayun-1, Bank Road-II, City Center, Kashmir Road, NIH, Bhara Kahu, T&T, Territ, Golf City, Shagun, Adiala Jail, Shahpur, Khasala, Karyala, Burma, Khanna Dak, Supermarket, Sports Complex, Waheedabad, Tufail Shaheed, F-10/2, G-10/3, Siddiqui Steel, Ittehad Steel, SH Steel, Old Exchange, Atwar Bazar, MPCHS, E-11/3, AQ Khan, Pindi Point, Nambal, Kotli Satyan, Golf City, Dhok Hakmaddad, Iqbal Road-2, Jamia Masjid, Gawalmandi, Pirwadhai, Mohammadi Chowk, Katarian, Shamsabad, Gulzar Quaid, Tench. Bhata, Charing Cross, Kamalabad, Nogazi, Fazahiya-1 & 2, F-17/1 & 2, Top City, Chakral, Siham, Range Road, BB Shaheed, Haider Road, Adam G Road, Rehmatabad-1, Media Town-1, X-Lair Colony, National Park, Humayun-1. Shahpur, Chahan, Gulshan Saed, Janhura, Chowk Pandori, Manoor Shaheed, Major Hanif, Abrar Shaheed, Doberman, Panjar, New Mandra, New Kalam, Bahrakaliyal, Syed Kasran, Mahouta, Ghazi Kohli, Margalla, Nisar Shaheed, Burhan, Shafi Chauhan, Hussainabad, Museum, Lalazar, Purmiana, Wesa, Miskinabad, Attock Rural, New Musa, Dhok Fateh, Attock Cantt, Darulsaalam, Kachehri, Qaziabad, Sony, Kasran, Mathial, Kahuta City 2. Feeders and surrounding areas.

Ali Nawaz Awan appeals teachers to call off protest

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Capital Development Authority (CDA) Affairs Ali Nawaz Awan Wednesday appealed to the FDE teachers to restore academic activities in the schools by calling off protest at the earliest. “No change has been made in the job structure of the FDE teachers in the Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government Ordinance 2021,” he told a press conference. There would be no change in their pay, scale as well as their status of federal government, he said adding the Mayor of Islamabad would only have oversight powers. He said around 200,000 students, who already faced educational loss during the Covid-19 pandemic were deprived of education due to ongoing protest of teachers. Ali Nawaz said the Senate Standing Committee on Education and Professional Training in its recent meeting had asked the protesting teachers of the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) to call off its strike. He said teachers were misguided on the Ordinance and they went on strike without understanding its clauses that had nothing to do with the current job structure of the teachers. He said government was ready to negotiate with them [teachers] and accept their legal demands if any. – DNA

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Shaukat Tarin in a meeting with Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and Middle East and Chairman Pakistan Ulma Council, Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi at Finance Division. –DNA

Noor Mukadam’s father summoned

ISLAMABAD: Defence lawyers completed cross-examination of two witnesses in Noor Mukadam murder case on Wednesday. The sessions court summoned complainant of the case Shaukat Mukadam for recording his statement in the next hearing on December 15. Defence counsels cross-examined ASI Zubair Mazhar, who is a spot witness in the trial. Another witness Dr. Sara, who had conducted post-mortem of the victim, testified in the court. “The post-mortem of Noor Mukadam was conducted at 9:30AM on July 21,” she said. “The substance found in lungs of the deceased was due to nicotine and drugs,” a defence counsel questioned her. “I don’t know the cause behind the substance found in her lungs,” the doctor replied. The defence lawyers completed cross-examination of Dr Sara CDR witness Mudassar also testified in the court. – DNA

ADB approves \$603m support for Ehsaas

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Wednesday approved a \$603 million results-based lending program to strengthen and expand social protection programs in Pakistan. In a statement today, ADP said, “Using conditional cash transfers, the program will support the implementation of Ehsaas, Pakistan’s national social protection and poverty reduction strategy.” “Under the Integrated Social Protection Development Program, ADB will provide a regular loan of \$600 million and a \$3 million grant from the Asian Development Fund, and will administer a \$24 million grant from the Education Above All Foundation.” ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeniy Zhukov said, “The program marks a significant shift in ADB’s strategic engagement in the social protection space in Pakistan in line with Ehsaas priorities.” “ADB’s support will transition from unconditional cash transfers that provide income support to a mixed-modality approach that focuses more on conditional cash transfers for education, health services, and nutritional supplies that will help reduce intergenerational poverty through human capital development.” The program supports the Ehsaas goal of expanding cash transfers to improve access to primary and secondary education up to grade 10 for children and adolescents of poor families, especially girls, and enhancing health services and nutrition for women, adolescent girls, and poor children. It also aims to initiate coverage of accelerated learning programs at primary education level for overaged out-of-school children under conditional cash transfers. “ADB is a trusted and longstanding partner. This program is the result of years of engagement with ADB and other partners and focuses on areas where we believe the bank can have most impact. It is a key priority under the government’s Ehsaas strategy,” said Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation Dr. Sania Nishtar. “This program incentivizes parents to send their children to schools, particularly girls, and will help to provide specialized nutritious food and conditional cash transfers to children and mothers in the districts of Pakistan that most need it,” she added. Pakistan is prone to the impacts of climate change and natural hazards, including floods, heat waves, and droughts which have a disproportionate impact on the poor and vulnerable. By leveraging Asian Development Fund resources for climate adaptation, the program will help identify and integrate appropriate climate resilience measures, such as vulnerability mapping and early warning systems. – DNA

Historic Action of Hangor

ASAF HUMAYN

Dark nights at sea can be scary. When you see a light closing in, you are not sure whether it is a menacing warship, a harmless fishing boat or a benign merchant ship. If it is wartime, many dangers lurk hidden in the cloak of darkness. On 9th Dec 1971, a similar situation existed. The moon was to rise after 9:30 pm and it was pitch dark. Pakistan and India had been at war since 3rd Dec. Two Indian Navy anti-submarine frigates KHUKRI and KIRPAN were patrolling near Diu Head searching for their prey, the Pakistan Navy submarines. Submarines and naval ships are old adversaries. This rivalry was joined by aircraft as a potent weapon to kill submarines in World War I. World War II saw many epic battles between submarines and submarine-hunters. The war at sea in the Atlantic was characterised by U-boats playing havoc with the allied supply lines. In the Pacific, Allied and Japanese submarines made their name. Admiral “Bull” Halsey of the United States Navy speaking well after the war, observed, “If I had to give credit to the instruments and machines that won us the war in the Pacific, I would rank them in this order; submarines first, radar second, planes third, and bulldozers fourth.” As compared to the United States, Royal, Japanese, and German navies of WW II, Pakistan Navy is a small force. In 1971, the Indian Navy was 5 times bigger than Pakistan Navy. Nevertheless, we can proudly claim a similar feat by our small submarine force during the 1971 Indo-Pak war. On this night, the time was 8:19 PM. A massive explosion under the Indian Navy Ship KHUKRI doomed the anti-submarine frigate and sent her to a watery grave.

An E-15 acoustic homing torpedo fired by HANGOR found its mark and hit the ship’s magazine full of explosives. PNS HANGOR’s daring action etched the fateful moment in the annals of naval warfare. World War II saw U-boats, Japanese and Allied submarines sinking many warships. HANGOR’s historic action took place about 26 years and 6 months after submarine attacks in the closing stages of World War. We can recall 2 successful actions by submarines. On 29th April 1945, at about 10 PM, the U-boat U-286 hit anti-submarine frigate HMS Goodall (K 479) with a Gnat (German Naval Acoustic Torpedo) in the entrance to the Kola Inlet near Murmansk (Russia). The magazine exploded, blowing away the forepart of the vessel and killing the commander. One hundred twelve crew members died. The abandoned ship had to be scuttled by gunfire. This was the last confirmed U-boat success in the North Atlantic theatre. The war in the Pacific continued a while longer. At 00:15 AM on 30th July, the USS Indianapolis (CA 35) Heavy Cruiser was torpedoed by the Imperial Japanese Navy submarine I-58 and sank in 12 minutes. The cruiser was heading for the Philippines after delivering parts of the nuclear bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima on 9th August. The ship was struck by 2 straight running torpedoes. Of 1,195 crewmen aboard, approximately 300 went down with the ship. Like the sinking of KHUKRI, both these sinkings occurred in the dark of the night. PN Submarine HANGOR had arrived in Pakistan in December 1970. PN Dockyard, Karachi, only had only rudimentary repair and logistic support for these newly acquired platforms. A similar state existed in PN Torpedo Depot that supplied the submarines’ main weapon – torpedoes. However, the gathering

war clouds after March 1971 urged all-around dedication, zeal, and application. Everyone in the logistics chain rose to the task at hand. All the Daphne class submarines – HANGOR, SHUSHUK and MANGRO – remained fully operational and war-ready. PNS HANGOR carried out a reconnaissance patrol off the Indian coast during August 1971, thus, gathering valuable experience and data. India unleashed an undeclared war on the eastern front on 21 Nov 1971. Within 24 hours of this aggression, PN submarine HANGOR sailed from Karachi. Despite serious machinery defects, she continued to pursue her mission. The courageous commanding officer Commander Ahmad Tasnim SJ was leading a motivated and brave crew of 53 officers and men. In the face of daunting risks, they repaired their submarine close to the enemy waters. During this perilous period, HANGOR dodged several enemy hunters both surface ships as well as aircraft. When the war was declared on 3rd Dec, HANGOR was ready in her assigned area near Bombay. Pakistan government had only permitted attacks on men of war and not on unarmed merchant ships. (This was in stark contrast to the Indian Navy’s policy of attacks even on unarmed merchant vessels). HANGOR signalled the deployment of the Indian Navy units to Naval Headquarters. After intercepting this radio communication, the Indians were alerted, evaded this position and deployed anti-submarine forces to find the Pakistani submarines. The vigilant attack team of HANGOR soon realised that the enemy warships were not anywhere near. So, they requested Pakistan Navy Headquarters to shift their patrol area, to seek battle with the enemy. By 8th Dec, HANGOR was patrolling in her assigned area. The re-deployment

proved fruitful and HANGOR started to track enemy ships. After the sunset at 6 PM on 9th Dec, Commander Ahmad Tasnim started steering to intercept the enemy frigates. The submarine crew was full of confidence that their desire to seek battle with the enemy would soon be fulfilled. In less than 2 hours, the enemy frigates came within torpedo range, and the attack team of HANGOR, on their commander’s order launched the first torpedo at 7:57 PM. This torpedo did not find its target. The Indians claim that KHUKRI and KIRPAN were alerted by this torpedo and KHUKRI started to search for and attack the prowling submarine. However, this manoeuvre brought the ship within HANGOR’s torpedo range again. HANGOR fired a second E-15 homing torpedo on the approaching KHUKRI at 8:14 PM and the rest is memorable history. Within 5 minutes the torpedo homed on to its target and broke KHUKRI in two parts. The ship sank within 2 minutes. One hundred and ninety-four of her crew including her commanding officer Captain M N Mulla perished. Most of them had no time to escape the sinking ship. As per normal tactics, HANGOR should have started her withdrawal from the battle because her position was now well-known. Not the redoubtable HANGOR; her valiant commanding officer and the crew continued their attack and fired a third torpedo which hit KIRPAN at considerable range. After this debacle, the Indian Navy did not dare repeat its attacks on Karachi or Pakistani naval forces. Thus, HANGOR’s action thwarted the Indian Navy’s further aggressive designs. After getting rid of the two Indian Navy anti-submarine frigates, HANGOR came under repeated counterattacks by aircraft and ships. The crew of HANGOR counted 156 attacks during the next 72

hours. However, she evaded the enemy. Commander Tasnim who was decorated with a second Sitara-e-Jurrah (SJ bar) dedicated his award to all members of his gallant crew. HANGOR’s attack was not a one-sided affair. The Indian Navy, which did not venture out at sea in the 1965 war due to the fear of PN submarine GHAZI, had bolstered her anti-submarine by the 1971 war. The Indian Navy inducted anti-submarine patrol aircraft Super Constellation and the French Alizé. She had acquired 5 Petya class anti-submarine corvettes. She had also improved her sonar and anti-submarine weapons. However, the proficient crew of HANGOR delivered a deadly attack using her sonar and passive ranging equipment giving no chance to the 2 anti-submarine frigates. The Pakistan Navy submarines during the 1971 war reported many close encounters with the Indian Navy anti-submarine aircraft. Nevertheless, the training and alertness of PN submarine crews saved them from any unfortunate mishap. The memorable success of HANGOR lifted the prestige of the Pakistan Navy as a professional force. When Captain Ahmad Tasnim (SJ and Bar) used to visit naval bases in France as Defence and Naval Attaché, the French navy officers and men revered him and greeted him as a hero. HANGOR now rests as a museum piece in Pakistan Maritime Museum, Karachi. The 50th anniversary of this remarkable achievement will renew the interest of the Pakistani nation in HANGOR. This momentous victory will continue to motivate Pakistan Navy’s manpower and especially its submariners to achieve and match this triumph. They will carry the battle honours of HANGOR in the forthcoming HANGOR class submarines and maintain an intimidating legacy, In Sha Allah.

Briefs

ANF seizes 2.3kg ice, 3.6 kg hashish

ISLAMABAD: In two different operations, the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) has seized about 2.35 kilograms of ice and 3.6 kilograms of hashish and arrested two drug pushers.

According to a spokesperson, the ANF arrested a person identified as Osama Jamil in jurisdiction of the federal capital and seized ice worth about \$55,000 that was hidden in plastic boxes.

In another operation conducted in Peshawar, the ANF recovered about 3.6 kg of hashish placed in secret compartments made in the Suzuki Alto car and arrested accused Muhammad Iqbal, a resident of Jhelum.

Cases have been registered against the arrested accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act and further investigation is underway. – APP

UAE company to invest in local power sector

ISLAMABAD: The leading power sector company, Brother Gas of United Arab Emirates (UAE) to bring an initial investment worth US\$15 million in refrigerant gases and ADNOC lubes in Pakistan.

The Board of Investment (BOI) organized a hybrid investment seminar at Pakistan Pavilion, Dubai Expo, which was attended by the local and international business community physically and virtually.

The business community was apprised on investment policies and potential in Pakistan with focus on technology as well as Knowledge economy.

On the sidelines of this seminar, Federal Secretary BOI, Ms. Fareena Mazhar met with Managing Director of Brother Gas UAE, Kashif Maqsood, one of the leading oil and gas companies in Dubai. Kashif Maqsood attended the seminar with his five member senior management team and confirmed their plan to set up a bottling plant at the Special Economic Zone in Faisalabad. Board of Investment has been facilitating the organisation previously and has assisted in applying for a Plot in Faisalabad Special Economic Zone (SEZ).

BOI's close coordination with the organisation has resulted in the organization announcing it's plan to invest in Pakistan.

The delegation representing Brother Gas UAE has shared that they will be investing in three phases, with an initial investment of USD\$15 million.

The first phase will include setting up a plant in M3 industrial area in Faisalabad which will serve the local market and facilitate export to neighboring markets from Pakistan.

It will include industrial gases, with more than 1000 products.

They will install an Aerosol Propellant Gas "APG" plant which will be manufacturing the much needed APG within Pakistan instead of importing the same. – APP

IRSA releases 88186 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Wednesday released 88186 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 32428 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1454.05 feet, which was 62.05 feet higher than its dead level 1392 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 16500 and 48000 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1137.40 feet, which was 1137.40 feet higher than its dead level of 1050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded a 5742 and 30000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 56828, 49171 and 33055 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 2800 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 7386 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. – APP



ISLAMABAD: IG Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younis took charge of his post along with the families and children of the police martyrs. – DNA

National narrative promotes shared identity: Wajeeha

Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Ali said that in addition to "Unity, Faith, Discipline", the nation wanted another slogan which must be "Compassion" so that Sialkot-like incidents should not happen again

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ms Wajeeha Akram, Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Federal Education and Professional Training, in her address as chief guest, said on Wednesday that since National Narrative promotes shared identity, the government was happy that academia and researchers besides other state institutions, think tanks and civil society organizations were playing their role in achieving national integration and cultural harmony.

It is need of the hour that all these pillars of the state join hands, merge their efforts and support each other's efforts to bridge the gap among the federating units and federation, minimize the difference of opinion among the provinces and the nation on the route to development as one nation, she said while speaking at Orientation Session on National Narrative here.

The National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Islamabad and the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad had organized the event at the QAU premises.

KPK Provincial Minister for Education

Kamran Khan Bangash said that Pakistani national identity is a sense of belonging to the Pakistani society. Various symbols have been invoked from time to time to construct Pakistani national identity, he said while addressing the participants as guest of honour through online link from Peshawar.

Accordingly, he said, different conceptions of cultural identity based on Islam, pluralism and nation-state are also prevalent in Pakistani society. National Narrative based on National Integration and Cultural Assimilation through unity in diversity promotes shared identity as the national culture of the country thus achieving the noble objective of unity, cohesion and political stability, Bangash said.

Talking about the Sialkot incident, he said if we enforce a discipline on our people, we will never be able to coerce them into resorting to violence.

Highlighting the role of Paigham-e-Pakistan's National Narrative against terrorism and extremism, Prof Dr Ziaul Haq, Director General, Islamic Research Institute of the International Islamic University, Islamabad said that Paigham-e-Pakistan was framed after the National Action Plan to root-out terrorism and extremism in the country showing "Kesa Ho Ga Pakistan." He was deeply shocked at the Sialkot tragedy.

He stressed for changing mindset for accommodating people from all segments of society. Speaking on Rationale of National Narrative, QAU Dean of Social Sciences Prof Dr Muhammad Idrees said National Narrative cannot be imposed superficially as it is developed in a gradual evolutionary process. Hence, it is the right time to begin a journey towards a positive end by highlighting unity in diversity, he said.

He greatly hailed the government's initiative of One Nation—One Curriculum.

In his Vote of Thanks, the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Ali said that in addition to "Unity, Faith, Discipline", the nation wanted another slogan which must be "Compassion" so that Sialkot-like incidents should not happen again.

He revealed that the QAU is going to organize a conference in January 2022 on "Hum Pakistan" highlighting services and achievements of both notable and ordinary Pakistanis to the country.

In his welcome address, Dr Sajid Mahmood

Awam, Director, National Institute of Historical & Cultural Research, Centre of Excellence, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad said that the idea of National Narrative is linked with modern nation states where it is important to create national harmony to keep the people united at a certain level for which common points of pride and historical achievements are highlighted to create a feeling of oneness among different people living in one state.

Prof Dr Waseema Shehzad, former Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Air University, Islamabad explored role of diversity through her seminal yet critical presentation on Lingua Discourse: Cultural Identity of Pakistan. Muhammad Kashif Irshad, Director and Academic Coordinator, KPK spoke on Integrating Silk Route to Explore Cultural Diversity of Pakistan.

The chief guest along with the QAU VC distributed shields and certificates among the speakers, dignitaries and event organizers. Earlier, the event started with recitation from the holy Quran. National anthem was played upon arrival of the chief guest. The NIHCR Senior Research Fellow Dr Rahat Zubair Malik moderated the event.



RAWALPINDI: French police attaché calls on Major General Ghulam Shabbir Narejo, chief of the Anti-Narcotics Force, at the headquarter located in Rawalpindi, to discuss about cooperation and trainings. – DNA

PMAS-AAUR 22nd Convocation; 4,439 degrees awarded

RAWALPINDI: Pir Mehr Ali Shah-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) here on Wednesday awarded degrees to 4,439 students of undergraduates, graduates, M.Phil and Ph.D scholars at its 22nd convocation organized for the outgoing batch of 2020 while 38 gold medals were also distributed among the students.

During the ceremony 37 students received PhD degrees, 1893 were awarded M.Phil and masters degrees, while 2509 students got undergraduate degrees in their respective disciplines. Around 38 students were awarded gold medals on outstanding performance in their academic record while 22 bagged silver and 18 secured bronze medals in the convocation. Two sponsored gold medals were also awarded by Bank of Punjab.

Minister for Higher Education, Punjab, Raja Yassir Humayun Sarfraz participated as a chief guest along with President Pakistan Academy of Sciences and Former Vice-Chancellor of PMAS-AAUR, Prof. Dr. Khalid Mahmood Khan (SI), PMAS-AAUR Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman all deans, directors, faculty members, graduates and their parents. In his address, Humayun Sarfraz

congratulated all the graduates, especially those who have got distinctions throughout their course of study and said that the fulfillment of the educated workforce required for economic and social development of the country should be among the explicit objectives of every educational concern. The Minister said, "The contemporary age demands education based on science and technology, but we must add the blend of socio-cultural aspects while imparting knowledge that evokes respect for one's culture, geography, history and national heritage." – APP

Struggle continues for women empowerment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "Whoever says women don't have the ability to perform as well as men need to get their records straight. As women we face many hurdles and challenges in our lives starting from our basic right to education. This struggle continues in our pursuit for economic empowerment.

And yet, we continue to march on, equally contributing alongside men." These views expressed by Madiha Nisar, Member of the Provincial assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Higher Education during a workshop organized by Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA).

This workshop was carried out under PYCA's initiative, "Increasing Girls' Participation in Education in Rural Pakistan" which is being implemented with support from in Hive Global.

Under this initiative, strong female role models from rural Pakistan will return to their former village schools to engage with the currently enrolled students and their families. These female volunteers will serve as mentors and role models who will enable and inspire young girls to aspire for leadership roles as they tread forward in their educational journey.

"It is very exciting that such amazing young women have gathered in this workshop to collectively work on the noble and important cause of girls' education," said Madiha Nisar while speaking with the young female volunteers present at the workshop.



Nationwide immunization drive starts from Dec 10

ISLAMABAD: The fourth National Immunization campaign would reach every nook and cranny of the country to vaccinate more than 40 million children under five-year age in 156 districts.

The three-day campaign would begin on December 10 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and on December 13 in other parts of the country, said a press release.

During the campaign, children would receive a supplementary dose of Vitamin A capsule along with the polio vaccine.

The Polio programme would also facilitate the process of COVID-19 vaccination in collaboration with the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) and the National Command Operations Center (NCOC) during the campaign.

The children from 12-18 years old would receive the Pfizer vaccine, while Sino-Vac would be administered for the 18 plus population in 31 high-risk districts identified by the NCOC. The NCOC and Health Expert Committee have already approved both vaccines.

"The current gains demand substantial and sustained efforts to further boost the progress achieved over the years towards polio eradication. The programme will reach every eligible child with the polio vaccine to solidify this progress. Parents should open their doors to polio workers and vaccinate their children to ensure their safety," said Dr Faisal Sultan, Prime Minister's Special Assistant on Health, on the launch of the Polio Immunization campaign.

Dr. Sultan added "after protecting their precious children under 5 from polio, the parents and all children over 12 years should then go to one of the more than thirteen thousand temporary vaccine sites for vaccination and protection of themselves against the COVID-19 disease." – APP

'Silver Linings' attracting people

ISLAMABAD: A two-week long solo exhibition titled "Silver Linings" by Arif Mahmood attracting a huge crowd which was started on December 6 organized by National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (NIFTH) Lok Virsa.

The Karachi-born artist made two more additions to his poetic series of photographs Silver Linings adding the artist has collected photos of shrines and mosques since the beginning of his career as a photo-journalist Arif Mahmood told APP on Wednesday.

While talking he said in Silver Linings, he explores the limitless experience of Sufism. His compilation consists of his work from 1988 to 2020. He said Silver Linings is an introspective journey that he took after the death of his mother, who was a seasoned traveler of the mystical path.

COVID-19 SOPs were followed, masks mandatory during people visit. – APP

Sufi Music Night held at Arts Council

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council(PAC), in collaboration with Survival of Pakistan's Culture organization, arranged a Sufi Music Night at PAC Rawalpindi.

According to PAC spokesman, renowned singer Fareeha Nawaz performed vividly and received thunder appreciation from the audience.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said that Council wanted to introduce the vanishing art of poetry and mysticism to the young generation of Pakistan.

In the Indian subcontinent, he said the saints raised the banner of Islam through spirituality and conveyed the message to the world through mysticism that Islam was a religion of love, tolerance and prosperity. Waqar said that Arts Council had always presented the work of young artists to the world. While speaking on the occasion, Naheed Manzoor said that the mystical word was the guarantor of peace and harmony while Sufi music united hearts. – APP

Class Discrimination

NAYRA ESHAL

IN Pakistan class consciousness is all the more visible and, in a way, seems unbridgeable. The poor remains poor almost whole of his life and even this poverty lurks at generations. While the rich enjoys the luxuries of life and so his kids and pets too.

This has been going on for years and it does not seem stopping, at least, in the near future. The poor people and their kids nurture in their hearts a severe hatred for the affluent and even plot for avenging themselves for being bereft of the necessities.

Such destitute youth tend to adopt nefarious ways for materializing their wishes. They resort to unlawful means for this. The question arises is not it the duty of the government to take responsibility of this youth, which gets wayward when their talent is not utilized. They get rudderless and are likely to become a tool in the hands of anti-state elements.

It is the need of the hour that the talented poor young people must be skilled so that after completing their studies, they do not get frustrated when the jobs avenues are denied to them. More and more vocational institutes need to be opened where they must be trained free of cost alongside their

formal education. Summer vacation is a ripe time to make them equipped with technical skills. Likewise, the computer literacy is a must. The Government must take care of the fact that it opens IT institutes for such budding youth who cannot afford hefty fees at the private institutes. The students at college level from low source of income must be sent to such institutes to make them skilled in basic IT management tools.

Last and the most important fact is to emulate the successful nations and learn from their life styles. The reality will dawn upon us that the more successful a country is, the more proud it

is on the language. And the simplicity in life is their hall mark. On the contrary in Pakistan, which is a struggling country, the people just fix the criteria of material opulence as the parameter for getting along with someone. The rest are simply looked down upon by others. This is highly lamentable. Great nations are proud of their language and culture and Pakistanis feel ashamed when their kids speak in mother language or national language. They spend thousands of rupees as fee for getting their kids enrolled in private English medium schools simply to attain the goal that their kid may speak fluently in English. We are a confused nation. We lack clarity

and are directionless. We run after shadows and worship appearances. Big house, big car, expensive clothes are the criteria for ascertaining the worth of someone. In fact, they are not. I wish the people of Pakistan may understand this reality that all the aforementioned superfluous things are not the parameter of being a gentleman. Allah Almighty likes modesty, simplicity and loves those who are generous in helping the have nots and the needy. The sooner we realize this, the better it would be for us all.

—The writer is the Student of First year, OPF College, Islamabad

The PDM Agenda

IF “timing is everything” is the first lesson taught in Politics 100, the grand opposition alliance were clearly absent that day. Just a while ago, Pakistan Democratic Movement was being hailed as finally back from its deep slumber. But their watch-out mantra again seems to lose its steam. The saffron-clad Maulana may huff and puff all he wants, but no grandiose can make up for the soft-peddled deadline. If the opposition believes it can arouse public sentiment by labelling its storming of the citadel an “anti-inflation” march, the major parties are in for a huge surprise. Or are they? Because even a whiff of political astuteness is enough to spot a sinking ship. And a campaign that has been nothing but talk, talk and a little more talk would ultimately end down in the dumps. What had started as a much-needed platform to tie the government to its feet has clearly fallen flat as those at its centre stage cannot see eye to eye on a single agenda item. First, there was a swirling tale of a long march to Islamabad to go for the jugular.

The heated declaration about en masse resignations had instantaneously bounced back because the PPP slammed its foot down on parliamentary superiority. We won’t let the extra-constitutional forces shuffle the deck, it screamed. Why should we trifle away our driving seat in Sindh, the Bilawal camp meant! It was only because of Maulana’s determination to push-start the halted ginger group that this too-far-away-in-the-future date reared its head. Unluckily for him, the threat to give away chieftainship won’t work every time. It can only be hoped that this time, the movement would deliver on the hype because the masses are getting increasingly bored of the usual punchlines. The overwhelming crowds that individual parties attract at rallies may suggest otherwise. Still, provocative attacks only go so far if they are not backed by a solid plan. Even if those putting their weight behind the opposition alliance buy every single accusation against the ruling party, how can words do the miraculous swish; dethrone Islamabad; relieve the entire country from the inflation burden and go on to make honey and milk flow through the land?

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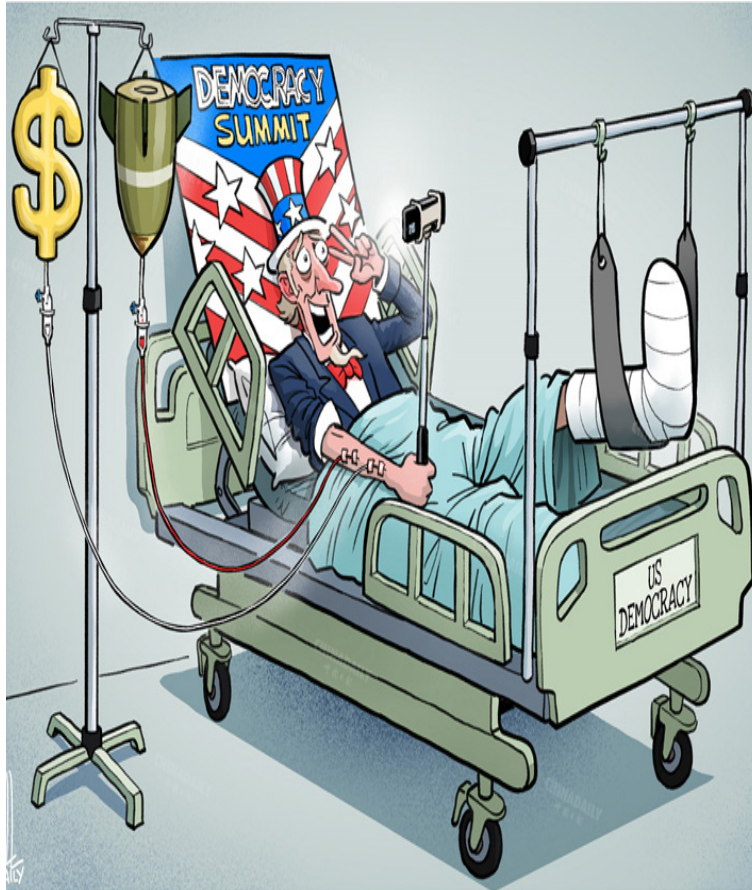
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Israeli racism and violence are symptoms of a ‘sick’ society

Ramzy Baroud

“First he called Jewish society ‘sick’ – dredging up antisemitic tropes about Jews as carriers of cultural and ideological disease. Then he asked whether Jews are ‘decent human beings’ – Questioning their humanity itself,” the article argued. Of course, the sickness of “violence, hostility, bullying (and) racism,” which Rivlin had pointed out, is very real

FOR whatever reason, some mistakenly perceive the Israeli newspaper Haaretz as liberal, progressive and even “pro-Palestinian.” Of course, none of this is true. This misconstrual tells of a much bigger story of how confusing Israeli politics is – and how equally confused many of us are in understanding the Israeli political discourse.

On Nov. 28, Israeli President Isaac Herzog stormed the Ibrahimi Mosque in the Palestinian city of Al-Khalil (Hebron) with hundreds of soldiers and illegal settlers, including a who’s who of Israeli extremists. The scene was reminiscent of a similar occurrence when then-opposition leader Ariel Sharon stormed Al-Haram Al-Sharif in East Jerusalem in September 2000. It was this event that unleashed the second Palestinian uprising, which led to thousands of deaths. Herzog’s gesture of solidarity with the Kiryat Arba settlers was identical to Sharon’s earlier gesture, which was also made to win the approval of Israel’s burgeoning and influential right-wing extremists. Only a few months ago, Haaretz described Herzog as a “centrist, soft-spoken, ‘no-drama’ person” who, at times, “felt out of place on Israel’s

stormy and fractured political battlefield.”

According to the newspaper, Herzog “may be exactly what Israel needs.”

But is this really the case? Marvel at some of the statements made by Herzog as he visited a site where 29 Palestinians were massacred by a Kiryat Arba extremist, Baruch Goldstein, and where many more were shot dead by Israeli soldiers in the aftermath of the tragic event. Not only did Israelis celebrate the memory of Goldstein with a shrine befitting heroes and saints, but many of Herzog’s companions during the provocative “visit” are ardent followers of the Israeli terrorist. “We have to continue dreaming of peace,” Herzog declared while marking the first night of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah inside the mosque compound, which had been emptied of its Muslim worshippers. Proudly, he “condemn(ed) any form of hatred or violence.”

Meanwhile, hundreds of Israeli soldiers were terrorizing 35,000 inhabitants of the old city of Al-Khalil. These Palestinians, who suffer daily violence at the hands of nearly 800 armed settlers in Kiryat Arba, along with an equal number of Israeli soldiers, were locked in. Their shops were closed, their life was put on hold, their walls covered with racist graffiti.

“If he had walked around the corner,” the Israeli news website 972Mag reported, referring to the Israeli president, “Herzog might have seen the graffiti on the walls reading ‘gas the Arabs.’”

Chances are Herzog already understands – in fact, supports – such racism; after all, he was joined by the likes of Eliyahu Libman, who heads the Kiryat Arba regional council, and Hillel Horowitz, leader of the settlers of Al-Khalil. These two men preach extremism and violence against the Palestinians as a matter of course. Aside from hosting the Goldstein grave and shrine, the settlement has a park that carries the name of Meir Kahane, spiritual leader of Israel’s most violent extremists.

In an emotional speech given by Horowitz in the company of Herzog, the settler leader announced that the Israeli president’s violent storming of the Ibrahimi Mosque “reminds us that we did not take the land of foreigners.” He followed this by saying: “Your visit here strengthens our mission.” From the point of view of Horowitz, Libman and their ilk, their “mission” has been a great success. They have managed to steer Israeli politics almost entirely toward the right. Even the “centrist, soft-spoken” president is now fully embracing their sinister aims. But will Haaretz acknowledge this reality? And will it admit that the “liberal” and “progressive”

editorial line it has allegedly championed for many years has completely failed. Will it depict the truth about Israel?

Compare the newspaper’s positive portrayal of Herzog with its coverage of the former right-wing Israeli President Reuven Rivlin. The latter was rightly, on various occasions, criticized for his pro-Likud political line and for his divisive role that contributed to an already fragmented Israeli political scene. But when Rivlin, in October 2014, declared that “Israeli society is sick and it is our duty to treat this disease,” a Haaretz columnist lashed out, suggesting that his comments “are positively bursting with Jew-hatred.”

“First he called Jewish society ‘sick’ – dredging up antisemitic tropes about Jews as carriers of cultural and ideological disease. Then he asked whether Jews are ‘decent human beings’ – Questioning their humanity itself,” the article argued. Of course, the sickness of “violence, hostility, bullying (and) racism,” which Rivlin had pointed out, is very real. Other symptoms of this horrible disease also include military occupation, apartheid and genocidal violence like that frequently meted out against the besieged Gaza Strip.

While this Israeli “disease” is becoming common knowledge globally – with organizations such as Human Rights Watch and many others describing it in the most honest and blunt terms – the vast majority of Israeli society, including their representatives and their “soft-spoken” president, remain blind to it. They are shielded from the truth by their own hubris, infatuated with their military power, and intoxicated by the humiliation and violence that Palestinians are subjected to in Al-Khalil, in Gaza, in Jerusalem and throughout occupied Palestine.

There are no indications that the Israeli society, government and media – “liberal” or right-wing – will, on their own, develop the necessary antibodies that will cure the racism, military occupation and apartheid. Yes, it will ultimately be the Palestinian resistance that will make the difference when it comes to holding Israel accountable. But that can only happen when the international community takes a courageous stance in advocating Palestinian rights and unconditionally supports the Palestinian quest for freedom.

Whether right wing, left wing or centrist, Israel is committed to its military superiority, its racism and the military occupation. The sooner we accept this fact and quit subscribing to the illusion that change in Israel will happen from within, the sooner the Palestinian people will finally achieve the justice they need and deserve.

– Courtesy: Arab News

Saudi Arabia’s GCC tour aims to unite the Gulf vis-a-vis Iran

Giorgio Cafiero



MBS visiting all five of Saudi Arabia’s fellow GCC members on this tour is an outcome of the Saudi-Qatari rapprochement. The Saudi-led Gulf blockade on Qatar since mid-2017 formally ended with the al Ula summit in January this year, easing - albeit not completely eliminating - tensions within the GCC. Mindful of the extent to which Riyadh-Doha relations deteriorated after the blockade began, it is significant that Qatar is the third leg of MBS’s tour

SAUDI leadership is seeking ways to work with its Gulf Arab allies and prepare for scenarios involving Iran, the nuclear deal, and the most delicate regional issues pitting Riyadh and Tehran against each other. In the lead up to the 42nd summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Riyadh, set to kick off on December 14, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) is touring Oman, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait. The Saudi Crown Prince has numerous aims on this Gulf tour. There’s much focus on opportunities for higher levels of trade, investment, and economic integration throughout the Arabian Peninsula. A genuine desire on the part of Saudi Arabia to deepen economic ties with the smaller GCC states has been another factor pushing Riyadh to improve relations with both Qatar and Oman this year.

MBS visiting all five of Saudi Arabia’s fellow GCC members on this tour is an outcome of the Saudi-Qatari rapprochement. The Saudi-led Gulf blockade on Qatar since mid-2017 formally ended with the al Ula summit in January this year, easing - albeit not completely eliminating - tensions within the GCC. Mindful of the extent to which Riyadh-Doha relations deteriorated after the blockade began, it is significant that Qatar is the third leg of MBS’s tour. Not long ago, the idea of him visiting Doha was simply unthinkable. Thus, the Crown Prince’s first visit since the crisis will unquestionably mark an important moment in the Saudi-Qatari rapprochement.

But why has MBS been so intent on patching everything up with Doha? There are numerous factors in play, but fear of Iran was a critical factor behind Saudi Arabia’s decision to become the main agent behind the al Ula summit. Put simply, the leadership in Riyadh decided that establishing a stronger Gulf Arab bloc vis-a-vis Iran needed to be prioritised above pressuring Doha into adopting policies more amenable to the worldviews of Qatar’s immediate neighbours on the Arabian Peninsula. Today, MBS’s Gulf tour reflects a continuation of Saudi efforts to bring GCC states closer to

a unified stance in relation to the Islamic Republic. No matter what comes out of the nuclear talks in Vienna, the Saudi Crown Prince will want to see the GCC members enhance coordination on Iran-related issues. If the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is revived, Saudi Arabia and others in the Gulf would still have serious concerns about non-nuclear issues that the JCPOA does not address. These include Iran’s support for certain non-state actors in the Arab world like Lebanese Hezbollah and Yemen’s Houthi rebels, plus Tehran’s ballistic missile activity. Iranian drones in the Middle East are also a growing concern in Gulf Arab capitals.

At the same time, if the Vienna talks fail to reconstitute the 2015 nuclear accord, the risks of a military confrontation are higher. Any war in the Gulf involving the US and Iran would inevitably leave all the Gulf Arab states vulnerable to extremely dangerous scenarios. “Obviously there is an urgent need to unify, insofar as possible, or at least better coordinate, the GCC stance towards Iran, particularly given the apparent imminent collapse of the indirect nuclear negotiations in Vienna,” Dr Hussein Ibish, a senior resident scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, told TRT World. “Assuming that there is a sustained failure in efforts to revive the JCPOA, it’s likely that Washington and its regional allies will have to shift to a more comprehensive containment strategy regarding Iran.”

With each member of the GCC counting on the US as its security guarantor, Gulf Arab officials are undeniably worried about the costs of continuing to rely on Washington as a key strategic partner, particularly in the aftermath of the botched Afghanistan withdrawal this year. But GCC officials questioning the wisdom of remaining so dependent on the US as a defence partner goes back years and precedes the Biden presidency. Even when the Trump administration was imposing “maximum pressure” on Tehran, Washington let down the Saudis in the face of destabilising Iranian conduct, at least in the eyes of Riyadh.

As Dr Annette Shelina, a Research Fellow in the Middle East programme at the Quincy Institute, told TRT World: “In general, the mood in the Gulf seems to reflect awareness that these countries cannot count on the US as a security guarantor, and so they need to work out a modus vivendi among themselves.” Today, each GCC member has its own bilateral relationship and unique interests vis-a-vis Tehran. This reality will possibly challenge the Saudi leadership when trying to form a united Gulf Arab front against the Islamic Republic.

That said, with Riyadh embracing a less hawkish approach to Iran and Abu Dhabi pursuing its own dialogue with Tehran, the Saudi and Emirati leadership will possibly find Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar’s more diplomatic approaches to their Persian neighbour less problematic than before. In any event, despite the GCC’s lack of any consensus on how to best interact with Tehran, there is a general sense among Gulf Arab states that, as Dr Ibish argued: “Outreach is an important element of de-escalation.”

Gulf officials might have low expectations about what can be achieved from Saudi-Iranian dialogue, which began eight months ago in Iraq. Nonetheless, there is awareness in the GCC that engaging Tehran is the most pragmatic way to proceed.

Iran will be a permanent neighbour and not talking to Tehran will not lead to any long-term stability. The Gulf Arab leaders understand that they can’t sit around and wait for American leadership to drive any meaningful engagement between GCC states and the Islamic Republic. Countries in the Gulf are taking the initiative.

Within this context, the leadership in Riyadh is seeking to find out how the Saudis and their Gulf Arab allies can best work together within the framework of a recently reconciled GCC to prepare for practically any scenario involving Iran, the JCPOA, and the most delicate regional issues pitting Riyadh and Tehran against each other.

– Courtesy: TRT World

The colonial undertones of travel bans

Rosebell Kagumire

The rush to punish Africa suggests that African countries have now become the epicentre of COVID-19, when this is far from reality. This not only draws attention away from Western public health failures and rising numbers of infections, but also erases the efforts...

ON November 26, the World Health Organization (WHO) designated a new coronavirus variant B.1.1.529 a variant of concern and named it Omicron. A day earlier, researchers in South Africa brought the variant to the world’s attention, citing research from the Network for Genomics Surveillance member laboratories which had detected a new virus lineage in samples from Gauteng province in mid-November. Instead of applauding the impeccable efforts of South African scientists, hailing its government’s transparency, and coming up with constructive ways to face this new potential threat, the European Union, the United States and the United Kingdom led the world into blanket travel bans on southern African countries. Despite the Omicron being reported in South Africa and Botswana, the travel bans targeted other southern African countries that had yet to record a case. Countries like Malawi

have had recorded less than 20 new COVID-19 cases. Furthermore, these kneejerk decisions were taken when there was still little information on the transmissibility and severity of the Omicron variant, or indeed on its origins. They do not reflect a sound public health policy, but long-held prejudices that continue to deny African citizens the right to mobility and the right to healthcare. The roots of these blanket travel bans, which the WHO says will not prevent Omicron spread, go way back to colonial times and reflect twisted perceptions and marginalisation of Africa and Africans.

During colonialisation, race-based segregation was imposed across Africa in order to keep “white” officials separate from Africans who were considered to be “carriers” of diseases, such as plague, malaria, syphilis, sleeping sickness, tuberculosis, smallpox, and cholera. Travel bans are the “modern” versions of these policies and have been often used against Africans. When the AIDS epidemic broke out 40 years ago, travel and residency restrictions were imposed on people with HIV, despite there being no public health rationale. These restrictions led to deportations, denial of entry into countries, loss of employment, denial of asylum, and increased stigma and discrimination, which disproportionately affected Africans.

Perceptions that Africa is a “source of disease” have also driven Western efforts, especially by the media, to “blame” the Omicron variant on South Africa, before enough evidence of its origin was made available. Contradictions in this theory – such as European countries detecting cases of the variant in people who had not travelled to South Africa – have not stopped this drive.

The rush to punish Africa suggests that African countries have now become the epicentre of COVID-19, when this is far from reality. This not only draws attention away from Western public health failures and rising numbers of infections, but also erases the efforts of African health authorities and local health systems to contain the

spread of the virus.

At the same time, the emergence of “variants of concern” across the world (including Europe) and growing COVID-19 death toll among unvaccinated populations have not dissuaded the West from pursuing vaccine hoarding and vaccine nationalism policies. For more than a year, African political leaders, scientists, and activists have been calling on the wealthier nations, to end what has been called “vaccine apartheid”. Several campaigns from #EndVaccineApartheid to #EndVaccineInjusticeInAfrica continue to demand immediate interventions to alleviate acute COVID-19 vaccine shortages. Using African bodies for medical experiments in search of cures for various diseases without regard to their safety or best interest is also a colonial legacy. As historian Helen Tilley points out in her paper on medical practices in colonial Africa, colonial authorities turned “the African continent writ large into a vast arena for experimentation”.

All these policies reinforce the prevailing colonial capitalist order which overlooks equity and justice and privileges some human lives over others. They may provide temporary, false sense of security in the Western societies, but in the long-run, they will only prolong the pandemic and impact not just the lives and livelihoods of marginalised populations, but also those who are more privileged. Vaccine nationalism, border closures and other inward-looking, discriminatory actions cannot guarantee global health security. We need to see leadership with foresight that recognises that this pandemic, like other global health challenges, feeds on inequality. Outreach should not be limited to charity, which has long been a band-aid that maintains power over formerly colonised peoples. It cannot be a solution for a world facing constantly changing public health threats. Instead, global health inequalities rooted in systems of economic power imbalances and upheld by long colonial histories need to be dismantled.

– Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Briefs

Top Indian General dies in air crash

FROM PAGE 01
11 other persons on board had died in the accident. "Group Captain Varun Singh SC [...] with injuries is currently under treatment at Military Hospital, Wellington," the statement said. Footage from the scene showed a crowd of people trying to extinguish the fiery wreck with water buckets while a group of soldiers carried one of the passengers away on an improvised stretcher. The chopper was already making its descent at the time of the crash. It came down around 10 kilometres from the nearest main road, forcing emergency workers to trek to the accident site, a fire official was quoted as saying by AFP. Meanwhile, Modi said he was deeply saddened by Gen Rawat's death. "A true patriot, he greatly contributed to modernising our armed forces and security apparatus," the prime minister said.

Pakistan military...

FROM PAGE 01
The condolence message was shared at the official Twitter handle of the Directorate General of Public Relations of Pakistan Navy.

'Pakistan, Kazakhstan need...

FROM PAGE 01
Fawad, on behalf of the Pakistanis, also felicitated the leadership and people of Kazakhstan on their national day. Pakistan and Kazakhstan ties were anchored in the shared religious and cultural values and had the potential to become important trade partners due to their strong diplomatic, historical, religious and political ties, he noted. The minister said his country was committed to promote an inclusive co-ordination with the Central Asian countries under its 'Vision Central Asia Policy'. Kazakhstan was an important country of the Asia, he said while stressing the need for boosting bilateral cooperation in industrial and agriculture sectors by both the countries whose economies were mainly based on those sectors. The two countries were needed to work together in the areas of politics, trade, investment, energy, bilateral relations, security and culture, the minister maintained and called for promoting bilateral cooperation among their private sectors. He said Islamabad had gained unique status in the world as about 65 per cent of world population was just three hours away from the federal capital of Pakistan.

Omicron may pose higher reinfection risk: WHO

GENEVA: Early data indicate the Omicron Covid variant may more easily reinfect people who have already had the virus or been vaccinated than previous variants, but could also cause milder disease, the WHO said Thursday. "Emerging data from South Africa suggests increased risk of reinfection with Omicron," World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters, adding that "there is also some evidence that Omicron causes milder disease than Delta". But he stressed that more data was needed before drawing firm conclusions, and urged countries everywhere to boost their surveillance to help provide a clearer picture of how Omicron is behaving. The hopeful assessments came as global concern grew over the heavily mutated variant, which has forced dozens of nations to re-impose border restrictions and raised the possibility of a return to economically punishing lockdowns. Even if it does turn out that Omicron causes less severe disease, Tedros warned against slacking off vigilance against the virus. "Any complacency now will cost lives," he warned. - APP

Pak whitewash Bangladesh after a remarkable victory

Hasan Ali and Shaheen Afridi claimed two wickets in the morning session for the tourists, leaving Bangladesh reeling at 25-4 in their second innings, before Liton and Mushfiquir came up with resistance

SPORTS DESK

DHAKA: Pakistan defeated Bangladesh by an innings and eight runs on the final day of the second Test in Dhaka on Wednesday and concluded a flawless tour that saw them whitewash their hosts in both the T20I and Test series. Sajid Khan was the undeniable star of the show as he added four more wickets to his tally of eight in the first innings to finish with a dozen for the match. Among the wicket-takers was also a rarity as captain Babar Azam got a wicket in what was the first over of his Test career. Earlier, the tourists inched close to the win after ending the resistance of Mushfiquir Rahim and Shakib Al Hasan.

Mushfiquir put two decent partnerships together, with Liton Das and Shakib Al Hasan, before an uncanny run-out on the stroke of



tea on the fifth day. Mushfiquir made 48 as hosts Bangladesh struggled to 146-6 in their second innings at the break, still needing 66

runs to avoid an innings defeat. Shakib Al Hasan, who put on 49 runs with Mushfiquir for the sixth wicket, was their

last hope but he also fell prey to Sajid Khan. Liton earlier made 45 runs and put on 73 for the fifth wicket to defy Pakistan's attack, before he was dismissed by Sajid Khan, who added to his 8-42 in the first innings. After bowling out Bangladesh for a measly 87 runs in the first innings, the side's lowest total on home soil, Pakistan were hoping for a quick kill after enforcing the follow-on. Hasan Ali and Shaheen Afridi claimed two wickets in the morning session for the tourists, leaving Bangladesh reeling at 25-4 in their second innings, before Liton and Mushfiquir came up with resistance. Shakib also showed some aggression, hitting Hasan for three fours off consecutive deliveries to raise Bangladesh's hopes of salvaging a draw. Only 63.2 overs of play were possible in the first three days because of rain and bad light. Pakistan led the two-Test series 1-0 after an eight-wicket win in Chittagong.

'In no circumstances' is forced vaccination OK

GENEVA: Countries considering introducing vaccine mandates in the fight against Covid-19 must ensure they respect human rights, the UN rights chief said Wednesday, stressing that forced vaccination was never acceptable.

Speaking to a Human Rights Council seminar via video message, Michelle Bachelet warned there were significant rights considerations that needed to be taken into account before making vaccination compulsory. Any "vaccine mandates must comply with the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality and non-discrimination", she said, according to a transcript. "In no circumstances should people be forcibly administered a vaccine." The UN

High Commissioner for Human Rights said the aims sought by countries mulling mandates to protect lives as Europe and other regions battle fierce surges in the pandemic, were "of course of the highest order of legitimacy and importance". But she insisted that "vaccine mandates should be employed only when necessary for achieving compelling public health ends".

"And they should only be considered when less intrusive measures such as mask-wearing and social distancing have demonstrably failed to meet such health needs." She also emphasised that for any mandate to be acceptable, countries needed to ensure that vaccines are truly available and affordable. "Unless all people have genuine, prac-

tical access to vaccines, vaccine requirements will not be consistent with fundamental human rights principles of equality and non-discrimination," she said. Bachelet also highlighted that "the actual vaccines employed must also be sufficiently safe and effective to achieve (the) public health aims." Any mandatory vaccination regime also must be flexible enough to allow for "appropriate exceptions, such as where a vaccination is medically contraindicated for an individual." Bachelet said it could be appropriate to restrict some rights and liberties, including conditioning access to schools, hospitals or other public spaces on vaccination. But forced injections was never acceptable, she said,

"even if a person's refusal to comply with a mandatory vaccination policy may entail other legal consequences, including, for example, appropriate fines". "Where penalties are imposed, they should be proportionate and subject to review by judicial authorities," she said. There needed to be "appropriate procedural safeguards, including the right to seek a justified exemption and the right to appeal any form of penalty before a fair and independent authority," she insisted. Looking forward, the UN rights chief said any vaccine mandates introduced "should be subject to frequent official review to ensure they remain necessary, proportionate and non-discriminatory." - Agencies

Sarwar for strengthening ties with Turkey

WEB DESK

ISTANBUL: Learning from our past will help further strengthen historical ties with Turkey, a top Pakistani official has said. Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar, the governor of Pakistan's largest province Punjab, spoke to Anadolu Agency on the sidelines of the Bosphorus Summit in Istanbul, a two-day event held under the theme of "Challenges for a Better World," with top officials, experts, academics in attendance. Referring to the support of South Asian Muslims to the Ottoman Empire in early 20th century, he said: "It is important that whatever has happened in the past, we remember that, and we educate our next generation." "There should be some kind of memorial on the contribution of South Asian Muslims during Turkey's War of Independence," he said, offering to build one in Lahore. The governor added: "Our support for Turkey continues to this day ... When you were fighting for democracy in Turkey [during the failed 2016 coup], the people of Pakistan supported Turkey's democratic institutions and the democratic government." Praising the efforts of Turkish aid agencies such as TIKA and Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH) in Pakistan, Sarwar said "it is a great idea" to collaborate for joint projects.

NZ defence forces warn of rising threat from China in Indo-Pacific

WELLINGTON: New Zealand's defence forces warned on Wednesday of the security threat from an increasingly powerful China as it assertively pursues its interests in the Indo-Pacific region. Growing strategic competition between China, which is New Zealand's biggest trading partner, the United States and other powers will also boost potential for confrontation and conflict in the region, a defence assessment report for 2021 said.

"New Zealand faces a world in which strategic competition is increasingly the background for states' relationships," the report said, adding that China's rise was the major driver of such competition. Even in the absence of open conflict, strategic competition would play out across arenas from space to cyber space in ways that will threaten New Zealand's security, said the report, which is made every five years. "This is true of both the wider Indo-Pacific and New Zealand's immediate region." New Zealand has publicly expressed its concern over developments such as the building and militarisation of features in the South China Sea, the report added. One of the biggest possible threats New Zealand could face would be the setting-up of a military base or dual-use facility in the Pacific by a state that did not share its values and security interests, the report said.

China has drawn up plans to upgrade an airstrip and bridge on one of Kiribati's remote islands to revive a site that hosted military aircraft during World War Two. New Zealand relies on its Western allies, including neighbouring Australia, for its security needs. U.S. President Joe Biden has signalled a renewed commitment to bolster his country's influence in the Indo-Pacific. "Washington's delivery on this commitment, over both short and longer terms, will be important in determining the future for this region, including New Zealand's own neighbourhood," the report added. - Agencies

Australian cricket board security officials visit SSU hqs

KARACHI: A three-member delegation of Australian Cricket Board comprising Bengamin Carl Oliver, Grendan Gerard Drew and Stuart Andrew Bailey visited Special Security Unit (SSU) headquarters on Wednesday. The visiting delegation was briefed on security arrangements pertaining to expected visit of Australian Cricket Team to Pakistan, said a news release. The delegation was welcomed by Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP) Security and Emergency Services Division Maqsood Ahmed who also presided a meeting where he briefed the delegation about security arrangements to be placed once the Australian team visits Pakistan particularly matches to be played at National Stadium Karachi.

The DIGP Security informed that advanced professional trainings have been provided to the commandos of SSU, the Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T) Team equipped with latest weapons and communication system remains alert round-the-clock as quick response force to challenge any emergency situation if created by the anti-social elements/terrorists. Furthermore, the delegation also reviewed the security arrangements placed at Airport, National Stadium, routes and hotels. Moreover, the delegation visited different sections of SSU headquarters and lauded the efforts of maintaining professional standards at SSU Headquarters and endeavours to further enhance the professional capabilities of police commandos. The delegation expressed their satisfaction over security arrangements made in context to cricket matches likely to be played at National Stadium, Karachi and also witnessed the security arrangements to be placed during West Indies cricket team's visit to Pakistan. - Agencies



Military top brass vow zero...

FROM PAGE 01
The ISPR said that the participants reviewed the global, regional and domestic security milieu. "Expressing satisfaction over security measures along the borders, COAS emphasised on maintaining high vigil to guard against any threat," said the ISPR. The officials also reviewed the "brewing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan". The army chief emphasised that "continuous support and timely international humanitarian assistance" was "imperative for not only peace and prosperity of Afghanistan but also for stability of the region at large". During the conference, the army chief also expressed satisfaction over the ongoing training activities in the army. "Objective evaluation of doctrine and training is necessary to evolve and meet emerging challenges in a technology driven future battle field," the army chief told the corps commanders.

Pakistan Navy...

FROM PAGE 01
Ground Based Air Defence (GBAD) live firing of Surface to Air Missiles (SAMs) at Karachi. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Chief of the Naval Staff was briefed on Pakistan Navy's operational capabilities and ongoing developments to augment security through induction of Surface to Air Missiles. Chief of the Naval Staff expressed complete satisfaction on operational readiness of Pakistan Navy and commended officers and men for their tireless commitment and professionalism. Later, Chief of the Naval Staff visited SEAL Battalion Headquarters where Special Services Groups Navy SSG(N) demonstrated Fire Power Display with various tactical drills that included unarmed combat, anti-hijacking of aircraft, hostage rescue ops and raid drills. Earlier, Chief of the Naval Staff visited Creeks Area to review operational readiness of troops deployed. Naval Chief was briefed on combat readiness for the defence of Creeks Areas. While interacting with officers and men, Chief of the Naval Staff motivated the troops for the best job being done to safeguard the maritime frontiers of Pakistan. Naval Chief reassured that Pakistan Navy is fully prepared and ready to thwart any nefarious plans against the country.

Pakistan set to host...

FROM PAGE 01
If a humanitarian crisis is averted and economic stability is assured, peace in the country can be consolidated. This will also have a regional peace dividend. Continued engagement of the international community with Afghanistan is, therefore, an imperative. Against this backdrop, the Extraordinary Session would provide an opportunity to consider practical arrangements and concrete steps to help address the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people. We expect and hope that in addition to expressing solidarity, the OIC member states and rest of the international community present will also consider making pledges of financial and in-kind support.

Seven UN peacekeepers killed in central Mali explosion

BAMAKO: An explosion on Wednesday in central Mali killed seven United Nations peacekeepers and seriously wounded three others, the U.N. mission said on Twitter. A logistics convoy hit an improvised explosive device between the towns of Douentza and Sevare, an area where groups linked to al Qaeda and Islamic State operate. No group claimed responsibility on Wednesday. Mali, one of Africa's largest and poorest countries, is battling an Islamist insurgency that has flourished despite a nine-year effort by international forces led by former colonial power France to defeat it. The U.N.'s peacekeeping mission, known as MINUSMA, has deployed over 13,000 troops to contain the violence in the north and centre of the country. - APP

UK joins US, Australia in Beijing Olympics boycott

The White House confirmed Monday that upcoming Winter Olympics in Beijing to

it was staging a diplomatic boycott of the protest Chinese human rights abuses

LONDON: No U.K. government minister will attend the Beijing Winter Olympics, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced Wednesday, calling it "effectively" a diplomatic boycott.

The announcement came after the White House and the Australian government confirmed diplomatic boycotts of the Winter Olympics in February to protest Chinese human rights abuses. China has vowed to react with "firm countermeasures." When asked in the House of Commons on Wednesday whether Britain would join in the diplomatic action, Johnson said "There will be effectively a diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics in Beijing."

"No ministers are expected to attend and no officials," he told lawmakers. "The government has no hesitation in raising these

issues with China, as I did with President Xi the last time I talked to him."

Johnson said he did not believe "sporting boycotts are sensible," and that remains his government's policy. The diplomatic moves by Britain, the U.S. and Australia do not affect their athletes' ability to compete in the Winter Games. Rights groups have called for a full-blown boycott of the Beijing Winter Games, citing Chinese human rights abuses against its Uyghur minority in the northwest Xinjiang province, which some have called genocide.

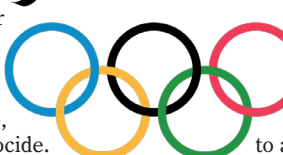
They also point to Beijing's suppression of democratic protests in Hong Kong and a sweeping crackdown on dissent in the semi-autonomous territory.

The White House confirmed Monday that it was staging a diplomatic boycott of the upcoming Winter Olympics in Beijing to protest Chinese human rights abuses. Australia followed suit earlier Wednesday, with Prime Minister Scott Morrison saying it was "in Australia's national interest."

He referred to the worsening relations between his country and China — including a spat over Australia's decision to acquire nuclear-powered subma-

rines — as well as human rights concerns. China's Foreign Ministry denounced Morrison's announcement as "political posturing," adding "no one would care about whether (Australian officials) come or not." It wasn't immediately clear whether Britain's royal family could still attend the 2022 Games. Princess Anne, Queen Elizabeth II's daughter, was an Olympic equestrian and is president of the British Olympic Association. Beijing's relations with Britain, the U.S. and Australia have plummeted after the three Western countries announced in September that they were forming a strategic Indo-Pacific alliance that allows for greater sharing of defence capabilities. The pact will provide Australia with nuclear reactors to power its submarines, but the subs will not be nuclear-armed. - APP

BEIJING 2022



Briefs

PM Abiy
announces
return to
Addis Ababa

WEB NEWS

ADDIS ABABA: Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said Wednesday that he was returning to Addis Ababa from the battlefield after pro-government forces claimed major advances in their fight against Tigrayan rebels.

The government on Monday said pro-Abiy forces had re-taken the strategic towns of Dessie and Kombolcha, the latest turn in the 13-month-old war.

After the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) rebel group reported significant territorial gains as part of a march towards Addis Ababa, Abiy announced last month that he would head to the battlefield, handing over his regular duties to his deputy. Since then, state media has broadcast images of a uniformed Abiy, a former lieutenant colonel in the military, as fighting reportedly raged on at least three fronts.

On Wednesday, the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize winner said: "I am returning to the office as I have completed the first phase (of the conflict)."

"The struggle isn't yet finished. We have areas that haven't been freed. We should offer a long-lasting solution to make sure the enemy that has tested us doesn't become a danger to Ethiopia again," he warned in a statement published on social media.

Trump White
House chief
risks criminal
charge

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump's former chief of staff said Tuesday he was no longer willing to cooperate with the probe into January's assault on the US Capitol, prompting investigators to threaten him with criminal prosecution.

Mark Meadows, who failed to appear before the congressional panel last month, is seen as a key witness to Trump's role in efforts to overturn the election by undemocratic means.

Having initially snubbed a subpoena to testify before the House of Representatives committee, Meadows later reached an agreement on sharing information with lawmakers – before reversing course again.

"Now actions by the select committee have made such an appearance untenable," Meadows' attorney, George Terwilliger, said in a new letter to the committee circulated among US media.

The lawyer said Meadows' change of mind had come after he learned over the weekend that the committee had "issued wide ranging subpoenas for information from a third party communications provider." "We now have every indication from the information supplied to us last Friday – upon which Mr. Meadows could expect to be questioned – that the select committee has no intention of respecting boundaries concerning executive privilege," added Terwilliger.

Baku lauds OIC support for lasting regional peace, security

"The valuable support provided to Azerbaijan by the OIC on the basis of the principles of international law is a contribution to ensuring lasting peace and security in the region," the ministry stated

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry has welcomed the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) support in ensuring lasting peace and security in the region, the ministry reported on December 8.

The ministry made the statement on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Azerbaijan's OIC membership.

"The valuable support provided to Azerbaijan by the OIC on the basis of the principles of international law is a contribution to ensuring lasting peace and security in the region," the ministry stated.

It was noted that Baku highly appreciates the OIC support to Azerbaijan's position based on international law regarding the former Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict.

The ministry added that as a result of the 44-day war in 2020, Azerbaijan restored its territorial integrity, as well as fulfilled the requirements of the UN Security Council and OIC resolutions on the unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from its territories.

The ministry stressed the importance of the OIC's public statements in terms of supporting Azerbaijan's just position during the 44-day war with Armenia.

It was underlined that the visit of the OIC Contact Group to Azerbaijan's liberated territories was of great significance in terms of

ICJ decision on Armenia ensures regional peace

BAKU: Human Rights Commissioner Sabina Aliyeva has described the International Court of Justice (ICS) decision on Armenia as an important step in ensuring regional peace, the ombudsman's office reported on December 8.

"I think the ICJ decision of December 7, 2021, on temporary measures to prevent the promotion of racial hatred by Armenia, as well as by the persons and organizations operating on the territory of Armenia and targeting Azerbaijanis, is important in terms of preventing violations of human rights and freedoms and ensuring peace in the region," Aliyeva stressed. She added that the court's decision, which was made following the hearings that lasted from October 14 to 19, 2021, instructed Armenia to take urgent measures to prevent human rights violations against Azerbaijanis.

"We believe that effective measures will be taken within the framework of international law for the immediate implementation of the ICJ decision by Armenia," Aliyeva underlined. Earlier a suit was filed against Armenia at Azerbaijan's request. Azerbaijan accused Armenia of violating the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which both states are signatories.

The submitted documents also referred to the reports prepared by the Azerbaijani Human Rights Commissioner and sent to relevant international organizations.

On December 7, the UN International Court of Justice rejected Armenia's main lawsuit on the immediate return of the so-called prisoners of war.

The court also rejected Armenia's lawsuit to close the Military Trophy Park in Baku, Azerbaijan. At the same time, Armenia's claim on the investigation of war crimes by Azerbaijan was not approved. — News Desk

highlighting the illegal activities deliberately carried out by Armenia in these lands for many years, especially vandalism committed against the Islamic heritage.

"The development of relations with the

OIC and the expansion of valuable cooperation with the organization are among the foreign policy priorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and our country has taken continuous steps in this direction over

the past 30 years," the ministry stressed. It was stressed that on December 8, 1991, Azerbaijan became a full-fledged member of the organization as the first country among the former Soviet republics.

"Over the years, Azerbaijan has been an active member of the OIC, as well as of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), and initiated the establishment of new organizations to strengthen Islamic solidarity - the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF), OIC Labor Center and Journalists Association of OIC Member States," the report emphasized.

It was added that in 2006, Azerbaijan hosted the 33rd OIC Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers and in 2010 the 35th meeting of the Islamic Development Bank's Board of Governors.

The Azerbaijani president declared 2017 the "Year of Islamic Solidarity" and in the same year, the 4th Islamic Solidarity Games were held in Azerbaijan.

The report stressed that Azerbaijan will develop high-level and multifaceted cooperation with the OIC and will contribute both to strengthening solidarity between member countries and ensuring international peace.

It should be noted that on December 8, 2021, Azerbaijan marks the 30th anniversary of its membership in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

Plastics in
soil threatens
food security

UNITED NATIONS: The "disastrous" way in which plastic is used in farming across the world is threatening food safety and potentially human health, according to a report from the Food and Agriculture Organization, a Rome-based UN agency.

It says soils contain more microplastic pollution than the oceans and that there is "irrefutable" evidence of the need for better management of the millions of tonnes of plastics used in the food and farming system each year.

"Soils are one of the main receptors of agricultural plastics and are known to contain larger quantities of microplastics than oceans", FAO Deputy Director-General Maria Helena Semedo said in the report's foreword.

According to data collated by FAO experts, agricultural value chains each year use 12.5 million tonnes of plastic products while another 37.3 million are used in food packaging.

Crop production and livestock accounted for 10.2 million tonnes per year collectively, followed by fisheries and aquaculture with 2.1 million, and forestry with 0.2 million tonnes.

Asia was estimated to be the largest user of plastics in agricultural production, accounting for almost half of global usage.

Moreover, without viable alternatives, plastic demand in agriculture is only set to increase. — APP

French top
diplomat
visits Algeria

PARIS: French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian is to hold rare talks in the Algerian capital Algiers on Wednesday in a bid to mend relations damaged by a series of disagreements, the foreign ministry said.

Le Drian is making a "working visit, to evaluate and relaunch the relationship", a French foreign ministry source, who asked not to be named, told AFP, adding that Le Drian had already arrived in the country.

The source said that during the visit, which was only revealed at the last moment, Le Drian would hold talks with his counterpart Ramtane Lamamra but also, crucially, be received by Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune.

Le Drian's presence in the country and his meeting schedule were also confirmed by Algerian official media. Relations between Algeria and France are currently enduring one of their toughest periods in recent years, in a situation at odds with President Emmanuel Macron's determination to take ties with former French colonies in to a new era during his mandate.

Macron himself poured fuel onto the fire of the tensions, personally outraging Tebboune with comments in October criticising Algeria's "political-military system".

The comments prompted Tebboune to stay away from a major summit on Libya in Paris in November in a major blow to the event. The dispute prompted a rare expression of contrition from the Elysee, which said it "regretted" the misunderstandings caused by the remarks. Algeria was also angered by a decision from Paris to sharply reduce the number of visas it grants to Algerian citizens. — APP

Amb. Sajjad
calls on DG
National Art
Museum

DNA

MINSK: Pakistan Ambassador to Belarus Sajjad Haider Khan accompanied by DHM Muhammad Abdullah Amin visited the National Art Museum of Belarus and held a meeting with its Director General Mr. Vladimir Prokoptsov. The Head of the Marketing Department Ms. Svetlana Voropay briefed the Ambassador about the history and ongoing expositions of the museum which was established in 1939. The two sides discussed the possibilities of bilateral cooperation including possibility of holding an Art exhibition of Pakistani Artists as well as a concert of Pakistani instrumentalists at the premises of the museum during 2022.

Congress allows
KSA weapons sale
to proceed

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: The United States Senate has blocked a resolution that would have banned a \$650m sale of missiles and missile launchers to Saudi Arabia.

The sale was approved by the administration of President Joe Biden in November. It is the first major arms deal between the US and Saudi Arabia since Biden took office in January this year. The chamber on Tuesday voted 67 to 30 against the resolution, which represented the latest attempt by legislators to attempt to block US weapons transfers to Saudi Arabia over its involvement in the continuing war in Yemen. It had been introduced by Republicans Mike Lee and Rand Paul, as well as Bernie Sanders, an independent who caucuses with Democrats. In a speech on Tuesday, Sanders said: "Exporting more missiles to Saudi Arabia does nothing but further this conflict and pour more gasoline on already raging fire."

A military coalition assembled by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates intervened in Yemen's conflict 2015 in support of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's internationally recognised government shortly after the Houthis took control of the capital, Sanaa.

Both sides have been accused of committing atrocities over seven years of fighting, resulting in an estimated 233,000 deaths and five million people on the brink of famine.

‘Turkey ready to mediate Russia-Ukraine tension with consent’

Erdogan said Turkey's hope is that "the tension does not increase further and the stability in the region is preserved"

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkey is ready to play the role of mediator, facilitator, or to provide support in any format desired to end the Russia-Ukraine tension with the consent of both sides, the Turkish president said Wednesday. Speaking to reporters on return from Qatar, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey's hope is that "the tension does not increase further and the stability in the region is preserved."

"We are ready to give our best support to establish a channel of dialogue," he continued. "With the consent of both sides, we can offer support in facilitation, mediation, or any other desired format. Of course, we will do our part without hesitation for the peace of the region." Longstanding tensions over Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in

2014 have been exacerbated by Russian-backed separatists in the eastern border region of Donbas, along with a Russian military buildup decried by the West.

On Friday, Ukraine's defense minister warned that Russia could trigger a large-scale escalation in January next year. Oleksiy Reznikov said around 94,000 Russian troops were deployed on the Ukrainian border and that intelligence forces were working on all possible scenarios that could arise. Following that, the US said it will take "strong" economic measures against Russia in case Moscow escalates military aggression against Ukraine. Underlining that Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu and intelligence will play an active role in ties with Abu Dhabi, Erdogan said a similar process could also be possible with Israel.

"I have had talks with Israel in the

past. But at this point, Israel needs to be more sensitive about its Palestinian policy in the region. It needs to be sensitive about Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque," he said. "As soon as we see the sensitive approach here, we will do our best and take our steps."

Asked whether there would be a mutual reassignment of ambassadors, the president said: "All of these things will happen. The Israeli side already knows what our sensitivities are. We know Israel's sensitivities. So, we solve the issue based on these sensitivities."

In late November, Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan paid his first official visit to Turkey since 2012, and both nations signed a series of cooperation agreements, which Erdogan called "cordial steps that will launch a new era between Turkey and the United Arab Emirates."

France presidential election 2022: Who's who in the race?

MONITORING DESK

PARIS: The list of people hoping to create an upset and unseat Emmanuel Macron is quickly growing with just four months to go before France's presidential election. Macron has not yet announced he will be running for a second term but is widely expected to do so. His main challenger within the centrist La Republique en Marche party was thought to be former prime minister Edouard Philippe, but the mayor of Le Havre has unequivocally rejected throwing his hat into the ring.

Marine Le Pen - Rassemblement National Seen as Macron's main rival and projected to join him in the second round of the plebiscite is Marine Le Pen.

The far-right leader, 53, is sticking to her preferred themes, namely immigration and security. Among the measures she has outlined are the end of naturalisation by marriage and of automatic citizenship for people born on French soil.

She also plans to restrict access to family allowances to French people exclusively with a five-year waiting period for foreigners. She also wants to abolish subsidies for "intermittent energies", in-

cluding wind and photovoltaic power.

She has however abandoned the idea of taking France out of the European Union, Schengen Area or euro.

Jean-Luc Mélenchon - La France Insoumise The left-wing populist leader, 70, came fourth in the last presidential election, capturing nearly 20% of the first-round vote. Right now, polls credit him with around 10% of ballots.

Up to now, his proposals have been solidly on social issues and the cost of living.

Mélenchon is a controversial figure. He was given a three-month suspended prison term and a Euro 8,000 fine in December 2019 for intimidating officials who were carrying out a search at his office in a probe over funding irregularities.

Anne Hidalgo - Socialist Party

The 62-year-old is the current mayor of Paris, after winning a second term in 2020.

She has called for the education and health systems to be "rebuilt" and said that "the question of work should once again become a central issue."



She is also positioning herself as an ecologist. Among the measures she has rolled out in the French capital are restrictions on car traffic in parts of the city and more bike lanes. Her new mandate plans for the plantation of 170,000 trees, the energy renovation of buildings and an end of plastic in school canteens.

She faces two major challenges. The first one is that she is seen as a local politician, tied to Paris. The second is that she is the candidate for a floundering party. The Socialists' candidate in 2017 secured just 6.2% of the vote – a record low for the party. This was followed by heavy defeats in the legislative and European parliament elections. Polls currently credit her with between 4 and 7% of the vote.

Yannick Jadot - Green Party

Jadot, 54, is an MEP who already won the Green party ticket for the presidential election in 2017, only to rally behind the Socialist candidate.

This time, such an alliance appears unlikely even though the two left-wing parties joined forces to win the Paris and Marseille mayoral elections.

His programme includes pledges to put an end to intensive livestock farming and to weaken lobbies, which he said "swallow up subsidies and public policies so that the climate, health, the environment and social justice finally take precedence". Finally, he has unveiled a plan to inject Euro 50 billion a year during the five-year mandate to "repair" the country and "rebuild" the economy. The funds would go towards infrastructure projects,

housing, transport and help the economy transition into "a virtuous circle of investment and responsible consumption."

Polls give him between 6 and 9% of the vote.

Valérie Pécresse - Les Républicains

Valérie Pécresse was picked by members of right-wing party Les Républicains to be their first female candidate in France's presidential election.

The head of the populous Ile-De-France region, in which Paris is located, is also a two-time minister for higher education and budget.

She has pledged to review plans to close nuclear reactors, conceding however that nuclear will not suffice and that renewables need to be boosted. Other proposals include a carbon tax at Europe's borders and "European preference in public procurement".

She also called for wages to be brought up and for reforms of the unemployment and pension systems and promised to bring down public debt.

Eric Zemmour - Reconquest

Controversial columnist, television pundit and author Eric Zemmour has also thrown his hat into the ring for France's presidency.

Zemmour, 63, is famed for his provocations on Islam, immigration and women which have seen him sued multiple times. He was convicted of provoking racial discrimination in 2011 and provoking hatred towards Muslims in 2018. He argues France is in decline both geopolitically and economically which he blames on immigration, and the "Islamisation" and "feminisation" of society.

Briefs

Economic
bases of
country
are open
worldwide

ISLAMABAD: Nation security advisor Government of Pakistan Dr Moed Yusuf on Wednesday said that the economic bases of the country are opened worldwide.

While talking to the Hard Talk host Stephen Sackur in an interview with BBC he responded to various questions pertaining to Pak-US Pak-China Economic Corridor and other issues.

He went on to say that there are no Chinese military bases in Gwader. He said that China has its economic bases in city. Moed mentioned that countries including US, Russia and Middle-east were also offered to establish economic bases. Moed said that Pakistan is in favor of relations with the United States. The SAPM told BBC Hard Talk in an interview that China has a long-standing strategic relationship and will continue to do so. He said that US administration is in touch with Pakistan people of Kashmir are our people Pakistan has always said that there is no military solution for Afghanistan Pakistan is again warning about Afghanistan. — DNA

Asia's
first ever
e-passport
service soon

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed says Asia's first ever e-passport service will start in Pakistan in the beginning of next year. He was addressing a ceremony in Islamabad on Wednesday to launch important initiatives by Directorate General of Immigration and Passports. The initiatives included revamping online passport facility, fast track delivery service at zonal offices, upgradation of website of Director General of Immigration and Passports and inauguration of its official logo. He said this online facility will enable people to get their passports at home without travelling and waiting in queues at passport offices. He said passport delivery service has been revamped and now one can get it within twenty four hours. The Interior Minister said online facility is also being given for renunciation of citizenship and getting emergency travel documents. — DNA

PPMA
donates Rs
100m worth
medicines

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA) is all set to donate medicines worth Rs100 million to Afghanistan, sources within the health ministry said on Wednesday. The medicines consignment will be dispatched to Afghanistan in the ongoing month of December, the sources said. The consignment to include medicines for temperature, flu, cough, heart, sugar and other life-saving drugs. The consignment of the medicines will be given to the government of Pakistan and it will be responsible to dispatch it to Afghanistan. It may be recalled that a delegation of the Afghan government led by its health minister had visited Pakistan, last month and had requested the provision of medicines on the humanitarian ground. Pakistan has been sending humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. On October 17, Pakistan dispatched 16 more truckloads of relief goods to Afghanistan as part of its ongoing efforts to avert any humanitarian crisis in the war-torn country.

Corruption breeds exploitation,
pilferage of money: UNODC

On International Anti-Corruption Day, remember that each and every one of us has a role to play in standing up for what is right, says UNODC Executive Director

DNA

NEW YORK: Ghada Waly, Executive Director of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has said every person has the right to justice and opportunity, to public services, and to a sustainable future. Corruption undermines every one of those rights, and more.

Corruption costs the world trillions of dollars, while enabling crime, exploitation and exclusion, endangering people and

planet, and compromising our recovery from the pandemic.

On International Anti-Corruption Day, let us remember that each and every one of us has a role to play in standing up for what is right.

You fight corruption when you refuse to pay or take a bribe, even when it is "business as usual"; when you report a corrupt act, even when it doesn't affect you; and when you play fair in sport, in business, and in life. The world's 1.8 billion young people have the most at stake,



and they have the perspective and conviction to find transformative solutions to corruption, and to hold leaders accountable. We must create opportunities to enable youth to fulfil their role as the future guardians of integrity. We at the UN Office on Drugs and Crime remain dedicated to our role in supporting countries to cooperate and take action through the UN Convention against Corruption. We are also engaging with allies in the public and private sectors, as well as in civil society, to promote transparency, integrity, and the rule of law.

By preventing corruption and returning stolen assets, we are unlocking resources for growth and new jobs, building resilience to future emergencies, empowering women and young people, and laying the foundations for a fairer future.

For our inclusive recovery, for our hopes to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and for the rights of everyone, let us all live up to our roles in saying No to Corruption.

US Consulate staff discusses
poverty alleviation with Minister

NAZIR H SIYAL

KARACHI: Engineer Abdul Bari Khan Patafi, Minister for Livestock and Fisheries, met with Eileen willingham, the Economic Officer in the US Consulate Karachi & Economic Specialist of Consulate Mehreen Kashif Ghiyas at Hotel PC Karachi on Wednesday. Secretary Livestock and Fisheries Sindh Qazi Ijaz Ahmed Mehesar and Director General Livestock Sindh Dr. Nazir Hussain Kalhoro were also present in the meeting. The delegation of US Consulate met with the Minister and his team to discuss betterment and development of the livestock and fisheries sector, poverty alleviation and the creation of training staff and financial standing/ working of the department. Provincial Minister Abdul Bari Khan Patafi expressed hope that these meetings would be helpful in taking further steps for betterment in his two departments and it will benefit the people of Sindh.

Indian troops
martyr three
Kashmiris

DNA

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism martyred three Kashmiri youth in Shopian district, today.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the troops martyred the youth during a cordon and search operation in Check-e-Cholan area of the district.

The troops also destroyed a residential house by using heavy weapons and chemical substance in the area. The operation continued till last reports came in. Meanwhile, the occupation authorities have suspended the internet service and sealed all entry and exit points of the area.

Media persons are not being allowed to conduct coverage of the military operation.

PML-N has
done laudable
work

DNA

MATIARI: PML-N Secretary-General Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said that his party had accomplished "unprecedented development work" during its tenure and "had the government not ended, the Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway would have been completed too."

Speaking at a lawyers' conference in Matiari, Sindh, Iqbal claimed that his party was sent packing as a result of a "rigged election" which, in turn, brought an incompetent government into power.

"To put the country on the path of development, the vote must be respected, and governments must be formed through free and fair elections," he stated.

According to Iqbal, the PML-N has had three finance ministers and the party does not have to "borrow" the services of a finance minister.

World urged
to pay
attention
to IIOJK

DNA

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference has urged the international community to pay attention to the grim situation of the territory and play role in settling the Kashmir dispute to save South Asia from a nuclear catastrophe. The APHC spokesman in a statement issued in Srinagar said Jammu and Kashmir is not India's internal matter but an internationally recognized disputed territory.

He said that the unresolved Kashmir dispute could provide the spark to light South Asia's nuclear fuse.

The spokesman warned that ignoring Kashmir dispute is not in anyone's interest and simmering situation of IIOJK needs immediate attention of the world community. He said that the UN should intervene to resolve Kashmir dispute to avoid nuclear war in South Asia. The APHC spokesman pointed out that a just resolution of the lingering dispute is imperative for ensuring permanent peace and stability in the south Asian region. "The UN must send a high level fact-finding mission to probe human rights violations in IIOJK. The world must not remain indifferent to what is happening in Kashmir," he added.

OGRA
decreases
RLNG price
by \$3 per
MMBTU

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Wednesday notified the revised price of Re-gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) on networks of the SSGC and SNGPL for the current month, decreasing the commodity price by \$3 per MMBTU. According to the notification, the authority decreased the price of imported RLNG by \$3.0490 per Million British Thermal Unit (MMBTU) on the system of Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC). It fixed the commodity's distribution rate at \$12.3769 per MMBTU for the month of December, which was available at \$15.4259 during the last month. Similarly, the distribution price of per MMBTU RLNG witnessed \$3.0553 decline on the SNGPL system after the authority determined the rate at \$12.6238 for the current month, which was \$15.6791 in November. Meanwhile, Minister for Energy Hammad Azhar while giving an update on the winter-LNG supply situation said the commodity was still available in abundance for the power sector on merit order.

"Fertilizer plants that are normally shut due to non-supply during winters [are] enjoying uninterrupted supply this year. Export sector [is] getting stable supply," he said on his twitter handle. — APP

66.8pc citizens believe govt's
accountability drive is partial

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Transparency International (TI) on Wednesday said the majority of Pakistanis (66.8%) believes that the present government's accountability drive is partial. According to the TI Pakistan announcement, the National Corruption Perception Survey 2021 has revealed that police remain the most corrupt sector, the judiciary was seen as second most corrupt, tendering and contracting the third most corrupt while health has climbed to become the fourth most corrupt since the last NCPS 2011. According to the Judicial Statistics of

Pakistan 2020 report by the National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee, there are 46,698 cases pending in the Supreme Court and 1,772,990 cases pending in the District Judiciary. A vast majority (85.9%) of people consider the federal government's self-accountability to be unsatisfactory, the TI report said.

It said Pakistanis continued to believe that the corruption in the government sector is high. The police (41.4%), judiciary (17.4%) and contracting/tendering (10.3%) are the three most corrupt sectors according to the survey, while contracts of roads (59.8%), cleanliness and garbage collection (13.8%), access to water (13.3%) and the drainage system (13.1%) are top the list of public services for which people have to pay bribes to get access to.

The three most important causes of corruption, according to the NCPS 2021, are weak accountability (51.9%), the greed of powerful people (29.3%) and low salaries (18.8%).

As measures to reduce corruption, 40.1% of Pakistanis say an increase in stringent punishments for corruption cases, 34.6% Pakistanis say accountability of public officers by expediting NAB's handling of corruption cases, and 25.3% say a complete ban on those convicted of corruption from holding public office, are key to combat corruption in Pakistan.

Pakistani nation
remembers hero
of Battle of Chamb

DNA

RAWALPINDI: In the 1971 War, Gen Iftekhar Janjua was divisional commander of 23 Infantry Division. He was assigned the task of capturing Chhamb, a strategically important town in Kashmir, which turned out decisive victory for Pakistan on the Kashmir front of 1971.

The fighting around Chhamb was fierce and took toll on both the advancing Pakistani troops and the fiercely resisting Indian regiments.

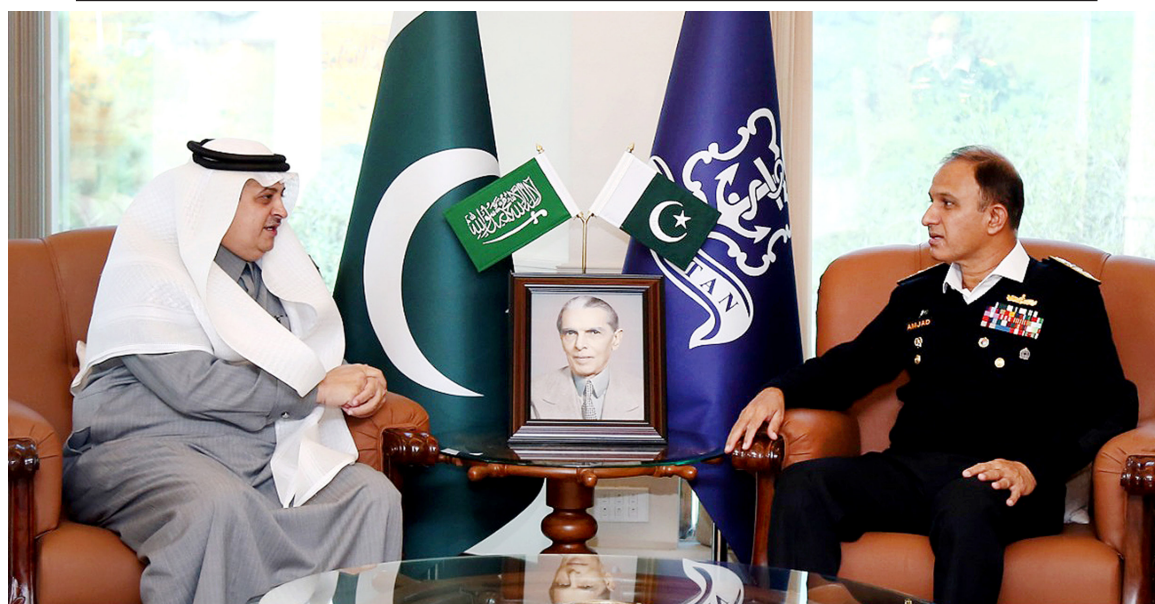
Although Gen Iftekhar Janjua was advised by high command to try to take Chhamb from the south, General Janjua said it was a better to take Mandiala bridge his troops would outflank the Indians eventually forcing them out of Chhamb and all the area west of Tawa. After intense fighting Mandiala was captured, then Pallanwala and Chak Pandit, and on 9 December 1971, the first Pakistani troops entered the surrounding area around Chhamb under the personal supervision of General Iftekhar Janjua. In the middle of fighting around Chhamb, on 9 December 1971, General Janjua was martyred when his OH-13S (Sioux) light helicopter, in which he was



travelling on to coordinate and position his troops, was attacked.

His helicopter was shot down by an Indian shoulder-mounted weapon. He was badly burned and evacuated to the Combined Military Hospital Kharian Cantt. Iftekhar Khan Janjua Road is named after him in Rawalpindi, Cantt. Iftekhar Janjua was a brilliant and charismatic leader who inspired his troops to continue to fight.

It was leading from the front for which General Iftekhar Janjua is remembered even today by the troops who served in 23 Division during the Battle of Chhamb. It was this quality which enabled him to arrive at a realistic appraisal of the actual situation without undue reliance on exaggerated reports from lower echelons and successfully take Chhamb.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi exchanging views with Ambassador of Saudi Arabia, Nawaf Bin Saeed Al Maliki. — DNA

Committed to make Pak 'Islamic Welfare State'

The government will provide interest-free loans and technical training to two-million families of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under Kamyab Jawan Programme

BUREAU REPORT

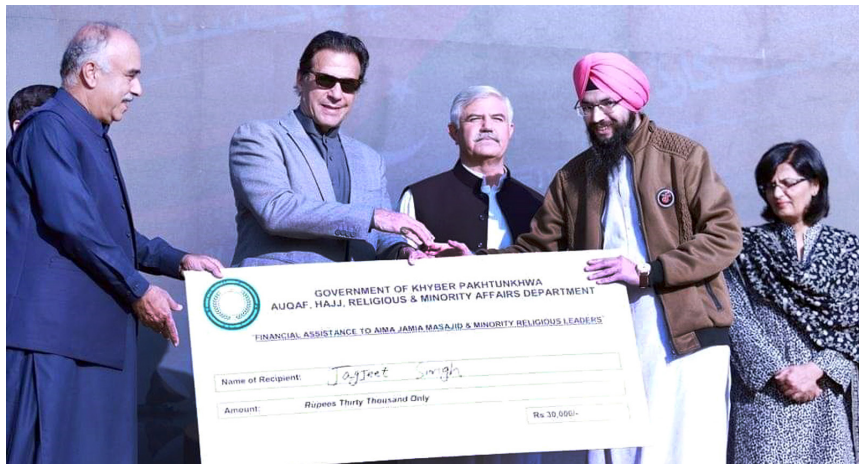
PESHAWAR: Prime Minister Imran Khan has expressed determination to make Pakistan an Islamic welfare state on model of Riasat e Madina and as per vision of Quaid-e-Azam. He was addressing a ceremony after launching 'Kaamyab Pakistan Program' in Peshawar on Wednesday. He said under the program, the government will provide interest-free loans and technical training to two-million families of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Prime Minister Imran Khan said the government is also launching another important program 'Ehsas Ration Riayat' to provide relief to deserving families in the wake of the current price hike. Under the program, three basic commodities including wheat, cooking oil/ghee

and pulses will be provided at subsidized rates to more than twenty million families across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Imran Khan directed the Governor, Chief Minister, Ministers and MPs to create awareness amongst the deserving families about Ehsas Ration Program for maximum registration.

The Prime Minister Imran Khan lauded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government for the universal health insurance scheme for the whole population in the province.

He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government was the pioneer of the scheme and now Punjab and Balochistan are also following in its footsteps.

Prime Minister Imran Khan said the government is providing merit-based scholarships to six point three million students across the country. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister



Mahmood Khan said Ehsas Ration program has been launched to provide relief to the deserving families.

He said government has decided to increase the monthly honorarium of Khatheeps up to twenty-one thousand rupees.