



# Islamabad POST

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### New German foreign minister warns Russia against invasion

Detailed News On Page-07

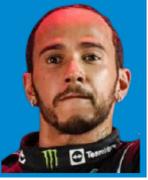
### No place for the ISIS in Afghanistan

Detailed News On Page-01



### History beckons and threatens for Hamilton

Detailed News On Page-06



## Briefs

### PM Khan for reforms in all sectors

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has said the government is committed to implement long term reforms in all sectors in order to lead Pakistan to become a regional leader. During an interactive session with the officers participating in the 115th National Management Course, he pointed out that our government inherited huge fiscal debts due to corruption and malpractices of the previous regimes. He said despite Covid-19 pandemic, Pakistan managed its economy with success.

### Zardari's statement 'unfortunate'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PML-President and Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly by Shahbaz Sharif on Thursday condemned PPP supremo Asif Ali Zardari's statement about Nawaz Sharif and termed it "unfortunate." Taking to Twitter, Shahbaz wrote that Nawaz had a firm commitment towards the betterment of the country, something which cannot be questioned. "Zardari sahib's statement about Mian Nawaz Sharif is unfortunate. Mian Sahib's unwavering commitment to Pakistan has always been unquestionable," he wrote. He continued: "Zardari sb. knows the conditions in which MNS had to go abroad.

### Pak did not aid Afghan factions

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Security Advisor (NSA) Moeed Yusuf, in an interview, said Pakistan did not aid and abet anyone in Afghanistan and termed the policy employed by the United States and others in the war-torn country as a failure. Speaking to BBC's Stephen Sackur on HARDtalk, Moeed, objecting to the host's opening remarks, said "there was a policy employed by the US and others who were there in Afghanistan and it was a failing policy."

## First case of Omicron suspected

### Sindh Minister says authorities "suspect the case to be of Omicron variant due to the virus' behavior"

NAZIR SIYAL / DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan has detected its first 'suspected' case of the Omicron variant in Karachi, said the provincial health minister on Thursday. Sindh Health Minister Azra Fazal Pechuho said the authorities "suspect the case to be of the Omicron variant due to the virus' behaviour". "The genome sequencing has not been done as of now, but we suspect it to be the Omicron variant due to the manner in which the virus is behaving". She added that the suspected Omicron-affected patient is a 57-year old woman from the provincial capital. "The Omicron variant spreads quickly, but recent reports from South Africa suggest that the variant does not cause serious illness or a high number of deaths," added the provincial health minister. A spokesperson for the Aga Khan University Hospital confirmed the development and said they had "received the first patient suspected of having Covid-19 Omicron variant". "We are awaiting the results of the final (genome sequencing) confirmatory test, which will take a few days and have reported the suspected patient to the health department." He added that the patient has been discharged. "Our current COVID-19 prevention and management protocols are adequate for the treatment of the virus," the hospital spokesperson assured.

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### Omicron cases so far 'mostly mild': EU

NEWS DESK

THE HAGUE: The European Medicines Agency (EMA) said Thursday that cases of Omicron so far appear to be "mostly mild", but cautioned it was still investigating whether the variant could cause severe disease. "Cases appear to be mostly mild, however, we need to gather more evidence to determine whether the spectrum of disease severity caused by Omicron is different (to) that of all the variants that have been circulating so far," said Marco Cavaleri, EMA's head of biological health threats and vaccines strategy. The highly-mutated variant sparked global panic when it emerged last month, prompting fears it could be more contagious, cause more severe illness or evade vaccines. The World Health Organisation said this week early signs suggested it might indeed be more infectious. But the makers of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine said that the third dose of their job offered effective protection against the variant and that it was developing an Omicron-specific shot that should be ready in March 2022.

## MBS visits Kuwait for first time since ties' resumption

### Prince Mohammed and Sheikh Tamim reviewed relations between their two countries and ways to enhance cooperation

CENTRELINE REPORT

RIYADH: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Wednesday arrived in the Qatari capital, Doha, on the third leg of his official tour of neighboring Gulf countries. Prince Mohammed and Sheikh Tamim reviewed relations between their two countries and ways to enhance cooperation in various fields, as well as the latest regional and international developments. The crown prince and emir signed the minutes of the Saudi-Qatari Coordination Council meeting at the end of the session. Sheikh Tamim said the prince's visit will deepen the strong ties, especially in light of the conditions in the region. "The relations of brotherhood and cooperation between Qatar and Saudi Arabia are based on solid foundations of a common history and destiny," he said in a tweet.



Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov calls on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force. - DNA

### Ambassador of Azerbaijan calls on Air Chief

### Khazar Farhadov commended the professionalism of PAF

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force in his office. During the meeting, both the dignitaries discussed matters of professional and mutual interest. Khazar Farhadov commended the professionalism of PAF and acknowledged its rising indigenous capacity in aviation industry. The Air Chief said that Pakistan and Azerbaijan had longstanding religious, cultural and historical bonds which were manifested through strong ties between the Air Forces of two countries. The Air Chief highlighted that both the countries enjoy cordial relations and reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral cooperation between the two brotherly countries.

## Economy is growing fast, says Ch Fawad

### Information Minister says Sindh govt has nothing to do with people's welfare



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhary Fawad Hussain says the economy of the country is growing rapidly despite Corona pandemic due to prudent and effective policies of the government.

Continued on Page 06

### PML-N condemns 'torture' of party workers

BUREAU REPORT

KARACHI: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday condemned the alleged torture of his party representatives including, former federal minister Ahsan Iqbal, by security personnel, urging the authorities to investigate the matter. Ahsan and the PML-N workers had arrived in Karachi's Nazimabad No 7 earlier in the day to perform

Continued on Page 06

## Electricity prices increased

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Thursday increased the power tariff by Rs4.74 per unit on account of fuel charges adjustment (FCA) for October 2021. The FCA for October 2021 will be charged with the bill of December 2021, which will be paid by all consumer categories of distribution companies, except for lifeline customers of all ex-WAPDA distribution companies (XWDISCOs). The Rs4.74 increase will put a burden of Rs60 billion on consumers, including a 17% GST. It is pertinent to mention that 10.98 billion units of electricity were sold during October.

## No place for ISIS in Afghanistan, say Taliban

DNA

KABUL: The Afghan interim government has arrested over 670 militants of Daesh/ISIS, also known as the Islamic State in Khorasan province (ISKP or ISIS-K), during the last three months, the Taliban spokesperson said, adding that there is no place for these terrorists in Afghanistan. During an exclusive interview with Anadolu Agency, the interim government spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said that 25 hideouts of the terrorist group have also been destroyed in Kabul and Jalalabad, the capital of eastern Nangarhar province. "Daesh is

no longer a big threat in Afghanistan. It was a small group that has now been dismantled in Kabul and Jalalabad," Mujahid claimed. He accused the former government of Ashraf Ghani of strengthening Daesh/ISIS in Kabul and Nangarhar province in order to use them against the Taliban. Mujahid is also the acting deputy minister of culture and

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Only dialogue can help resolve Kashmir issue - Page 03

ICCI chief calls for making conducive policies for PWDs - Page 04

Report shows how Israel killed truth of Gaza protests - Page 05

Iran sticks to stance as nuclear talks resume - Page 06

New German foreign minister warns Russia over Ukraine - Page 07

Divvy Film Festival inaugurated at PNCA - Page 08

## Uyghur Tribunal accuses China of genocide

### Reading the tribunal's judgement, Sir Geoffrey said there was "no evidence of mass killings" in Xinjiang, but he said that the alleged efforts to prevent births amounted to genocidal intent

AGENCIES

BEIJING: China has committed genocide against the Uyghur people in Xinjiang, an unofficial UK-based tribunal has found. The Uyghur Tribunal cited birth control and sterilisation measures allegedly carried out by the state against the Uyghurs as the primary reason for reaching its conclusion on Thursday. Sir Geoffrey Nice, a prominent British barrister who chaired the tribunal hearings, said its panel was satisfied China had carried out "a deliberate, systematic and concerted policy" to bring about "long-term reduction of Uyghur and other ethnic minority populations". He added that the panel believed senior officials including the Chinese president Xi Jinping bore "primary responsibility" for the abuses against Muslim minorities in the Xinjiang region. The tribunal's panel was made up of lawyers and academics. Its findings have no le-

## China slams nations over Olympic boycott

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: China has warned countries who have announced a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics that they "will pay the price for their mistaken acts". The US, UK, Australia and Canada will not send government representatives to the Games because of concerns over China's human rights record. This includes widespread allegations of abuse against the Uyghur minority group. France, host of the next Summer Games, said it would not join the boycott. The Winter Olympics are set to take place

in Beijing in February. "The United States, Britain and Australia have used the Olympics platform for political manipulation," Wang Wenbin, a spokesperson at the Chinese foreign ministry, said. Chinese state media claimed on Wednesday that Beijing "never planned to invite US and Western politicians who hype the 'boycott' topic". The US was the first country to announce a diplomatic boycott, with Australia, Canada and the UK following suit. The move by these countries stops short of preventing athletes from attending - something which has been welcomed by International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach.

gal force and are not binding on ministers, but its organisers said at the outset they intended to add to the body of evidence around the allegations against China and reach an independent conclusion on the question of genocide. The Chinese government denies all accusations of human rights abuses in Xinjiang. Responding to the tribunal's ruling on Thursday, a spokesman told the BBC the body was a "pseudo tribunal" and a "political tool used by a few anti-China elements to deceive and mislead the public". Reading the tribunal's judgement, Sir Geoffrey said there was "no evidence of mass killings" in Xinjiang, but he said that the alleged efforts to prevent births amounted to genocidal intent. The panel also said it had found evidence of crimes against humanity, torture, and sexual violence against the Uyghur people. Speaking to the BBC after the judgment, Sir Iain Duncan Smith, the former Conservative Party leader and co-chair of the

Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, said it was time for the UK government to accuse China of genocide. "The British government said the evidence needed to be assessed by a competent court, well it doesn't get more competent than this," he said. "The government now needs to stop messing around. The genocide taking place in Xinjiang has got to dominate our relationship with China." Conservative MP Nus Ghani called the conclusion of the tribunal "groundbreaking". "This tribunal was set up to the highest legal standards and the evidence that that was put forward today shows that there is enough proof beyond reasonable doubt that there was an intent to commit genocide," she told the BBC. "What is particularly troubling is the evidence that this genocide is in particular targeted at women, and focused on preventing births." The Chinese state has been accused of crimes against humanity and genocide in Xinjiang.

# PRA, FCCI liaison stressed to solve tax related problems

PRA is comparatively a new entity which was passing through its initial evolutionary phase and hence there was room for improvement in its laws and operation etc.

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Close liaison between Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) and Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) is imperative to resolve tax related problems with mutual consultation, said Mr. Usman Jappa additional Commissioner PRA Faisalabad.

Addressing an awareness session in FCCI, he said that PRA is comparatively a new entity which was passing through its initial evolutionary phase and hence there was room for improvement in its laws and operation etc. Contradicting the allegation of double taxation, he said that earlier the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) was collecting income tax, GST and custom duty on behalf of the federal government in addition to Provincial tax on services. However, after 18th amendment PRA was constituted to

collect the tax on services. He clarified that Pakistan Revenue Automation Limited (PRAL) was collecting both Federal and Provincial taxes as the domain of Federal and Provincial has been clearly identified. He said that PRA was working for the last few years but still there was a gap between PRA and the business community. He said that an awareness session has been arranged to redress the genuine grievances and reservations of the business community. He said that he is always available and would like to revisit FCCI to settle down the remaining problems of the business community. Earlier Senior Vice President FCCI Mr. Imran Mahmood Sheikh said that Government was trying its optimum best to facilitate the business community and Pakistan Single Window was an innovative step to provide all facilities to the business community under one roof but the taxation at Federal

and Provincial level will further complicate their issues. He said that chambers across the country are regulated through the Directorate General of Trade Organizations by the Ministry of Commerce. "We use a uniform and set pattern for the membership of all active tax payers", he said and added that if any addition and deletion is required in this procedure, PRA must contact Ministry of Commerce through Punjab Government. Mr. Qaiser Iqbal of PRA gave a detailed presentation while Mr. Zeeshan, Mr. Muhammad Fazil, Chaudhary Khadim Hussain Maan and Mian Abdul Waheed took part in the question answer session. Rana Abrar Ahmad Chairman FCCI standing committee on Liaison with PRA offered vote of thanks while Vice President Rana Fayyaz Ahmad presented FCCI shield to Mr. Usman Jappa additional commissioner PRA.



KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah received Dr. Salem Al Khaddeim Al Dhanhani, Consul General of UAE in Karachi. On the occasion, the term of three years of CG UAE completed in Karachi. CM Sindh extended his gratitude by praising his efforts in strengthening ties between Pakistan and UAE during three years services. – DNA

## KMU reviews curriculum

PESHAWAR: Khyber Medical University (KMU), Peshawar has taken an initiative to revamp curriculum and assessment of nursing, rehabilitation and allied health sciences in line with the modern healthcare system. In this regard, a meeting of owners and heads of public and private institutions affiliated with KMU was held where Secretary Higher Education Department (HED) Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Daud Khan was the chief guest.

On this occasion, vice chancellor Prof Dr Zia ul Haq, Registrar Prof Dr Muhammad Saleem Gandapur, dean of basic medical sciences Prof Dr Jawad Ahmed, dean allied health sciences Prof Dr Haider Darain, dean clinical sciences Prof Dr Lal Muhammad Khattak, Chairman central curriculum committee Prof Dr Zia-ul-Islam, director IHPE & R Dr Brikhna Jamil, director QEC Syeda Asiya Bukhari and heads of various institutions, faculty and administrative staff were also present in large number. – APP

## Over 4.7m people vaccinated in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: Over 4.7 million (4,711,677) people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the district. District Health Officer Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Thursday that 3,067,702 citizens were injected the first dose, and 1,580,106 the second dose of vaccine. He said that 38,405 health workers were also given the first dose while 25,464 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As of now 239,500 first doses and 159,666 second doses were in the stock in Faisalabad. He said that 37 vaccination centers and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad where registered people were being vaccinated. – APP

# FF Steel playing vital role in labour welfare

Mr. Zarak Khattak informed the Minister that being one of the most responsible manufacturer in Pakistan whether being environmental protection or quality product

DNA

PESHAWAR: FF Steel playing vital role in labour welfare and become a leading company to ensure 100% compliance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Social Security Act 2021. The efforts made by FF Steel Management in this regard are highly commendable. This was stated by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Labour, Culture, Human Rights and Parliamentary affairs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mr. Shaukat Ali Yousafzai at a new enrollment ceremony at FF Steel Head office Hayatabad Industrial Estate Peshawar. Mr. Shaukat Yousafzai mentioned that industrialization process will yield results only with labour welfare and management with new innovations. He appreciated FF Steel's new initiatives taken in the field of Industrial relations, expansion of networking and capacity building of workers. Earlier chairman FF Steel Mr. Nauman Wazir and CEO FF Steel Mr. Zarak K. Khattak received the Minister and briefed about activities and achievements in last more than three decades under the slogan of Stronger and Safer Pakistan. Mr. Zarak Khattak briefed the Minister about educational and motivational initiatives taken by FF Steel for the labour, students and trainers to further strengthen the steel industry in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular and the country in large. The Minister was informed that FF Steel is the fastest growing steel organization in Pakistan with two manufacturing plants one in Lahore and the other in Peshawar and

corporate offices in all provincial capitals. The company is now diversifying towards exploring copper export business and steel re-bars export to Central Asian States. The company will hold its IPO in January 2022 which will further open its avenues towards diversification in new areas.

Mr. Zarak Khattak informed the Minister that being one of the most responsible manufacturer in Pakistan whether being environmental protection or quality product, FF Steel has maintained its reputation in adapting best human resource practices in Pakistan. A special ceremony to celebrate the implementation of KP Social Security Act 2021 was arranged at FF Steel head office to commemorate the KPSSI for its efforts. The ceremony was also attended by Vice Commissioner ESS Ms. Shahana Wazir, DG ESS Mr. Anwar Khan and SSO Mr. Maqbool Wazir apart from senior officers from KPEZDMC and FF Steel. Mr. Khurram Shahzad FF Chief Human Resource Officer briefed the Minister about FF Steel compliance under new social security act 2021 along with other steps taken for the benefit of workers and their dependents.

Later on Mr. Shaukat Ali Yousafzai distributed Social Security cards among the workers at FF Steel. He commended FF Steel's top management on their determination of adapting best human resource practices and employee centric policies and urged other industries to follow the same model for the betterment in standard of living of workers and labour.



## Sizing unit sealed, five arrested

FAISALABAD: The anti-smog teams, during an operation, sealed a sizing unit and arrested five persons including boiler operator and three brick kilns owners here Thursday.

Deputy Director Environment Waseem Ahsan said that the teams checked sizing units in Punnu Chowk, Ghulam Muhammad Abad and found that rubbish, plastic, garbage and other items were being burnt in the boiler which causing pollution. They got register cases against two persons with Ghulam Muhammad Abad police station. They also handed over owners of Sunrise brick kiln, Ilyas brick kiln in Chak No 70-JB Mansooran and Dhillion brick kiln in Chak No 51-JB to police over running brick kilns without zigzag technology. The teams also imposed a fine of Rs 9,450 on drivers of smoke emitting vehicles. – APP

## PHP conducts annual fire practice

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: In compliance of directions of Addl: IG PHP Shahid Hanif, SSP Punjab Highway Patrol conducted the annual fire practice at Police line District T.T. Singh. While talking to PHP Personnel, he said that the purpose of fire practice is to enable all the PHP personnel to handle the weapon in an effective and efficient manner. Weapon handling is very crucial for every uniform officer. Every police officer has been taught to assemble and disassemble the weapon. He said that the activity is being supervised by DSP T.T. Singh Mahr Saeed, DSP Faisalabad Malik Muhammad Amin and District Elite officers. Moreover, PHP Personnel are taught about Normal safety precautions to remain safe while handling the weapon. This exercise is very healthy and productive for all the participants, he added. However, talking about the patrolling mechanism to curb the crime, SSP PHP said that hotspots policy is being followed to reduce the crime. The time and place of occurrence of crime is most crucial to identify the crime nature and pattern in that particular area.

# Govt determined for journalist colony

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar is determined to fulfill his promise to establish a journalist colony in Faisalabad and in this regard the departmental actions are being taken fastly. This was stated by Divisional Commissioner Zahid Hussain while inspecting the proposed land for the journalist colony in FDA City Sargodha road. Additional Director General FDA Rizwan Nazir briefed the Divisional Commissioner regarding the location of the land, progress in departmental affairs and related records and informed that 221 kanals of land adjoining the X block is available which is proposed for setting up of Journalist Colony. Director State Management Sohail Maqsood Pinnu, Directors Town Planning Mehr Ayub, Asma Mohsin, Deputy Director State Management Mian Asad Majed and other FDA officials, the press club represented by Group Leader Shahid Ali, Coordinator Journalist Colony Rana Iqbal Hassan Khan and others media representatives were also present on

the occasion. The Divisional Commissioner reviewed the present situation of the proposed lands from different angles, obtained details of the departmental measures taken by the FDA and directed that all administrative arrangements be made for the successful completion of this important project. Prepare a workable summary by removing the obstacles which will be approved by the Chief Minister of Punjab. He said that some encroachments near the proposed site for the journalist colony would be evicted and illegal occupants would be evicted and designing would be done according to the future requirements of the journalist colony keeping in view the requirements. A strategy and formula will be worked out in consultation with the Press Club representatives so that all journalists can benefit from the list. The Divisional Commissioner assured the Press Club representatives that concerted efforts would be made to address their long standing demand and he would personally oversee the project for the sustainable development of the journalist colony. Group

Leader Shahid Ali thanked Divisional Commissioner Zahid Hussain for inspecting the proposed site for the journalist colony and said that he had mobilized the concerned departments to fulfill the promise made by the Punjab Chief Minister to set up a journalist colony. Hopefully, this long-held dream will soon be embarrassingly interpreted. **RED should achieve its targets** Secretary Archives Punjab Saqib Manan has directed that the daily target of Reach Every Door Corona Vaccination Phase II should be achieved 100% and Schools and Transport should be focused in this regard. He was presided over the highlevel meeting to review the RED campaign at DC office. Deputy Commissioner Ali Shahzad gave briefing on the the targets and achievement. ADCs Muhammad Khalid, Qaiser Abbas Rind, CEO DHA Dr. Kashif Mehmood, ACs Sahibzada Muhammad Yousaf, Mansoor Qazi, CEO DEA Ali Ahmad Siyan, Secretary DRTA Muhammad Sarwar and other officers from health and education authority were also present.

# Experts call for coping with NTSC

Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram, Executive Director, CGSS presented an Overview of Learnings and Outcomes from CGSS-HSF joint events on Non-Traditional Security Challenges

DNA

LAHORE: Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad & Hanns Seidel Foundation Pakistan in collaboration with Department of Political Science and IR & Regional Integration Centre, University of the Punjab, Lahore organized a One Day University Workshop on "Non-traditional Security Challenges" in Lahore. The event commenced with welcome remarks by Ms. Meher Ghaswani, Head of Program Management, Hanns Seidel Foundation Pakistan. She stated that today's workshop on NTSC aims to discuss nontraditional security challenges being faced by Pakistan, amongst academia and policy experts. With an increasing population and depleting resources, it is important for the policy experts and youth to come up with solutions together in addressing such challenges. Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram, Executive Director, CGSS presented an Overview of Learnings and Outcomes from CGSS-HSF joint events on Non-Traditional Security Challenges. He stated that CGSS in collaboration with HSF has organized almost six



high-level national events on NTS issues. We are working through comprehensive research assessment on NTS issues amid policy recommendations to compose a robust policy plan. Moreover, we are working to promote awareness and constructively add into the curriculum development on Non-traditional security challenges through extensive research. He mentioned that we have been successful in developing profound understanding and analysis and bridging gap between academicians and stakeholders via providing them an integrated platform to discuss relevant subject. First session of the Workshop com-

menced with the speech of Prof. Dr. Iram Khalid, Chairperson, Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of the Punjab, Lahore who discussed "Evolution of Traditional Security to Non-Traditional Security". She stated that the fundamental goal of NTS should be to overcome the dichotomy between traditional and non-traditional security paradigms. Despite the maturation of scholarship and policy attention on NTS issues, however, pervasive questions remain about the relationship between non-traditional and traditional security sectors, what or whom is being secured, and the conceptual

and practical value of "securitising" more generally. Challenges in the food, energy, environmental, and health sectors, among others, threaten the lives of countless vulnerable communities and the future progress upon which societies across the world depend. The charge of NTS is to explore these issues coherently and in ways that can add value to the policymaking and civil society communities. Dr. Tahira, Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Sialkot, Sialkot discussed "Impact of climate change on water security: Policy Recommendations". She explained the interrelationship between climate change and water. She stated that planning is needed in this regard. "We need to enhance and strategize our water policy. We need to opt for precautionary measures so that the risk of spreading infections can be reduced". She stated that through usage of technology and enforcement of legislation, things can be improved. Dr. Rehana Saeed Hashmi, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science & IR, University of the Punjab Lahore discussed Climate Change driven migration and national security.

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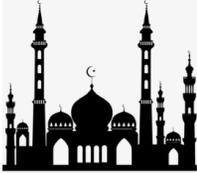
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## SERVICES



## Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	05:32 am
Zohr.....	12:00 pm
Asr.....	03:22 pm
Maghrib.....	05:00 pm
Isha.....	06:28 pm



## Hotels &amp; Restaurants

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



## Airlines

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RDA.....	5555864
TMA.....	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3



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## Islamabad Metropolitan

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

## Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
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## Only dialogue can help resolve Kashmir issue

Mr Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Foreign Minister of Pakistan, and Patron of the Institute commended the effort of the Institute for this initiative

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "Kashmir has kept the peace of South Asia hostage... We hope for India to have such a government that can resolve the conflict through logic and sanity. It is the only problem between India and Pakistan. Till last minute, Pakistan will try to resolve the conflict through dialogue," stated the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Mr Imran Khan in his inaugural address at the first-ever mega-event by the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), "Islamabad Conclave-2021." While speaking at the occasion, the Prime Minister stated that Pakistan's peace overtures towards India have been considered a weakness by the Modi government. He went on to say that dialogue is the best solution for conflict reso-



lution. He was of the view that the RSS and the Hindutva ideology is a tragedy for the Indians themselves and this has led to unprecedented marginalisation in the country. He highlighted that regional connectivity is important and without peace in Afghanistan, this cannot materialise. He termed the CPEC a great

opportunity for Pakistan and reiterated that Pakistan does not want to be a part of any bloc as the new Cold War has been intensifying between major powers. He emphasised the need for peace in Afghanistan and the urgent need for humanitarian aid for the Afghan people. Talking about the challenges of Climate Change, he

stated that Pakistan has undertaken great initiatives in this regard and is one of the vulnerable countries in this respect. He commended the effort made by the ISSI in promoting intellectual activities like the Islamabad Conclave 2021. Mr Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Foreign Minister of Pakistan, and Patron of the Institute com-

mended the effort of the Institute for this initiative. He shed light on the global and regional landscape and outlined Pakistan's vision for peace. He went on to say that we are witnessing a pivotal moment in history, as the world and international order is undergoing a profound transformation. Foreign Minister further

explained that Globalisation and multilateralism have been undercut by unilateralism and there is a return to nationalistic agendas. The Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan poses the threat of transforming into a nuclear flashpoint, he said. Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director General ISSI, in his introductory remarks gave a briefing about the working of the Institute and the ambit of its activities. He highlighted the Institute's effort regarding the dissemination of Pakistan's narrative and the efforts towards bridging the gap between policymakers and academics. While highlighting the theme of the Islamabad Conclave, "A Peaceful and Prosperous South Asia," Ambassador Chaudhry outlined the objectives of the Islamabad Conclave especially, for narrative building, global engagement, bridging the gaps and tripod security paradigm.

## 'Universal Human Rights Day' celebrated

ISLAMABAD: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) secretariat of National Assembly in collaboration with Parliamentarians Commission for Human Rights (PCHR) organized an event to commemorate "Universal Human Rights Day". The event was chaired by MNA Riaz Fatyana. Shafique Chaudhary Executive Director Parliamentarians Commission for Human Rights in his welcome statement said, "United Nations adopted the universal declaration of Human Rights on 10th December 1948. The day is celebrated to remember the promises made to achieve common human rights standards for all people and all nations", said a press release issued here on Thursday. On this occasion, Riaz Fatyana stated "Human Rights are at the heart of agenda 2030 and are driven by progress on all SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). A number of efforts have been made both at National & International levels to provide and protect fundamental Human Rights. However, many people, both in developing and developed are still deprived of them." He further highlighted the Sri Lankan mob attack in which Mr. Priyantha diyawadana was deprived of basic right to life, which our constitution promises under article 9 - considered as the violation of basic human rights. - APP

## 5,489 vehicles fined over wrong parking

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) fined 5,489 vehicles over wrong parking during ongoing year and also impounded most of them in police stations creating problems in smooth flow of traffic. Following directions of Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Muhammad Omar Khan, Islamabad Traffic Police reviewed arrangements to ensure smooth flow of traffic in the city, a news release on Thursday said. The SSP (Traffic) directed all Zonal DSPs to ensure implementation on traffic laws through courteous attitude with citizens. He said that policy of 'Phele Salam- Phir Kalam' should be adopted with the people and briefed them about traffic laws in a polite way. The Superintendent of Police (Traffic) said that it is the right of pedestrian to use footpath and no parking would be allowed there. He said that vehicles should be parked at lots specified at shopping centers while awareness campaign has been launched to educate those citizens coming for shopping activities there. Omar Khan said that it is our top priority to ensure convenience for road users by maintaining traffic discipline and every possible effort would be made for the purpose.

## Vehicular emission contributes 43% to air pollution

ISLAMABAD: Meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change was presided by Senator Seema Ezedi, Chairperson Committee at Environmental Protection Agency's Conference Room. The Committee discussed in detail the alarming situation of smog, air quality monitoring mechanism and preventive measures taken by the ministry of Climate Change in this regard. The Climate Change Committee was briefed about the overall environmental situation of the country. Secretary Climate Change and DG EPA informed the Committee that the main causes of the air pollution are industrial units, vehicles and brick kilns emissions. For the eradication of air pollution difference measures have been taken. The committee was informed that in Federal Capital out of 63 brick kilns, 20 have installed pollution control technology. The Committee was informed that 43 percent of air pollution was caused by vehicular emission and in Islamabad daily around 4 lakh vehicles move on Islamabad Expressway. These issues have prompted the Government to take strict action which includes its commitment of conversion of 30 percent of all transport to cleaner and greener electric vehicles. The standing committee also stressed on the need for developing enabling environment for switching to EV by incentivizing users and also unanimously recommended that public vehicles of the educational institutions should be converted to electric vehicles. Senator Taj Haider informed the committee that currently Karachi is facing worst pollution problems. He said that focus should be developed on how to recycle the pollutants. He also stressed that there should be a mechanism for plastic recycling which is being used worldwide. Senator Faisal Javed said that Prime Minister of Pakistan took the challenge of the environmental issue of Pakistan and did a tremendous job which is being appreciated by international community. - DNA

## Shafqat Mahmood meets Egyptian Education Minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education, Professional Training, National Heritage and Culture, Shafqat Mahmood, held a bilateral meeting with Egyptian Education Minister Prof. Khaled Abdel Ghaffar on the sidelines of 14th General Conference of ICESCO and 2nd Edition of Global Forum on Higher Education taking place in Cairo, Egypt. Shafqat Mahmood thanked the Egyptian Higher Education Minister

for hosting the conference. According to a press release on Thursday, it was decided to review bilateral cooperation in the sector of Higher Education & Research with further enhancement of students and faculty exchanges as well as possibility of establishing a scholarly Pakistan Chair in Al-Azhar University. Both sides agreed to work-out and share best practices with special focus on faculty development for enhancement of quality of education. Mr. Sajid Bilal, Pakistan Ambassador to Egypt was also present.

## Ending corruption responsibility of State, society': President Alvi

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday, terming corruption an impediment to the country's growth, said it was the collective responsibility of all tiers of the State and society to ensure its eradication. "Strict laws, effective prosecution, and prompt dispensation of justice besides societal pressure are the important factors in checking corruption," he said in his address at the seminar on 'Corruption Free Pakistan: Pride of Nation', held here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. The event organized by National Accountability Bureau (NAB) was held in connection with the International Anti-Corruption Day aimed at creating awareness among the masses to fight corruption in society. President Alvi said allowing greed to take over morality results in the adoption of corrupt practices and put a detrimental impact on



society. He condemned the abuse of entrusted power for private gains and emphasized self-accountability to eliminate corruption. The president lauded NAB for taking action against corruption, however, pointed out that the efforts of the anti-corruption watchdog alone could not prove effective unless supported by all segments of society. He stressed the respective roles of parliament and ex-

ecutive in making strict laws and their implementation to check corruption. A combined action can eradicate the menace of corruption from the country, he added. He also laid emphasis on prompt decisions by the judiciary in the cases of corruption because delays caused dispensation of justice. Dr Alvi said the pressure of society, and religious and spiritual beliefs also helped a person not get deviated from

the righteous path. He said media, through whistle-blowing about corruption, could play a positive role, however stressed that it should be about the actual exposure of fraud rather than pursuing out-of-context journalism. The president said Pakistan was taking effective steps against corruption and appreciated NAB for making a huge recovery of Rs 821 billion. Chairman NAB Justice (ret'd) Javed Iqbal said NAB was committed to ending corruption in the country and had carried out 1,194 convictions with a total recovery Rs 821 billion, including the Rs 538 billion in the last four years. He said NAB also took action against its 200 officials on charges of corruption in four years. He mentioned that foreign anti-corruption organizations had acknowledged the efficiency of NAB and had sought training on its 'factum of deterrence' methodology.

## Chairman CDA visits various tourist spots

ISLAMABAD: CDA is taking all possible steps to promote tourism in Islamabad. In this context renovation work is being completed while provision of missing facilities at these spots are also being ensured. The Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) along with senior officials visited various places in Islamabad and inspected ongoing development work at these tourist places. According to the details, Chairman CDA inspected facilities available for tourists at Lake View Park, Shakarpurian, Daman Koh and other tourist spots and the ongoing development works at these places. On this occasion, it was directed that wash rooms be constructed at Lake View Park, Daman Koh and other places for persons. Furthermore, of tourism, he said that all available resources should be utilized to provide the best facilities to the tourists of Islamabad should be made



## Annual sports day of IMCG held

ISLAMABAD: Annual sports day was held at Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG) (PG) F.7/4, Islamabad on Thursday followed by prize distribution ceremony. Various inter class sports competitions including volleyball, badminton, table tennis, net ball, basketball and athletics were organized earlier from November 17 to 27, 2021. Students were taken to Sports Complex for races on November 29, 2021. - APP



ISLAMABAD: CEO Murree Brewery Company Mr. Isphanyar Bhandara called on the president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhary to congratulate him on assuming the highest office in the Government of Azad Jammu & Kashmir. A goodwill bouquet presented to the president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir on this occasion. - DNA

## Briefs

FJWU  
organizes  
three-day  
workshop

RAWALPINDI: The department of Gender Studies, Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU) in collaboration with Bedari Foundation organized a three-day workshop on Performing Gender.

Dr. Shahla Tabassum, Ms. Nadia Bukhtawar and Ms. Nashia Ajaz were the co-trainers at the workshop. The guest resource person, Ms. Maliha Husain, Managing Director, Mehergarh conducted a session on clarifying the concept of gender. Another guest resource person, Inspector Shahida Yasmin, Station House Officer of the women's police station, Rawalpindi talked about life choices in context of gender roles and relationships. Ms. Aabreen Ajaib, Executive Director, Bedari discussed social disability and inclusion of persons with disabilities in her session while Ms. Reem Shareef, Transgender Rights Expert at Ministry of Human Rights delivered a lecture on social inclusion and history of transgender community in the sub-continent. — APP

17 more  
tested  
positive of  
coronavirus

RAWALPINDI: As many as 17 more patients were tested positive of the fatal coronavirus during the last 24 hours in the district, with six belonging to the Rawal town, four each from Rawalpindi cantonment and Potohar town, two from Taxila, while one case has arrived from Gujjar Khan.

According to the daily situation report issued by the District Corona Management centre on Thursday, 24 coronavirus confirmed patients were admitted to five city facilities, including 12 in Fauji foundation hospital, eight in Institute of Urology, two in Benazir Bhutto, and one in Bilal and Attock hospitals each.

The report updated that one patient was on a ventilator in critical condition, seven stable and 16 on oxygen support. "Around 3,835,077 people, including 44,152 health workers, had so far been vaccinated against the fatal disease out of the total eligible population of 4,225,634 in the district," it informed. — APP

Fine imposed  
on two brick  
kilns

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District administration, in its drive to control the spread of smog, imposed a fine on two brick kilns in the area of Saddar here Thursday. In line with special directives of Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali, the Assistant Commissioner Saddar, along with the Inspector Environment department, inspected various brick kilns and imposed a fine of Rs 100,000 on two kilns for functioning without transforming their brick burning facilities into the latest zigzag technology and causing smog.

Earlier the Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Syed Gulzar Hussain Shah had directed all Assistant Commissioners to take stern action against elements causing smog. — APP

ICCI chief calls for making  
conducive policies for PWDs

Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that PWDs are endowed with great talent and if they are provided with better opportunities, they can play an active role in the economic development of the country

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that collaborative efforts are required for ensuring the inclusive, accessible, and sustainable future of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). He expressed these views while addressing as a Chief Guest at a ceremony organized by Islamabad Founder Lions Club to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Dr Masood Ghani presided over the ceremony.

ICCI Senior Vice President Jamshed Akhtar Sheikh, Vice President Muhammad Faheem Khan, former President Sheikh Amir Waheed, former Senior Vice President Muhammad Naveed Malik, President Islamabad Founder Lions Club Baser Dawood, Secretary General Azhar ul Islam, Saima Aslam International Coordinator for National Forum of Women with Disabilities, Nasira Ali, Malik Najeeb, Faizan Shehzad, Shazia Rizwan, Uzma Aslam, Kamran Khan and others were also present on the occasion.

Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that PWDs are endowed with great



talent and if they are provided with better opportunities, they can play an active role in the economic development of the country.

He stressed that the government should formulate more conducive policies to bring PWDs into the mainstream of the national economy. He said that PWDs needed more incentives and better opportunities to unleash their potential for the country. He also urged the business community to come

forward and play a more effective role for the betterment of PWDs. Speaking at the occasion, Dr Masood Ghani said that PWDs are an important part of our society, therefore, providing them a better quality of life is our national responsibility. He said that many institutions in the country are working for the betterment of PWDs and there is a need to synchronize their efforts to achieve better results for PWDs.

Baser Daud, President, Islamabad Founder's Lions Club said that by focusing on better education and health of PWDs they can be made useful citizens of the society. He demanded that the government should focus on better education and health of PWDs for taking benefit of their talent for the betterment of PWDs.

Islamabad Founder Lions Club Secretary General Azhar ul Islam, ICCI Senior Vice President

Jamshed Akhtar Sheikh, Vice President Muhammad Faheem Khan, former President Sheikh Amir Waheed, former Senior Vice President Muhammad Naveed Malik, Malik Najeeb, Uzma Aslam, Kamran Khan and others also addressed the function and presented useful suggestions for the betterment of PWDs.

The wheelchairs were also distributed among the PWDs on this occasion.

DC visits  
Raja Bazaar  
Panagah

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi, Muhammad Ali on Wednesday night visited Raja Bazaar Panagah (Shelter Home) and inspected all the arrangements for the Panagah dwellers. He also visited the kitchen of the Panagah and personally checked the quality of the food.

He talked with the residents of the Panagah and inquired about the arrangements who expressed satisfaction on the facilities being provided to them in the Panagah. He also ate dinner at the shelter home and sought suggestions from the people on shelter home's arrangements. On the occasion, the DC said that the purpose of setting up shelter homes was to provide shelter and food to the homeless in a dignified manner and this was an important part of the government's vision of a welfare state.

He directed the officers concerned that sympathy should be shown to all the people residing in the shelter home and they should be treated as guests.

He was informed that in the Shelter Home, passengers and homeless people were served with quality breakfast and dinner. — APP

Pakistan  
Water Week  
concludes

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Water Week 2021 celebrations concluded here on Thursday after prize distribution among the winner students of Essaycon, Debate, Poster and Water Board games competitions.

Pakistan Water Week was arranged by the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), in collaboration with International Water Management Institute (IWMI) Pakistan and CGIAR's Water Land and Ecosystem (WLE) flagship program.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Qamar uz Zaman, the Vice Chancellor, the University of Arid Agriculture, Rawalpindi remarked that Pakistan Water Week 2021 is an effective platform to initiate water conversation awareness that tackle with various dimensions of water issues, including their technical, political, legal, environmental, developmental and economic aspects.

The Additional Secretary Ministry of Science and Technology, Dr Atta ur Rehman congratulated all the students as well as to the organizers. — APP

ANF seizes  
96 kgs heroin

ISLAMABAD: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in two different operations in Karachi and Islamabad has seized about 96 kilograms of heroin and 110 grams of ice and arrested a foreign national.

According to a spokesperson, the force had seized about 96 kg of heroin skillfully concealed in towels to be imported to Canada through cargo.

He said that the drug was booked in the name of an exporter IB Trader. In another operation, the force had arrested a foreign national supplying drug to students of educational institutions in the federal capital and seized 110 grams of ice from him. Cases had been registered against the accused persons under the Anti-Narcotics Act and an investigation was underway. — APP

IHC dismisses Vawda's  
intra court appeal

Justice Miangul Hassan remarked that it was a requirement to submit affidavit along with the nomination papers of the candidate

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday dismissed the intra court appeal (ICA) of Senator Faisal Vawda and instructed the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to decide his disqualification case within one month.

A division bench comprising Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the intra court appeal filed by Faisal Vawda seeking to stop ECP proceeding in his disqualification case.

Vawda's Lawyer Hasnain Ali Chohan contended that the opponent of his client in senate elections had filed a disqualification case on basis of an affidavit submitted to ECP. Justice Miangul Hassan remarked that it was a requirement to submit affidavit along with the nomination papers of the candidate. A person was still ineligible to

hold the membership of Parliament if he had submitted a false affidavit even in previous elections, the court remarked.

On a query of the bench, the lawyer said that the affidavit submitted by Faisal Vawda to Election Commission of Pakistan was correct and his client had told the ECP as well in written form.

At this, Justice Farooq asked the lawyer then there was no problem; let the Election Commission of Pakistan probe affidavit. He remarked that Vawda also didn't submitted comments in IHC even after one and a half year.

The court subsequently dismissed the case and upheld the decision of single member bench which had directed the Election Commission of Pakistan to conclude the case in sixty days. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov met with Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tabassum Afzal, Rector of COMSATS University. Exchanged views on future cooperation perspectives of Azerbaijan of Pakistan Universities, including COMSATS. — DNA

HVACR delegation visits  
Rawalpindi Chamber

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: A delegation of Pakistan Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVACR) Society visited the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI). The delegation was led by President Khurram Rehman Malik and was accompanied by former president Mubashir Ahmed, Usman Chughtai, Ahmed Nawaz and members of the society. President Nadeem Rauf, Senior Vice President Asim Malik, Vice President Talat Awan, Former President RCCI Abdul

Rauf Chaudhry and members of the Chamber were also present on the occasion.

Chamber President Nadeem Rauf gave a briefing to the delegation about the ongoing activities of the Chamber and future programs. He said that the share of HVACR in manufacturing and import substitution is more than 30%. While in the construction industry it has about 60% share.

The government should abolish double taxation, reduce the rate of regulatory duty and tax so that this sector can be further developed. He assured the delegation that the Rawalpindi

Chamber would work closely with the HVACR Society for skilled development and promotion of the industry. Suggestions for innovation in heating, air conditioning, ventilation, and refrigeration systems and locally manufactured eco-friendly parts will be forwarded to the relevant agencies. HVACR Society President Khurram Rehman Malik congratulated the newly elected officials and said that the efforts of Rawalpindi Chamber in promoting business activities were commendable. He said that the Chamber should assist the society in registering with the DGTO. We need to focus on branding, he added.

Commissioner  
directs action  
against hoarders

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner, Rawalpindi Division Syed Gulzar Hussain Shah Thursday directed the authorities concerned to take strict action against profiteers and hoarders of fertilizers.

Chairing a meeting held here to review prices of the fertilizers, he instructed the price control magistrates to monitor hoarding of urea and ensure supply of the fertilizers in all areas of the division.

Strict action in accordance with the law should be taken against those found involved in hoarding without any discrimination, he added.

He ordered the Deputy Commissioners and price control magistrates to conduct surprise visits to check stocks of the dealers and those found involved in profiteering or hoarding should be blacklisted.

FIRs should also be lodged against the hoarders and profiteers, he added.

The Commissioner said that no one would be allowed to overcharge the farmers and all-out efforts should be made to ensure sale of fertilizers on notified rates.

The meeting was informed that sufficient stocks of urea were available in Rawalpindi division and there was no shortage of urea as the authorities concerned had launched a campaign and conducting raids to check hoarding and profiteering.

The meeting was attended by Additional Commissioner, Coordination, Saif Anwar Jappa, Deputy Commissioner, Rawalpindi Muhammad Ali, ADGC, Capt (retd) Qasim Ijaz, Director Agriculture Sajjad Ahmed, Deputy Director Information and other officers concerned. — APP

## Korean embassy donates ten thousand trees

Both sides also discussed other green initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Climate Change and possibilities of cooperation within them

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in its commitment to support the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Initiative of the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan has donated Ten Thousand Trees under the second phase of the Pak-RoK Friendship Forest, which is aimed at helping Pakistan in its fight against Climate Change.

A ceremony to mark the occasion was held at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea here in Islamabad. The Korean Ambassador, Suh Sangpyo and the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Malik Amin Aslam jointly planted a tree in the Embassy's premises.

The Ambassador said the Friendship Forest was launched in 2019 in Haripur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with just 6,000 trees. Now with its Phase-II, the Embassy will be planting 10,000 trees and with the years to come, it aims to continue expanding this Friendship



Forest across the country especially in areas which have suffered from deforestation and biodiversity loss.

The SAPM lauded the donation and said

that it serves as another green milestone in the bilateral friendship between the two countries and in achieving the vision of the Prime Minister. Both sides also discussed

other green initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Climate Change and possibilities of cooperation within them.

Senior officials of the Ministry of Climate Change, Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Project, and Journalists were also present at the ceremony.

Hailing the participation of China and Korea in the country's historically largest afforestation programme of Prime Minister Imran Khan, Special Assistant to PM on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam on Thursday said the government was committed to work with global community to tackle adverse fallouts of the global warming on lives and livelihoods of the people. Addressing a launching ceremony of Pakistan-Korea Friendship Forest Initiative (Phase-II) held here at the Korean Embassy, PM's aide Malik Amin and the Korean Ambassador to Pakistan Suh Sangpyo pledged to work closely for boosting PM Imran Khan's green initiatives, particularly the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme (TBTP) for boosting the country's climate resilience.

Fine imposed on  
shopkeepers

RAWALPINDI: Assistant Commissioner (AC) Khautta on Thursday imposed Rs 15,500 fine on shopkeepers in different areas of the tehsil Kahutta for indulging in profiteering.

While carrying out price checking of fruits and vegetables in Kahutta main bazaar, the AC sealed

one shop for overpricing and imposed a fine of Rs 15,500 on different sellers for not displaying the price list.

He warned that stern action would be taken against those overcharging and not displaying approved rate lists in their shops. — APP

## CHANGED NAME

I Tehseen Haider Son of Muhammad Abbas Khan R/O APS Ordinance road near Laal qurti bazar rwp registered with FBISE at SSC level under registration No 2028341258 passed SSC Annual

Examination 2020 under roll no 128058 do announce that I have decided to substantially change my father's name from Muhammad Abbas Khan to Muhammad Abbas which is written as Muhammad Abbas Khan in Board's documents/record. Hence the same may be changed/corrected



## A Tragic Land

If warning could do wonders, the endless ringing of humanitarian organisations' alarm bells about an unprecedented food crisis in Afghanistan would have long brought smiles on over 3.5 million angst-ridden faces. As winter bites, the war-devastated country is fast sinking into yet another pit of suffering. With the UN putting on the alert of about 23 million Afghans braving emergency levels of food insecurity, the World Food Programme cautioning, "we are on a countdown to catastrophe," and now Washington lamenting that hunger would "kill more people than all the bombs and bullets of the past two decades," what more do we need to hear to finally raise our eyelids to the frightening development before us. Since temperatures have already begun to dip below freezing point, it is no longer a question of some far-fetched tragedy that might happen if the odds are stacked against us. To the beautiful land's great misfortune, its patience when it comes to walking on the same thorny path over and over again is about to be tested for the nth time. When the international community is asked to ease restrictions on Kabul, it raises the security card. Now, the resumption of aid to ensure the survival of about one million children should not have been broadcasted here, there and everywhere in an ideal world. But since Afghanistan's young hills and old wounds are not valued much in this great game of politics, the imminent anarchy, widespread destitution and the nightmarish cursing from hell warrant little response. Had it been any other state, especially one in the ever-so-prestigious First World, never-ending donations from the soft-hearted would have long averted the crisis. However, the rugged terrain's distance from the sacred land keeps encouraging widespread oblivion to parents selling daughters to feed their younger children, people stealing sacks of grains from beggars on gunpoint and children running after shoppers in hopes for a tiny morsel of bread. Afghanistan is used to living in sheer helplessness. But, the curtain is now down, the power show is done with, and the spotlight haunts all of us. For, they may sleep on an empty stomach but would the world be able to live a life of guilt?

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## Pakistan card initiative

ON Wednesday, the government announced that it will be launching the Pakistan Card initiative which would encompass the government's welfare initiatives including Ehsaas Ration Card, Health Card and Kisan Card. The launch of this initiative is being considered an important milestone towards the prime minister's vision of building a welfare state. Initially it was reported that PM Imran Khan will be visiting Peshawar for the launch, however that may not be the case anymore because of concerns raised by the opposition and the ECP in light of the upcoming local government elections. Given that the announcement of development schemes is restricted following the issuance of the election schedule, the planning authorities should have anticipated this. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to see the government continuing its focus on healthcare and making it more accessible for citizens all over the country. The government's health initiatives have steadily grown over time. In fact, the health card initiative was first introduced in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where it grew considerably over the years. Today, the KP government is now offering provision of free health coverage—covering all major diseases—to the entire population of the province and has thus far treated 6,030,000 patients under the programme. To ensure that this initiative is a success and that all those in need are able to avail these resources, it is important that citizens are made aware of these services. This would require increased engagement and targeted awareness campaigns around the country regarding the Pakistan Card initiative. Inadequate health coverage—especially for the most vulnerable amongst us—is a country-wide issue. This is a great step forward in streamlining the welfare efforts of the government. A few years ago, providing access at such a scale would have been considered impossible, so the government must be commended for its efforts in this area. Improving our health care facilities and increasing access to them for the underprivileged across the country will also help us achieve our development goals going forward.

## China and Taliban

M Akram Zaheer



Taliban's direct contacts with Xinjiang are minimal. Virtually all attacks in China are entirely local and unrelated to international terrorist networks. The border is closed and there is no fear of a literal spread from neighboring Badakhshan

THE security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated since the United States and its European allies decided to withdraw from a two decades-long mission in the country. The US presence was viewed by China as a geopolitical threat, as was the Soviet military presence in the 1980s. China has concerns on a number of issues. Its ongoing concern, the last time the Taliban was in power, is that Afghanistan could become a safe haven for militant groups that could potentially target China. China's economic and political interests in the region as a whole have grown significantly since the BRI project. Many scholars see China as an opportunity to increase its influence in the region after the talks between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Taliban leaders. The Chinese

government has long sought to strike deals with the Taliban, focusing mainly on relations with Uyghur groups. The recent meeting between Mullah Baradar and Wang Yi in Tianjin was extremely popular; the two sides have been in talks for decades. However, Beijing is pragmatic about the realities of power in Afghanistan; it has always been uncomfortable with the Taliban's ideological agenda. China wants to see them compromise with the other political forces in the country, not revive them after a military victory. The Chinese government fears the implications of its success in Afghanistan for militancy in the face of the threat, including the Pakistani Taliban that may challenge to CPEC. Beijing is also concerned about the threats of confusion in Afghanistan, which is seen as a strategic trap that has undermined other major powers heavily involved. So, as it watches what is happening now, there is a need to play a more active political role to deal with the consequences of United States and NATO's withdrawal, Beijing feels a lot of fear about it. For China, there are certainly considerable trade and economic interests in Afghanistan. Major investment project such as the Aynak copper mine and the Amu Darya energy project, which are stalled for years. There has been a lot of talk about Afghanistan's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative, including China-Pakistan Economic Corridor ties, but Beijing believes stability in Afghanistan must be preceded for serious economic commitments. Beijing has also chosen not to build cross-border infrastructure via the Wakhan Corridor, despite requests from the Afghan government. If Afghanistan has a security and political environment, China will certainly play an important investment role - but it will be very cautious. At present, Beijing is very concerned about the recent attacks on Chinese nationals working on projects in Pakistan. Therefore, to think about new project in Afghanistan, may be dangerous. Taliban's direct contacts with Xinjiang are minimal. Virtually all attacks in China are entirely local and unrelated to international terrorist networks. The border is closed and there is no fear of a literal spread from neighboring Badakhshan. Potential cross-border

charges focus on Central Asia and Pakistan not with China, which is one of the main reasons, Chinese security presence on the Tajik border with Afghanistan. In the long run, Chinese concerns about the Islamic Movement in East Turkestan are mismatched with the threat shown by any Uyghurs trapped in a militant network in the region. The civil war in Syria has seen the Turkestan Islamic Party emerge as a more capable actor than its predecessors and has a presence in Afghanistan. China is also concerned about the return of fighters from northern Syria. Since the late 2000s, China has also been the target of various other militant and terrorist groups in Xinjiang and partly to Pakistan. The Taliban whatever promises they make to the Chinese government and are ready to turn a blind eye to the situation in Xinjiang but the environment have created in which many of these groups are likely to thrive. While it is incomprehensible to expect attacks on Chinese soil, but it is also clear that threats against soft Chinese targets in the region have increased.. The Afghanistan situation brings back a massive influx of refugees in Europe, and all that are political. Afghans are already appearing in large numbers in Turkey as they flee violence and the consequences of the Taliban takeover. Unsurprisingly, many European states have seen more gradual and circumstantial US evacuations than the current scenario. Afghanistan is a wonderful country where the interests of China, Europeans and Americans are relatively intertwined. Beijing wants to see it as a stable political settlement and has been instrumental in reconciliation talks on various issues. China's close ally in the region, Pakistan, has been the main host and support for the Taliban, providing them with an additional avenue of influence, whether it is always ready to use it effectively or can in the coming years, however, Beijing will focus on securing its bilateral interests in Afghanistan and use its diplomatic energy in the region to deal with current events particularly withdrawal of United States from Afghanistan. There will certainly be opportunities for European states to trade with China on Afghanistan. It is expected that Beijing will place such a priority on such active cooperation with Europe at this time.

## Paradigm shift in culture: A horrible reality

Munaza Kazmi



The women once having shyness in eyes now talk about mera jism mere marzi, however the meaning would be different but the choice of words are beyond admiration. Girls came from remote villages on the pretext of education well we all know what education they are getting in the dirty hostels and horrible flats

CULTURE! "the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning." However, Culture is the cornerstone of any civilized society and evolves over time with its values and norms. It is not a fixed concept, however, and can change for many reasons. One force that can cause a culture to change is the exposure to other cultures' political and economical philosophies, social structures, religions, languages, and styles of education. Talking about the culture of Pakistan, which seems quite diverse, and somewhat transforming, reasoning the involvement of different ethnic groups and its rich dynamic history. However, how far much diverse and changing it was, the ever constant object was the hint of respect, civilization, discipline and to which in Urdu we say, "Te-hzeeb". Pakistani culture starting from its pleasant language Urdu, the beauty of its calligraphy, the softness of words, the way of delivery, the love and utmost respect in the dialect, that have no substitute. Then our family culture, the warmth of togetherness, the cuddles of grandma, the knowledge sharing, moreover the satisfaction in eating together; The joint family structure. Our delicious foods, from spicy biryani to the lip-smacking jalebi, from muton karahi to yummy gulab jamun; the art of cooking, delight in learning recipes from mothers, planning food parties, the joy of sharing. And the shyness in the eyes of little women, the respect for the family, the authority of brother, the honor in seclusion, the proper way of carrying oneself, the knowledge of forbidden..... Are you thinking that am telling you about a long-forgotten tale of 1960's or 1980's.... Perhaps you are right, am talking about the peeling colorful Pakistani culture, leaving behind the strained, unimaginable, and wicked shadows of the intoxication of the Western civilization, and culprit we our self are. Vine Deloria, an American scholar once said, "Western civilization, unfortunately, does not link knowledge and morality but rather, it connects knowledge and power and makes them equivalent." Hence, the flip side of the coin shows a more menacing picture. The increasing trend of westernization has taken our local culture hostage in numerous aspects.

Let's start with the language, that is known as the identity of any nation. By far, the greatest impact that westernization has had on our culture is on the language. Our mother tongue Urdu is being replaced by English as a more common language used in conversations. This is happening because of the number of English medium schools in our society and the excessive use of email and messaging amongst the youth, which is usually in English or in a combination of English and a native language. It frequently, however, is communicated in Roman characters, diminishing the importance of Urdu script. Moreover, the influence of colonial mindset is immensely drastic that a large part of society, specially youth feel ashamed speaking Urdu. In fact, we have started using English as a tool to distinguish between high and low class, we think it as a criteria to judge people, irrespective of their education and background. Those who speak English proficiently are considered among the elite class, despite the fact that Urdu was the official language of Pakistan until English was added only a few years back. Next, the extended or joint family system, a trademark of Pakistani social culture, is losing its value and seems to be vanishing altogether, replaced by a culture of individuality. The youth of today believe in independence and individuality. As a result, we have seen a rise in the psychological disorders, divorces, suicides, and crime. Food, another lifeline of a culture, which in our transforming society is being hitting very badly. The traditional concept of home-cooked food is being replaced by fast food meals from restaurants like KFC, Pizza Hut, and McDonalds and others inspired by the fast food model. Pakistani dishes, which were famous for their flavor, are hardly acceptable to today's youth. As of today, we see cold drinks being used to such an extent that they are part of almost every meal, even in formal dinners. The introduction of energy drinks and sodas also has played a part in diminishing or I should say put an end to the consumption of traditional drinks. Talking about the element of respect, discipline and our Tehzeeb seems as another island. Our very basic "Salam" being replaced by "Hello", the kids seems in uniforms now just carry paper books not the knowledge or education since they have surpass all the elements of regard or Lehaaz as we say in Urdu. The youth if we consider, that is said to be the defining pillar, is now a days can't even hold their own balance, flying in air with effect of drugs, how would they even pick a brick for Pakistan. The women once having shyness in eyes now talk about mera jism mere marzi, however the meaning would be different but the choice of words are beyond admiration. Girls came from remote villages on the pretext of education well we all know what education they are getting in the dirty hostels and horrible flats. The idea of socializing, liberation upon the curse of media have almost destroyed our culture. Now a days the half-naked dresses are common in stores even the advertising campaign of breakout and outfitters our everyday brands are showing half-naked women. I question if in the past they couldn't make sale, the exposure of body is had become that essential that they have forgotten about our basic norms. And where is the control center, if its PEM-RA or any another institution, why the authorities are blind or if waiting for complete destruction. Moreover, it is the responsibility of parents to look into the matter, since only giving birth is not the solution, we have to answer another Authority in the end, to which I believe we had forgotten. Increased exposure to internet, television, movies, and video games has increased drug abuse, violence, and related vices. The Pakistani youth, which forms the majority of the population, are quickly being influenced as they are the most vulnerable. The influences mentioned above are in no way the only areas where westernization has had an impact. Westernization has influenced every aspect of daily life, ranging from cuisine to basic human rights. To that extent, even the minute details of daily life have been affected by westernization effects on Pakistan's culture. However, Westernization has been part of the modernization process, but it is crucial to examine, otherwise it may lead to the disruption of cultural values and customs.

## Report shows how Israel killed truth of Gaza protests

Ray Hanania

The ICC investigation and accusations that Israel is whitewashing war crimes are likely among the main reasons the Tel Aviv government is seeking to ban six human rights organizations, confiscate their computers and evidence, and arrest their staff. It wants to silence the critics who have gathered evidence that contradicts and exposes the Israeli government's lies. Israel's so-called investigation was not conducted by an "independent" group, as it contends, but was in fact carried out by the same group accused of the killings: The Israel Defense Forces

ON March 30, 2018, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip began holding weekly protests against Israel's harsh blockade. The timing was symbolic, as it commemorated the day in 1976 when six Palestinian citizens of Israel were killed while protesting against Israel's plans to seize thousands of acres of Arab-owned land for "state purposes." Palestinian protesters called the Gaza protests the "Great March of Return" and the world saw thousands of civilians waving Palestinian flags while marching to the border of Gaza, which is essentially an open-air prison managed and controlled by Israel. The protests ended in December 2019. During the near-two-year period, tens of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza gathered every Friday at the border with Israel to protest. Israeli soldiers, positioned safely behind armored fortifications, used sniper rifles to shoot dead 223 protesters, while wounding 8,000 more. Among those killed by the heavily armed Israeli soldiers were journalists, women, children (46 victims were under the age of 18), elderly people and emergency first responders, including several nurses. In response to rising international outrage, Israel announced it would conduct its own investigation into the killings. This week, two human rights groups - B'Tselem and the Palestinian Center for Human Rights - released the results of an inquiry into Israel's investigation, concluding that the probe was a ruse and none of the officials responsible for ordering the shootings were ever investigated. The 31-page B'Tselem and PCHR report, "Unwilling and Unable: Israel's Whitewashed Investigations of the Great March of Return," can be read in full online. Meanwhile, Israel is seeking to create a legal defense in anticipation of an unfavorable outcome at the International Criminal Court, which is investigating its abuses in the Gaza Strip. Israel is hoping to undermine the ICC probe by asserting, falsely in this case, that the

charges were investigated and that it has been accountable and fair. The ICC investigation and accusations that Israel is whitewashing war crimes are likely among the main reasons the Tel Aviv government is seeking to ban six human rights organizations, confiscate their computers and evidence, and arrest their staff. It wants to silence the critics who have gathered evidence that contradicts and exposes the Israeli government's lies. Israel's so-called investigation was not conducted by an "independent" group, as it contends, but was in fact carried out by the same group accused of the killings: The Israel Defense Forces. Israel asserts that it wants peace, but in reality it is the single greatest contributor to the violence. Far more Palestinians are injured and killed at the hands of Israeli soldiers, police and armed settlers inside Israel and in the Occupied Territories. Individuals who are bewildered by how US politicians pander to Israel - closing their eyes to its human rights violations and violence, while exaggerating Palestinian violence - have a responsibility to help them see the truth. Every American who believes in human rights and opposes violence of any kind should make a copy of the 31-page report and mail it to their member of Congress. They need to speak up. They need to help open the eyes of members of Congress who are willing to turn away from justice in order to receive hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from pro-Israel political action committees. As long as Israel has Congress in a campaign finance headlock thanks to PAC contributions, the truth will be killed almost as fast as it injures and kills Palestinians. For the record, between 2008 and 2020, Palestinians have killed 251 Israelis, while Israel has killed 5,590 Palestinians. That figure does not include the 115,000 Palestinians who have been injured, compared with the nearly 5,000 Israelis who have been hurt. Courtesy: Arab News

## Briefs

## First case of Omicron suspected

FROM PAGE 01  
Earlier this week, the National Command and Operations Centre (NCOCC) announced travel restrictions in the wake of the Omicron variant of coronavirus, adding 8 more countries, mostly European, in Category C, banning in-bound passengers. With the latest expansion, the number of countries on Category C increased from 7 to 15. The list comprises The Netherlands, Hungary, Ireland, Croatia, Ukraine, Slovenia, Vietnam, Poland, South Africa, Mozambique, Lesotho, Eswatini, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

## MBS visits Kuwait for first time since ties' resumption

FROM PAGE 01  
The crown prince was received by Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad. An official ceremony and procession was held to welcome Prince Mohammed at the Amiri Diwan, where he also met senior Qatari officials. The crown prince then visited the Consultative Assembly, where he was greeted by a number of officials. Prince Mohammed and Sheikh Tamim presided over the 6th Saudi-Qatari Coordination Council meeting, where the Qatari leader welcomed the crown prince to Qatar. The crown prince expressed his thanks and appreciation to the emir for the warm reception and generous hospitality, and conveyed greetings from King Salman. The crown prince arrived in Doha from the UAE on the third leg of his official tour of Gulf states. He began in Oman and is expected to visit Bahrain and Kuwait, where he will meet with leaders and senior officials in an effort to boost relations.

## No place for ISIS in Afghanistan, say Taliban

FROM PAGE 01  
Information of the Taliban's interim government in Afghanistan. "Initially, when we entered Kabul (in mid-August this year), there was no security and communication system, and that helped Daesh to carry out attacks and target mosques, and public places to spread fear among the civilians," the Taliban spokesperson said, adding that the vacuum provided them an opportunity to target civilians. "Earlier, Daesh had the support of former government forces but now we have destroyed their hideouts as these terrorists have no place in Afghanistan because the Afghan people have rejected their ideology," Mujahid said, adding the arrested people are in jail and the government will deal with them under the Sharia law. Responding to a question regarding the ongoing economic crisis in Afghanistan, Mujahid said the US had blocked their assets in August causing the economic crisis. "The US move to freeze our assets was an act against international law," he said. However, he hoped that after the recent meeting of Afghan acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi with the US officials in Doha, Qatar, Washington will release their funds soon.

## Barca to 'start from scratch' after CL exit

MUNICH: Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez vowed to return the Spanish giants to the pinnacle of European football after they crashed out of the Champions League on Wednesday with a 3-0 defeat at Bayern Munich. Five-time European champions Barca were eliminated in the group stages for the first time in 21 years. They had reached the last 16 in each season since 2003-04 when they did not qualify for the competition at all. Goals by Thomas Mueller and Leroy Sane gave Bayern a 2-0 half-time cushion in falling snow at the Allianz Arena. - APP

## Iran sticks to stance as nuclear talks resume

"Iran is serious about reaching an agreement if the ground is paved (towards a deal)...The fact all sides want the talks to continue shows that all parties want to narrow the gaps"

## Israel's FM in Egypt for talks on Gaza, Iran

CAIRO: Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid met President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on Thursday during a rare visit to Egypt for talks on the blockaded Gaza Strip and Iran's nuclear programme, the two sides said. Egypt was the first Arab country to sign a peace treaty with the Jewish state in 1979, after decades of enmity and conflict. "I thank President Sisi, whose contribution to the region and the relations between us is of historic proportions," Lapid tweeted. "I presented the president my 'economy for security' programme for Gaza and the steps taken by the Israeli government with regards to the Palestinian issue," he added. Egypt's presidency also said the Palestinian issue was a key priority. In his meeting with Sisi, Lapid noted "Iran's attempts to become a country with a military nuclear capability as well as its continued use of terrorism, and the threat this poses to the Middle East". His visit comes a month to the day after both countries struck a security deal to boost Egyptian troop numbers around the border town of Rafah in the restive Sinai Peninsula. - APP

ment if the ground is paved (towards a deal)...The fact all sides want the talks to continue shows that all parties want to narrow the gaps." Speaking to reporters, Enrique Mora, the European Union's coordinator for the talks, said the sides "don't have all the time in the world". "What I felt this morning was from...all delegations a renewed sense of purpose in the need to work and to reach an agreement on bringing the JCPOA back to life," Mora said, using the deal's formal name, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Russia's envoy said the short meeting had been constructive and that all sides agreed on the need to restore the accord "successfully and swiftly."

Under the 2015 accord with major powers, Iran limited its nuclear programme - which the West feared would be used to develop weapons, something Tehran denies - in return for relief from U.S., European Union and U.N. sanctions. Trump pulled the United States out of the deal in 2018 and reimposed harsh U.S. sanctions, and Iran began violating the nuclear restrictions a year later. Indicating that Washington may be losing patience, President Joe Biden's administration is moving to tighten enforcement of sanctions against Iran with the despatch of a senior delegation to the United Arab Emirates next week, the U.S. State Department said as talks resumed on Thursday. - Agencies

## Afghanistan to host Netherlands in Qatar for three ODIs

"Afghanistan will also host Australia and Pakistan in the ODI league before travelling to India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka for the remaining series"

KABUL: Afghanistan will play three one-day internationals against the Netherlands in Qatar next month, the country's cricket board announced on Wednesday. The ODIs will be part of the International Cricket Council's Super League, which serves as qualifying for the 2023 World Cup. "Afghanistan will host the Netherlands in three ODIs on January 21, 23 and 25 to be played in Asian Town cricket stadium in Doha, Qatar," a press release from the Afghanistan Cricket Board said. Nine of the top 10 ranked ODI teams are taking part in the one-day league from which seven teams will qualify for the World Cup, with India getting a direct entry as the hosts. The Netherlands series will be Afghanistan's second ODI league series after they beat Ireland 3-0 in Abu Dhabi last year. "Afghanistan will also host Australia and Pakistan in the ODI league before travelling to India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka for the remaining series," said the statement. Afghanistan qualified for the 2015 and 2019 50-over World Cups. They also took part in the Twenty20 World Cup in October-November, losing three of their five games and failing to qualify for the semi-finals. Qatar has become the new base for Afghanistan cricket since the Taliban took over the government in September. They previously played their international matches at neutral venues in India and the United Arab Emirates. ICC last month set up a working group to observe and review cricket in Afghanistan after the Taliban barred women. That prompted Australia to postpone last month's Test match against Afghanistan, demanding the ban on women should be lifted. ICC rules demand all member countries must have active men's and women's teams. - APP

## Lithuania braces for China led corporate boycott

## FOREIGN DESK

FRANKFURT: China has told multinationals to sever ties with Lithuania or face being shut out of the Chinese market, a senior government official and an industry body told Reuters, dragging companies into a dispute between the Baltic state and Beijing. China downgraded its diplomatic ties with Lithuania last month, after the opening of a representative office by Taiwan in Vilnius. Lithuania's ruling coalition had agreed in November last year to support what it described as "those fighting for freedom" in Taiwan, putting its relations with China at risk. China views self-ruled and democratically governed Taiwan as its territory and has stepped up pressure on countries to downgrade or sever their relations with the island. China's foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said on Thursday that China followed interna-

tional trade rules and again criticised Lithuania for its stance on Taiwan. "It has created the false impression of Taiwan being separate from China, gravely harmed China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and started an egregious precedent among the international community," he said. "China will firmly safeguard its sovereignty, territorial integrity and core interests." Taiwan has other offices in Europe and the United States but they use the name of the city Taipei, avoiding reference to the island itself. Lithuania's direct trade with China is modest, but its export-based economy is home to hundreds of companies that make products such as furniture, lasers, food and clothing for multinationals that sell to China. "They (China) have been sending messages to multinationals that if they use parts and supplies from Lithuania, they will no longer be allowed to sell to the Chinese market or get supplies

there," Mantas Adomenas, Lithuania's vice-minister for foreign affairs, told Reuters. "We have seen some companies cancel contracts with Lithuanian suppliers." He did not name any companies or suppliers affected. The Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists, which represents thousands of Lithuanian companies, confirmed that some multinational companies that buy goods from Lithuania suppliers were being targeted by China. "This week was the first time we saw direct Chinese pressure on a supplier to drop Lithuanian-made goods," Vidmantas Janulevicius, the Confederation president, told Reuters. "Previously, we only had threats it could happen, now they became reality." "For us, the most painful part is that it's a European company," said Janulevicius, referring to the multinational. "Many Lithuanian businesses are suppliers for such companies." He did not name any companies. Lithuania is looking at set-

ting up a fund to shield local companies from Chinese retaliation, a senior government official told Reuters. The Lithuanian government is in talks with the companies at risk of fallout from the China dispute about offering possible financial support, such as loans, the government official said. Lithuania has also appealed to the European Commission for support. In a letter sent earlier this week to top officials at the Commission and seen by Reuters, Lithuanian foreign minister Gabrielius Landsbergis asked for support in rebuffing China. "A strong reaction is necessary at the EU level in order to send a signal to China that politically motivated economic pressure is unacceptable and will not be tolerated," the letter said. The European Commission responded in a statement that the EU was ready to stand up against all types of political pressure and coercive measures applied against any member state.

## Travis Head century puts Aussies in firm command

BRISBANE: Travis Head blasted the third-fastest century in Ashes history to crush England hopes on the second day of the opening Test at the Gabba on Thursday. At the close of play a dominant Australia were 343-7, a lead of 196 on England's dismal first-innings total of 147. Head was on 112, alongside Mitchell Starc, who was not-out 10, on another inspiring day for England in Brisbane. England had threatened a comeback after tea when Ollie Robinson took two wickets in consecutive balls, but Head's aggressive innings put paid to any hopes of a miracle recovery. The 27-year-old Head, controversially recalled to the Australia side ahead of veteran Usman Khawaja, justified his selection by passing 100 off only 85 balls. He smashed two sixes and 12 fours in his century - the third-fastest in the Ashes behind only Adam Gilchrist's 56-ball ton in Perth in 2006 and Gilbert Jessop's 76-ball effort at The Oval in 1902. "I'm still pinching myself - I can't quite work out what transpired over the past couple of hours," Head said. "I took some chances - technically and mentally I was really composed, really relaxed," he added. "I found the first 20 runs really tough, but the game opened up and I was able to take the chances, which is pleasing." Head attacked from the outset and was particularly harsh on spinners Jack Leach and Joe Root, the English came to the crease with Australia 189-3 after Steve Smith skipper. Head edged Mark Wood to keeper Jos Buttler just before tea. He then watched David Warner (94) and Cameron Green depart to Robinson's accurate seamers after the break, with Australia still only 89 runs ahead. Earlier, Warner rode his luck in the first two sessions. The gritty Australian batsman was bowled by a no-ball by Ben Stokes before lunch, then dropped by Rory Burns in the first over after the break, before Haseeb Hameed bungled a simple run-out. Warner's good fortune began when Stokes bowled him when he was on 17, but the all-rounder had overstepped to give the Australian opener a mighty reprieve. Television replays showed that Stokes had also overstepped on the first three balls of his over, but nothing was called. It later transpired that technology issues were at the centre of the no-ball drama. England needed to take all their chances to keep their hopes of salvaging anything from the first Test after their disastrous start on Wednesday, when they were bowled out in just 50.1 calamitous overs. They started well when Robinson claimed his first Ashes wicket, Marcus Harris, with the score on 10. England went into the Test without veteran seamers Jimmy Anderson and Stuart Broad, surprising many, including Australian captain Pat Cummins. But the seam attack of Robinson, Chris Woakes and the outright pace of Wood were able to keep the Australian batters pinned down early on with some tight and accurate bowling. - Agencies

## West Indies cricket team arrives amid heavy security

Pakistan were forced to play their home international matches abroad - mostly in the United Arab Emirates - until 2015 when normal service tentatively resumed

KARACHI: The West Indies cricket team arrived in Pakistan on Thursday for a visit which local officials hope will scotch bitter memories of a New Zealand tour abandoned on security grounds. The Windies will play three Twenty20 and three one-day internationals - all in Karachi - starting on Monday, their first visit since 2018. A Pakistani official said a 26-member party had flown to Karachi early on Thursday before being escorted by heavy security to the team hotel. The series comes three

months after New Zealand quit their first tour to Pakistan in 18 years shortly before the opening match was due to start following a security alert. That was followed by England's decision to withdraw visits by their men's and women's teams scheduled for October. Pakistani officials were furious with the cancellations, arguing security measures were lock-tight. The cricket-mad nation endured a long spell without a visit from an international team following a terror attack on a bus carrying the Sri Lankan team in Lahore in 2009. Pakistan were forced to play their home international matches abroad - mostly in the United Arab Emirates - until 2015 when normal service tentatively resumed. This West Indian squad is somewhat understrength, with regulars Evin Lewis, Shimron Hetmyer, Andre Russell and Lendl Simmons all opting out for personal reasons. Former skip-

## History beckons and threatens for Hamilton

ABU DHABI: Motor racing history beckons and threatens Lewis Hamilton at this weekend's floodlit season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. The defending seven-time champion could be dethroned by a pugnacious young pretender, who may be his nemesis, or set for a magnificent record with an eighth title when he competes with Max Verstappen at a much-modified Yas Marina Circuit. After 21 closely-fought races from Bahrain to Jeddah, via classic vigorous contests at Monaco, Silverstone, Monza and Interlagos, the duelling duo will arrive at their final inter-generational showdown level on points. Each man knows he is within reach of fulfilling a dream at the conclusion of a dramatic and sometimes belligerent season that has been a Box Office sensation for Formula One and the sport's global television ratings. After last Sunday's extraordinary drama-laden spectacle in Saudi Arabia, this winner-takes-all show will surely grab the attention of a rapt world audience as the warring Mercedes and Red Bull teams fight their final acrimonious battle to decide both the drivers' and constructors' titles. After travelling 1850 kilometres across the Arabian Peninsula, from Jeddah, the Formula One circus will be united by one hope - that the season ends fairly on the track without rancour or any need for a stewards' inquiry. To take his unprecedented eight title, one more than the record seven he shares with Michael Schumacher, Briton Hamilton, 36, must finish the race and score more points than Verstappen. - APP

## Economy is growing fast, says Ch Fawad

FROM PAGE 01

Addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Thursday, along Food Minister Syed Fakhar Imam, he said it is expected that the country will continue its GDP growth with 5 per cent during this fiscal year.

He said the sales of tractors, vehicles and other agricultural machinery have been increased. Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said that Sindh was being ruled by a government that had nothing to do with the welfare of the people. He said that the policies of the Sindh government were badly hurting the people of the province. The minister said that flour and sugar prices were the highest in Sindh as compared with the rest of the country and the people of Sindh were deprived of health card and ration program.

He said that the people of Sindh were deprived of this facility due to the anti-people policies of the PPP government, and the public representatives of Sindh including MNAs and MPAs should ask their Chief Minister for which reason he was taking revenge from the people of the province.

"Flour is being sold at Rs 1100 per 20 kg bag in the whole country except Sindh, as people of Karachi and Sindh were forced to purchase it at Rs 1460 per bag. The price of sugar across the country is Rs 90 per kg, but in Sindh it is being sold between Rs 97 and Rs 100", he added.

He said that Transparency International's post-Covid-19 survey was encouraging because for the first time, there was no evidence of corruption committed by the political government.

Chaudhry Fawad said that the people of Pakistan had a government after a long time which was not accused of any type of corruption. He said that even the opponents of the Prime Minister in Pakistan believed in his uprightness. "Trust in political government is being restored today, 89 per cent people have expressed confidence on the performance and initiatives of the government after outbreak of the coronavirus which was big achievement", Chaudhry Fawad said. He said there were very few examples in the world that a country's economy was developing at 5 per cent per year after the pandemic. "Our economic growth figures are also being acknowledged by the IMF, and there is likelihood that Pakistan will go beyond 5 per cent growth rate," he said. The agriculture sector due to the policies of the government earned about Rs 400 billion additional amount last year, he said, adding farmers earned Rs 118 billion in wheat, Rs 138 billion in cotton, Rs 46 billion in rice and Rs 3 billion in maize and Rs 96 billion in sugarcane. The minister said that demands of tractors, vehicles, agricultural equipment and urea fertilizer increased due to surplus income in agriculture sector. The price of urea fertilizer in Pakistan was Rs 1700, whereas its price in the international market had crossed Rs 10,000 mark, he said. The minister said that a truck loaded with urea fertiliser was sent abroad, it would earn Rs 8 million.

## PML-N condemns 'torture' of party workers

FROM PAGE 01  
A symbolic inauguration of the Green Line Bus Rapid Transit project. "On the orders of Imran Niazi, Rangers in Karachi brutally tortured party leaders and workers including Ahsan Iqbal," Shehbaz was quoted as saying on PML-N's official Twitter handle. Terming the incident extremely sad and condemnable, Shehbaz said that his party would protest against the unfortunate incidents at all forums. "The incident should be probed at the highest level and the perpetrators should be given punishments as per the law," he said and added that torture on political workers is unacceptable. The incident occurred a day before Prime Minister Imran Khan will officially inaugurate the Green Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service, a project which was conceived during the tenure of PML-N.

## Briefs

## US orders arms embargo on Cambodia

## FOREIGN DESK

BANGKOK: The U.S. has ordered an arms embargo on Cambodia, citing deepening Chinese military influence, corruption and human rights abuses by the government and armed forces in the Southeast Asian country. The added restrictions on defense-related goods and services, issued by the State and Commerce departments, are due to be published and take effect Thursday.

A notice in the Federal Register said developments in Cambodia were "contrary to U.S. national security and foreign policy interests." The aim of the embargo is to ensure that defense-related items are not available to Cambodia's military and military intelligence services without advance review by the U.S. government, it said. The latest restrictions follow the Treasury Department's ordering in November of sanctions against two senior Cambodian military officials for corruption and come amid increasing concern about Beijing's sway. At the time, the U.S. government issued an advisory cautioning American businesses about potential exposure to entities Cambodia and its military that "engage in human rights abuses, corruption and other destabilizing conduct."

## 2 Azeri killed land mine in Karabakh

## NEWS DESK

BAKU: Two Azerbaijani construction workers were killed when a mine planted by Armenian forces exploded in the Karabakh region on Thursday. The workers, identified as Vusal Gandiyev and Orkhan Khanatov, were killed in the Shusha region, according to Azerbaijan's Interior Ministry. In a separate incident, an Azerbaijani soldier was killed in "another provocation committed by Armenian armed forces ... in the direction of the Kalbajar region" on Wednesday night. "The Armenian military-political leadership bears full responsibility for the escalation of tensions," the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry said in a statement on Thursday. Azerbaijan has been making efforts to clear the Nagorno-Karabakh region of land mines planted by Armenian forces during their nearly three decades of occupation. Baku handed over 10 captive soldiers to Armenia this month in exchange for minefield maps, while it earlier received maps of 92,000 mines laid in Fuzuli and Zangilan and 97,000 in Aghdam after releasing 30 Armenian nationals. The two countries were involved in a 44-day conflict over Upper Karabakh that started in September last year and ended with a cease-fire brokered by Russia on Nov. 10.

## China, Arab states to expand BDS cooperation

BEIJING: China and the Arab states will expand win-win cooperation in utilizing the China-developed BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS), according to the Third China-Arab States BDS Cooperation Forum.

China and the Arab states will jointly implement pilot projects in key domains in the application of BDS and GNSS (global navigation satellite system) over the 2022-2023 period, according to a cooperation action plan signed at the forum. Both sides will facilitate the establishment of BDS/GNSS centers in the Arab states, hold training courses on satellite navigation technologies, and exchange visiting scholars. Each year, China will offer scholarships to three to five students majoring in navigation and communications from the Arab states, said the action plan.

China and the Arab states will also carry out joint BDS/GNSS tests and evaluations, and promote the application of BDS in international search and rescue, among other initiatives. — APP

## New German foreign minister warns Russia over Ukraine

"The territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine aren't up for negotiation for us"

## AGENCIES

PARIS: Germany's foreign minister warned Russia on Thursday that it would pay a "high political and economic price" if it makes any militaristic moves against neighboring Ukraine.

Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock emphasized the need to coordinate a common European position when dealing with hostile neighbors such as Russia, which has amassed troops near the border with Ukraine.

"The territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine aren't up for negotiation for us," Baerbock said in Paris while making her first foreign trip, a day after taking office. She added that the highest priority must be to avoid a military escalation.

"Russia would pay a high political and economic price for a renewed breach of Ukraine's statehood," Baerbock told reporters during a joint news conference with French Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian. "We can only find solutions down the diplomatic route, and we are both ready to become personally deeply engaged (on this matter)."

Russia insists it has no plans to invade Ukraine unless it is "provoked." In a phone conversation Thursday with Angela Merkel, Russian President Vladimir Putin thanked the now-retired German chancellor for "years of fruitful cooperation," according to the Kremlin's readout of the call.

Putin underscored Merkel's "significant contribution to the development of the



Russian-German relations" during her 16 years in office and said she was always welcome in Russia.

Merkel, in turn, wished Putin success in "establishing a dialogue" with new German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, the readout said.

In France, Baerbock said a possible diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics in China was another "big topic" on Thursday. The White House and the British and Australian governments have said none of their diplomats will attend the Beijing Games, decisions intended to protest Chinese human rights abuses.

Germany wants to decide how to proceed "in unison with our European friends," she added. Le Drian also said a common European stance regarding a diplomatic boycott of the Olympics was needed. The French foreign minister spoke shortly af-

## Russia blasts US stance

MOSCOW: Russia accused the United States on Thursday of refusing to cooperate in a longstanding row over their respective embassies, two days after the issue was raised in a call between presidents Vladimir Putin and Joe Biden.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said that despite reaching an understanding on some "peripheral" issues, the two countries were deadlocked in the dispute over the size and working of their diplomatic missions.

"Overall this whole bloc of issues is at a deep impasse and practically cannot be resolved because of the lack of U.S. cooperation," Ryabkov was quoted by Interfax news agency as saying.

The U.S. and Russian embassies have come under staffing pressure as each side has cut the other's representation in a series of tit-for-tat exchanges as bilateral relations have sunk to their worst point since the end of the Cold War.

The Kremlin has said Putin proposed to Biden that the two countries should resolve the stand-off by lifting the staffing limits they had imposed.

Tuesday's call was dominated by tensions over Ukraine, with Biden voicing concern about a Russian military build-up near the border with its former Soviet neighbour and telling him Moscow would face serious economic consequences if it invaded. Putin has said talk of an invasion is "provocative" and accused Ukraine and NATO of fanning tensions.

Biden said the next day he hoped for an announcement by Friday of high-level meetings with Russia and major NATO allies to discuss Moscow's concerns and the possibility of "bringing down the temperature along the eastern front". Ryabkov described this as a "unilateral" statement, implying the U.S. side had not discussed it with Moscow. — Agencies

ter French Education and Sports Minister Jean-Michel Blanquet said Paris would not join such a boycott.

"Sports is a world in itself, which must be protected from political interference, otherwise...we can end up by killing the competition," Blanquet said on French news channel BFM-TV.

During the wide-ranging news conference

with her French counterpart, Baerbock stressed that the sexual assault allegations made by Chinese tennis player Peng Shuai against a former Communist Party official should be taken seriously.

"If a woman makes such allegations, then they should be heard, including internationally," said Baerbock, who is Germany's first female foreign minister.

## Covid situation is stable in Kazakhstan: PM

## NEWS DESK

NUR-SULTAN: The situation with COVID-19 is stable in Kazakhstan, Prime Minister Askar Mamin stated at a government session, Kazinform correspondent reports.

"In general, the epidemiological situation is stable, the number of COVID-19 patients continues falling. The occupancy rate of beds at the infectious diseases hospitals stands at 24%, and in intensive care units — 21%," said Mamin. The Kazakh PM added that the country's most areas are in the "green zone", five - in the "yellow zone" and one - in the "red zone". "The main effective way to protect from the coronavirus infection is to get vaccines and a booster shot. As of today, the first component of COVID-19 vaccines has been administered to a total of 8.8mln people which is 77.5% of the adult population. The second component has been given to over 8.2mln people or 72.5% of the eligible population," said the PM. Mamin also named the regions with the lowest vaccination rates, they are Mangistau, Kostanay, and West Kazakhstan regions. "These regions need to rev up the COVID-19 vaccination coverage," concluded the Kazakh PM.

Earlier, Prime Minister Askar Mamin gave an instruction to tighten border controls for arrivals amid the occurrence of the new Omicron strain. At the regular Government's session on Thursday, Kazakh Prime Minister Mamin instructed to tighten control at the state border amid the growing number of COVID-19 cases associated with the new Omicron strain. He also gave instructions to the Ministry of Information and Social Development together with regional authorities to raise public awareness regarding the new COVID-19 variant.

Earlier at the session the Prime Minister noted that the epidemiological situation in Kazakhstan is stable and that the number of COVID-19 patients continues to decrease. Bed occupancy at infectious facilities stands at 24%. Askar Mamin also pointed out that most regions of Kazakhstan in the "green zone", the low-risk zone for the spread of the coronavirus infection. Five regions are in the "yellow zone", and only one region in the "red zone", the high-risk one.



ISLAMABAD: Women taking interest in various items displayed on the occasion of 30th Anniversary of the Independence of Kazakhstan. — DNA

## Pakistan-China sign 23 new friendship accords this year

BEIJING: Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque on Thursday said that Pakistan and China had signed 23 new friendship and cooperation agreements this year which was unprecedented.

"One of the most promising aspects of our bilateral relations is now increasing people to people contacts between our two countries. I'm very pleased to note that ever expanding cooperation between the provinces and cities, our countries is further solidifying," he said while addressing the Forum on Cooperation between China and Pakistan Friendship Provinces and Cities. Pakistan Embassy Beijing and Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries jointly organized the forum.

Under the theme of Win-win cooper-

ation for common development, Pakistan and China exchanged views on issues of common interest and issued a Joint Declaration.

Ambassador Haque informed that both the countries have 43 provinces and cities including lakes and parks which were closely connected to friendship relationship.

"This year alone, we have signed all together 23 new friendship agreements which is unprecedented," he added.

He congratulated the leadership and officials of all these provinces and cities for making this history and expressed the confidence this would provide a solid and strong foundation for the development of future ties between the two countries in all fields and help jointly build China-Pakistan community of shared destiny in the

new era. Ambassador Haque said that this year, the two countries were celebrating the 70th anniversary of establishment of their diplomatic relations.

"We have so far organized over 120 events to celebrate our friendship and today's forum is an important part of these celebrations," he added.

He said that this year also marks the centenary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) which had made immense sacrifices for the Chinese people before China's peaceful rise in the global politics and economics. He felicitated the government and the people of China for 100 years of CPC and also paid tributes to CPC leadership and the members for their contributions to the China-Pakistan bilateral relations. — APP

## Uzbekistan: Energy efficient buildings' prospects

"Energy-efficient materials and technologies in Uzbekistan: the state of the market and its development prospects for promoting green construction in the country"

## DNA

TASHKENT: The main priority of the government of Uzbekistan is the widespread introduction of energy-saving technologies and the use of alternative energy sources in the economy, social sphere and construction industry.

To speed up the process, since 2017, a joint six-year project of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is being implemented in Uzbekistan jointly with the Ministry of Construction of the Republic of Uzbekistan with grant support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) "Assistance in the development of construction of energy-efficient rural housing in Uzbekistan." As part of the second component of the project, today on 9 December 2021 Tashkent is hosting a business forum "Energy-efficient materials and technologies in Uzbekistan: the state of the market and its development prospects for promoting green construction in the country."

The main national partner organizations took part in the event - the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Finance, the Center for Hydrometeorologi-

cal Service under the Ministry of Emergency Situations (Uzhydromet), the State Committee for Land Resources, Geodesy, Cartography and State Cadastre, the State Committee for Ecology and environmental protection, Qishloq Qurilish Invest LLC, Qishloq Qurilish lishloyiha LLC, Qishloq Qurilish Bank JSCB, regional and district authorities, representatives of design engineering companies, institutes and educational institutions, international organizations, domestic manufacturers and others. The event was also attended by representatives of international financial institutions - Asian Development Bank (ADB), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and KfW.

The main goal of the project is to provide the rural population of Uzbekistan with improved and affordable living conditions that do not harm the environment. For these purposes, about US\$136.6 million has been allocated. A lot of work has been done since the start of the project. Based on the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan PP-4028 from 24 November 2018, a subsidized green mortgage lending scheme was developed to

increase demand for energy efficient (EE) and low-carbon (LC) rural housing. One-story and multi-story EE and LC affordable rural houses have been built in five regions of Uzbekistan.

And also the construction of a demonstration pilot house with practically zero energy consumption was launched in the Yashlik mahalla in the city of Nurafshan in



the Tashkent region. In November 2019, a business forum was held in Tashkent on the topic: "Energy efficient solutions in Uzbekistan: current state and development prospects." The event made it possible to demonstrate the available financial mechanisms of a market economy, exchange views and experiences, and discuss the prospects for "green construction" and "green economy".

In addition to presenting the achieved results of the Project's work and its future plans, the business forum allowed evaluating new approaches and solutions, updating the base of energy-efficient materials and technologies, getting acquainted with innovations in the field of building materials, exchanging knowledge and experience with representatives of various manufacturing companies and suppliers of energy-efficient materials and technologies.

"The natural energy resources used by humanity are gradually drying up, while the cost of extracting and processing primary fuel and energy resources is increasing, and their irrational use negatively affects the environment. Efficient use of resources through the use of innovative approaches in construction, as a solution to this problem, is currently one of the priority areas in Uzbekistan.

This project aims to reduce energy consumption in the residential sector by improving the thermal performance of the structures themselves, as well as introducing energy efficient and low carbon technical solutions. Such measures ensure the saving of natural and financial resources, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emis-

sions into the atmosphere.

We hope that this forum will help to develop the necessary recommendations for further actions in order to strengthen cooperation with stakeholders in promoting EE and LC solutions in the housing sector of Uzbekistan, said the project manager, Timur Ibragimov.

During the presentations and roundtable discussions, issues were raised such as market development and improvement of the supply chain for EE and LC technologies and materials, energy efficient design solutions, strengthening the regulatory framework for the implementation of energy efficient and low-carbon technologies and materials in housing construction in Uzbekistan.

Also, within the framework of the business forum, a specialized exhibition of energy efficient materials and technologies from local and foreign manufacturers was organized. The Forum has become a platform for domestic manufacturers, suppliers, construction companies and design organizations to discuss the necessary measures to expand available market solutions, accelerate the introduction of new EE and LC technologies, exchange ideas and strengthen cooperation.

## Azerbaijan, Huawei ink MoU

## NEWS DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijan's Digital Development and Transport Ministry, ADA University and Huawei have signed a trilateral memorandum of understanding to establish a Joint Research and Development Center (R&D Center). The project aims to develop innovative products and make a long-term contribution to the ICT sector of Azerbaijan.

The R&D Center will train specialists in ICT, including 5G, GPON, IP technologies and other relevant areas for the national and regional socio-economic development.

Participants in the training programs will acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to implement digital transformation in the country. The project will train highly qualified local specialists with Huawei certificates. Speaking at the signing ceremony, Digital Development and Transport Minister Rashad Nabiyevev stated that one of the main goals of Azerbaijan for the next 10 years is to build a creative and innovative society. It should be noted that this is one of the main tasks outlined in "Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development" by President Ilham Aliyev.

"I am confident that the R&D Center, which will be established on the basis of today's signing, will play an important role in achieving our goals. As a ministry, we will spare no effort to establish such centers," he said. ADA University Rector Prof Hafiz Pashayev noted that the document enables cooperation with Huawei.

## 3 Turkish soldiers killed in Iraq

## AGENCIES

ISTANBUL: Three Turkish soldiers were killed in an attack by Kurdish militants during cross-border operations in northern Iraq on Thursday, the Turkish Defence Ministry said, adding six of the militants were "neutralised".

"Targets identified in the region were struck in an air operation and six terrorists were neutralised according to initial indications. Operations in the region are continuing," the ministry said. "Neutralised" is commonly used to mean killed.

Turkey's operations in Iraq target the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group, which has bases there and which is designated a terrorist group by Turkey, the United States and European Union.

The group launched an insurgency in southeast Turkey in 1984 in which more than 40,000 people have been killed.

## WHO warns against vaccine hoarding

## WEB DESK

GENEVA: The World Health Organization warned wealthy countries on Thursday against hoarding COVID-19 vaccines for booster shots as they try to fight off the new Omicron variant, threatening supplies to poorer countries where inoculation rates are low.

Many Western nations have been rolling out boosters, targeting the elderly and people with underlying health issues, but worries about the fast-spreading Omicron have prompted some to expand their programmes.

The WHO recommended boosters instead for those with health issues, or those who have received an inactivated shot.

The jury is still out on how effective current vaccines are against Omicron. They have so far proved hugely successful in slowing the spread of the coronavirus and the severity of illness, but low rates of inoculation pose the risk of more dangerous and more vaccine-resistant variants emerging.

"As we head into whatever the Omicron situation is going to be, there is risk that the global supply is again going to revert to high-income countries hoarding vaccine," the WHO's vaccine director, Kate O'Brien, told a briefing.

**Briefs**

**Navy celebrates golden jubilee of Hangor Day**

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy on Thursday celebrated Golden Jubilee of HANGOR Day, which is reminiscent of the heroic act and unrivalled courage of Pakistan Navy's Submarine HANGOR and to pay tributes to its veterans of the 1971 war. The remarkable naval action took place South East off 'Diu Head' on West Coast of India, whereas the event was distinguished in naval history as the first successful kill by any submarine after WW-II, said a Pakistan Navy media release. In order to commemorate Golden Jubilee on completing 50 years of sinking of Indian Navy Ship (INS) KHUKRI, an impressive ceremony was organized here by Pakistan Navy, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi graced the occasion as Chief Guest and Vice Admiral (R) Ahmad Tasnim, then Commander graced the occasion as Guest of Honour. While addressing at the ceremony, Chief of the Naval Staff underlined that Pakistan Navy was ready to respond to any threat and misadventure posed by the adversary. "The HANGOR's triumph serves as a lesson to the enemy and a testimony of highest standard of professionalism and selfless devotion of our veteran submariners," he said. - APP

**New Pak-Iran border crossing opened**

DNA

CHAGAI: Pakistan and Iran have opened a new border crossing in Raajay area of Chagai district. The border crossing at Raajay has been opened for trade activities as well as travel purposes, border officials said. Local administration, border officials and tribal notables were present during inauguration of the new crossing point. The new border crossing would facilitate people from both sides of the border to travel and carry out trade activities. A high-level meeting chaired by Balochistan Chief Minister Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo had recently decided to open more border crossing points between Pakistan and Iran to facilitate bilateral border trade, which is a source of income for the people of the region. The meeting finalized the modus operandi for trading oil and edibles with Iran.

**Shaukat Tarin fit to contest Senate election**

PESHAWAR: An election tribunal has rejected a plea to disqualify Shaukat Tarin, who is a candidate from Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) for a Senate seat from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

The election tribunal while rejecting a plea to challenge nomination papers of Shaukat Tarin as null and void declared him fit to contest the polls. The decision was announced by the tribunal judge, Justice Atiq Shah after hearing arguments from both sides. Earlier in the day, an appellate election tribunal reserved a verdict on an appeal challenging the candidature of adviser to the prime minister on finance Shaukat Tarin for the Senate by-election.

The verdict is likely to be pronounced later today. Awami National Party (ANP) candidate Dr Shaukat Jamal Amirzadah moved the appeal challenging the acceptance of Tarin's nomination papers by the returning officer for the by-election on a vacant Senate seat from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). - DNA

**Divvy Film Festival inaugurated at PNCA**

The first film screened was Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, Sitara, 2019 Sitara takes the audience on a journey through the old city of Lahore in the 1970s, where a fourteen-year-old girl called Pari dreams of becoming a pilot

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Divvy Film Festival opened at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts on Thursday. The festival will go on till Sunday 12 December. "During three-day event, around 58 brilliant films would be screened in Islamabad and Lahore. Divvy Film Festival in Lahore will run from December 16 to 19. PNCA is striving hard for the revival of film and cinema in Pakistan by taking various steps to give it strength so it could stand on its own. The film diploma course announced by PNCA is also a move forward in this direction." PNCA Director General Hasnain Raza said while addressing participants of the ceremony. The Festival focuses on independent Pakistani films and includes feature films, short films, documentaries and animated films. The first film screened was Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, Sitara, 2019 Sitara takes the audience on a journey through the old city of Lahore in the 1970s, where a fourteen-year-old girl called Pari dreams of becoming a pilot. Pari's story is told through the perspective of her six-year-old sister, who like the audience is unaware of the traditions and barriers that lay in the paths of women from this family. Nida Kirmani & Dostain Baloch, *Khel Khel Mein*, 2021 This is the story of three young people from the area of Lyari in Karachi—an area that is known for being one of the most conflict-ridden parts of the city. However, Lyari is also one of the oldest, most diverse and vibrant parts of the city.



Each of the young people featured in this documentary are pushing gender boundaries in their own unique ways. **Haya Fatima Iqbal, The Sky is Far, The Earth is Tough, 2021** Shahbano, Zarb Ali and Nurat are all residents of district Ghizer, which is one of the most prone districts to climate disasters and is host to a simmering mental health crisis. It has had the highest rates of suicides in the past seven years. The film explores how climate change has an impact on the mental health of mountain communities affected by climate disasters, through a human lens. **Nauman Khalid, One Way Glass, 2021.** 'One-way Glass' is the story of a hapless migrant Pakistani woman trapped in a violent

pathless marriage. The film follows her path to freedom via the revelation that her husband, like her, leads a clandestine parallel life. **Madyha Leghari, Hairless, 2019** A fictional city grapples with an inexplicable, complete loss of hair. Posited both as an extension and the boundary of a body, hair occupies a liminal position between the animate and inanimate "dead" matter. Since the influence of evolutionary thought in the nineteenth century, comparative hairlessness in humans has been the subject of extensive cultural debate and resultant shift in its value. "Excessive" human hair is variously associated with sexual inversion, the primitive, the criminal, the pathological, the diseased, the beast or even the lunatic.

The film satirizes these accounts by removing the supposed evolutionary obstacle posed by hair. However, the resultant world is that of tactile longing, sensory deprivation, and eco-anxiety. **Manele Labidi, Arab Blues, 2021** Selma, a psychoanalyst, deals with a cast of colorful new patients after returning home to Tunisia to open a practice. In this sophisticated comedy, Manele Labidi opens a fascinating window into modern Tunisia at a crossroads, with a story of contrasts, contradictions and culture clashes, full of vitality and humor. The event has been carefully curated to create a thoughtful and immersive experience for the viewer, ending with a discussion with a panel discussion with filmmakers.

**Pak-US business ties' growth stressed**

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Mr. Shaukat Tarin held a meeting with Mr. Masood Khan, Pakistan's Ambassador designate to the United States of America at the Finance Division. While greeting Mr. Masood Khan, the Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue Mr. Shaukat Tarin extended his felicitations to the designated Ambassador on his new responsibilities and conveyed his best wishes for success. Highlighting Pakistan's long history of relationship with the United States of America, Mr. Masood Khan reaffirmed his resolve to strengthen economic and commercial relationship between both the countries. The Adviser stressed upon further enhancing business collaborations between both the countries which have a great potential of growth given the opportunities for business and investment available in Pakistan. The Adviser extended his full support and cooperation and hoped the bilateral collaborations between the two countries would further grow during the tenure of Ambassador Masood Khan.

**Sialkot incident against Islam: Pervaiz Elahi**

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi said on Thursday that Sialkot incident is against Islam and constitution of Pakistan and is a failed attempt to discredit Pakistan. He said this in his meeting with Dr. Hafiz Abdul Rehman Madani, Mian Muhammad Ahsan, Anwar Ahmad Khan, Dr. Hafiz Hamza Madani and Dr. Anwar Madani who called on him at the Governor House on Thursday. Parvez Elahi gifted a sample of Quranic verses and hadiths prepared with reference to finality of Prophethood to all the leaders. Speaking on the occasion, the speaker Punjab assembly said that Quranic verse and Hadiths have been prominently displayed in all government offices including Governor House. He said that those responsible for the Sialkot tragedy should be given the harshest punishment.

**APS tragedy: Govt seeks time to submit report**

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has sought time from the Supreme Court to submit a response in the case of the Army Public School attack in Peshawar and has stated that a cabinet committee has been constituted to meet with the martyrs' parents. Prime Minister Imran Khan had been directed by the Supreme Court to hear the views of the martyrs' parents, after which he directed the officials to form a Cabinet committee. According to the government's petition in the apex court, because the anniversary of the APS Peshawar attack is on December 16, the government has formed a committee to meet with the parents of the martyrs the same day. The petition's text requested that the conclusion of the meeting between the parents and the committee be brought to light, as well as given a time so that a comprehensive implementation report could be filed with the court. The court had asked for a signed response from the PM within four weeks, which ends on December 10. The Cabinet committee, on the other hand, was formed on the Prime Minister's orders. It includes Shireen Mazar, Omar Ayub, Fahmi-da Mirza, and Sahibzada Mehbub Sultan. - APP

**Bilawal wants IIOJK human rights violations be noticed**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Thursday urged the world community for fulfilling its duties to stop the serious human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). In a message on International Human Rights Day, he said, sadly today the world is celebrating the day, but human rights continue to be exploited in IIOJK. He said to promote the observance of human rights in the country, it is necessary to strengthen democracy and cultivate democratic traditions. "We are working to create an environment of peaceful coexistence where citizens are not discriminated based on color, race, religion or gender," he added. Bilawal Bhutto stated that PPP always defended human rights, adding that the founding chairman of the party Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto presented to the nation with a constitution that guarantees protection of all human rights. He said that PPP govts have taken many revolutionary steps to protect basic human rights, including multi-faceted legal reforms and establishment of fair institutional mechanisms. - DNA



LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar chairs a review meeting on special economic zones. - DNA

**Korea donates medical items to NDMA**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Government of the Republic of Korea in its commitment to support Pakistan's fight against COVID-19 has donated essential medical equipment to the National Disaster Management Authority of Pakistan. A handing over ceremony to mark the occasion was held at the Prime Minister's Secretariat on 9th December 2021. The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea H.E. Suh Sangpyo lauded the efforts made by the Pakistani Health Authorities to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus and its variants resulting in Pakistan having some of the lowest figures in theregion. The Chairman of NDMA, Lt Gen Akhtar Nawaz Satti appreciated the Government and the People of the Republic of Korea for their donation and stated that the donated equipment will help further strengthen Pakistan's response. The donated equipment included 2000 Test Kits, 5 Ventilators, and 10 Oxygen Concentrators. Dr. Nausheen Hamid - Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination attended the ceremony as the chief guest and hoped that Pakistan and Korea will further enhance cooperation in fighting against the pandemic and in Disaster Risk Management.

**US Embassy nominates Amna Baig for prestigious award**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: US Embassy Chargé d'affaires Angela P. Aggeler hosted an event to mark the 30th anniversary of the 16 Days Against Gender Based Violence campaign. The guest of honor was Assistant Superintendent of Police Amna Baig, an Islamabad-based police officer in charge of the law enforcement's Gender Protection Unit - a government initiative to facilitate women and transgender individuals in their fight against discrimination and injustice. "Even though gender-based violence is pervasive, it is not inevitable," Charge d'affaires Aggeler said at the event. "It can and must be prevented. This is why we take this time each year to reinvigorate our efforts against gender-based violence and to call for greater collective and individual action to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against women." She added that it was in this spirit that the Embassy nominated Assistant Superintendent Baig for the 2022 U.S. Secretary of State's International Women of Courage Award, which recognizes women from around the globe who have demonstrated exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for peace, justice, human rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment. In its nomination, the Embassy noted that Assistant Superintendent



Baig serves as a role model for young Pakistani girls to pursue their dreams despite the obstacles they may face. The U.S. Mission takes an active role in the Global 16 Days Against Gender Based Violence Campaign every year, and this year was no exception. Amongst the many activities across the country, the U.S. Mission sponsored a virtual photo exhibit of heroes who have made Pakistan a safer society for women, a martial arts training program with girls, a film series in collaboration with the Dastak organization, and a student poster competition to promote a future free from gender-based violence. The Global 16 Days Against Gender Based Violence Campaign began in 1991. Today over 6,000 organizations in approximately 187 countries have participated in the Campaign, reaching over 300 million people. The spirit of the original campaign remains as relevant today as it did in 1991, as gender-based violence remains a threat to peace, stability, and economic growth worldwide.

**Dr Nudrat wins ADR lawyer award**

The awards were organized by Ministry of Law and Justice, Women in Law Initiative, Group Development Pakistan with support from the Australian High Commission and British High Commission

DNA

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's 1st Women in Law Awards 2020-21 and Symposium on Diversity and Inclusion were held in Islamabad. Dr Nudrat Piracha won the best Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Lawyer award. The awards were organized by Ministry of Law and Justice, Women in Law Initiative, Group Development Pakistan with support from the Australian High Commission and British High Commission and were distributed by the law minister's office. Dr. Nudrat E. Piracha is the first woman in Pakistan to have qualified as a Doctor of Juridical Science (S.J.D), which is the highest degree in law awarded to people with exceptional academic and professional record. She is a Fulbright scholar, a Weinstein JAMS International Fellow for 2018, and the first lawyer from Pakistan to become a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, UK.



Dr Piracha is partner at the firm Samdani & Qureshi, Islamabad. In the past, she had dealt with corporate issues, commercial and investment arbitrations and has cross-border issues and transactions. She also worked on cases like Bayindir concerning an approximate claim of USD 800 million, Agility concerning an

approximate claim of USD 650 million, and advised the government concerning annulment of the Riko Dik dispute valuing approximately 6 billion dollars. She is also advising the government as a member of a twelve-member committee on improving the international investment regime of Pakistan and eight member committee on inter-

national law. She is also author of treaties on investment arbitration, which is referred to by giants in the field as a "uniquely impressive tome." She has been referred to by Judge Charles N. Brower (Judge of the International Court of Justice, Iran-U.S. tribunals and arbitrator for over fifty years) as truly a "Wonder Woman" of international law. Pakistan in international cases has lost significant battles before international forums. The resistance against ADR has been witnessed during its development stages in other more developed countries as well. There is a dearth of expertise in the area in Pakistan and people are comfortable with what they know and understand. It is often thought that the users of the system are not sufficiently trained to effectively pursue international ADR. But ADR is the need of this time and age and cannot be avoided for too long, and internationally acclaimed professionals like Dr Piracha are an asset to the country.