



Saturday, December 11, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

Islamabad POST

Germany's Chancellor Scholz Olaf eyes stronger EU relations

Detailed News On Page-07

Bond Premiere in Pakistan a step ahead

Detailed News On Page-08



Indonesian envoy meets Punjab minister

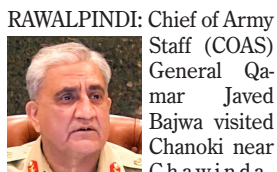
Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

Army Chief witnesses military drills

STAFF REPORT



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa visited Chanoki near Sialkot on Friday. According to a statement issued by the ISPR, during the visit, the COAS witnessed exercise: 'Victory Shield' of Gujranwala Corps troops. He was briefed on objectives, planning parameters and conduct modalities of the exercise which is aimed at enhancing operational preparedness of formation, encompassing defensive and offensive tasks in response to any misadventure by the adversary.

Nato should end Ukraine, Georgia vows

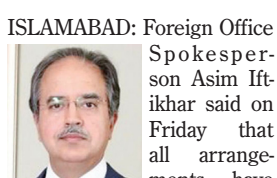
DNA



MOSCOW: Russia demanded on Friday that NATO rescind a 2008 commitment to Ukraine and Georgia that they would one day become members and that the alliance should promise not to deploy weapons in countries bordering Russia that could threaten its security. The demands were spelt out by the Russian foreign ministry in its fullest statement yet on the security guarantees that President Vladimir Putin says he wants to obtain from the United States and its allies.

All set to host OIC session: FO

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office Spokesperson Asim Iftikhar said on Friday that all arrangements have been finalized to host 17th Extraordinary Session of OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on 19th of this month in Islamabad. He said we are getting positive response on the invitation extended to member countries.

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday.

- Editor

Inside...

DC expresses severe dissatisfaction in DCC's meeting - Page 02

Political parties acclaim Communist Party of China - Page 03

Pakistan advised to learn from China's experience - Page 04

Saudi Arabia targets banned ultra-conservative proselytisers - Page 05

Biden assures Ukraine's leader of US support - Page 06

Aliyev signs decree to speed up development of Karabakh - Page 07

National leader Heydar Aliyev contribution undeniable: Envoy - Page 08

Green Line bus project inaugurated

PM says federal govt will complete K-IV project by Sept 2023 to fix Karachi's water woes

NAZIR SIYAL / DNA

KARACHI: Underscoring the point that a modern transport system was a must for the city of the 21st century, Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Friday that in Karachi's development lay Pakistan's development. Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Green Line Bus service project in Karachi, he said that the entire United Kingdom (UK) depended on its capital London for its progress and prosperity, and the city had the world's most modern transport system.

"Same is the case with several Chinese cities," he said, and added, "Even Tehran, the capital of Iran, which has been hardest hit by the sanctions, has modern transport facilities. Iran collects \$500 million in revenue and spends it in a systematic manner. In comparison, Karachi doesn't even collect \$30m," PM Imran noted, and stressed the need for giving the Sindh capital autonomy so that the local government system could succeed. "We don't just make promises, we deliver," he boasted. PM Imran said unfortunately no government in the past had ever concentrated on the improvement of

Continued on Page 06

PML-N slams PTI govt

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Mocking at Imran Khan's claim that he will make 'Naya Pakistan' after becoming the country's prime minister, Opposition Leader in the National Assembly and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif said on Friday that the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) government was continuously increasing the electricity rates.

In a statement, he said this was the real face of 'selected' prime minister's Naya Pakistan that he had set out to build. "Instead of providing relief to the people, the government is fleecing them," he said, adding this was not a government but complete collapse of governance.

Continued on Page 06



KARACHI: Prime Minister Imran Khan inspecting Green Line Rapid Bus Transit System. - DNA

UK court permits Assange's extradition

MONITORING REPORT



LONDON: A British appellate court opened the door on Friday for Julian Assange to be extradited to the US by overturning a lower court ruling that found the WikiLeaks founder's mental health was too fragile to withstand the American criminal justice system. The High Court in London ruled that US assurances were enough to guarantee Assange would be treated humanely and directed a lower court judge to send the extradition request to the home secretary for review. The home secretary, who oversees law enforcement in the United Kingdom, will make the final decision on whether to extradite Assange. However, the appellate court ruling handed down on Friday is likely to be appealed. A lower court judge earlier this year refused an American request to extradite Assange to the US to face spying charges over WikiLeaks' publication of secret military documents a decade ago. District Judge Vanessa Baraitser denied extradition on health grounds, saying Assange was likely to kill himself if held under harsh US prison conditions. The US appealed, challenging the notion that Assange's mental health made him too vulnerable to withstand the US judicial system. Lawyer James Lewis said Assange has no history of serious and enduring mental illness and does not meet the threshold of being so ill that he cannot resist harming himself.

Korean govt reschedules Pakistan's debt

The Ambassador says Korea stands by Pakistan and aims to enhance bilateral economic relationship between the two countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Mian Asad Hayat Din and the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Suh Sangpyo signed an agreement here in Islamabad for the rescheduling of external debt of Pakistan owed to the Republic of Korea for the year 2020 and first half of year 2021.

This agreement comes, following months of negotiations leading up to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Treatment of Debt Service and its Amendment signed between the Republic of Korea and Pakistan in June and December, 2020 respectively. It is pertinent to mention here that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank called on all official bilateral creditors to suspend debt payments from the International Development Association (IDA) countries in March, 2020 by the G20 Finance Ministers agreement on the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) in April, 2020 and the concerns expressed by the Paris Club regarding the economic and social impact of COVID-19 crisis on the poorest countries of the world.



The Ambassador spoke at the ceremony that the Republic of Korea stands by Pakistan and aims to enhance bilateral economic relationship between the two countries. The Secretary, Mian Asad Hayat Din appreciated the Ambassador for paving the way for this agreement and thanked the Government of the Republic of Korea for its everlasting support to Pakistan. In the side-lines of the signing ceremony, the Ambassador additionally met with the Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Zulfikar Haider Khan and discussed matters of mutual interests.

Saudi Crown Prince in Oman, Kuwait

On arrival, Prince Mohammed was received by his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

NEWS DESK

KUWAIT CITY: Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman arrived in Kuwait on Friday after leaving Bahrain, the fourth leg of his tour of Gulf countries aimed at bolstering relations. On arrival, Prince Mohammed was received by his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He was later received by the Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who bestowed upon the crown prince the Order of Wisam Mubarak Al-Kabir for his efforts "to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and understanding between the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council," Saudi Press

Correction

ISLAMABAD: The news story of Mohammad Bin Salman's visit of Qatar published on December 10, carried the headline "MBS visits Kuwait", which was in correct. Kuwait was wrongly written instead of Qatar. The error is regretted. - Editor

Agency reported. The crown prince sent a cable of thanks to Bahrain's rulers after his departure from Manama. "As I leave your brotherly country, it gives me great pleasure to express to Your Highness my thanks and appreciation for the warm reception and hospitality that

Continued on Page 06

Commemoration of 100th anniversary of Iraqi State

Ambassador of Iraq Hamid Abbas Lafta says, due to the recklessness and tyranny of the dictatorial regime that controlled Iraq from 1968 to 2003, the wars and the siege that was imposed on the people, followed by the occupation and terrorism of al-Qaeda and ISIS and the former dictatorial regime made against the neighboring Islamic Republic of Iran

CENTRELINE REPORT/DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iraq to Pakistan Hamid Abbas Lafta has said we are celebrating the centenary of the founding of the Iraqi State. On 23rd August, 1921, the world welcomed Iraq as a country with its geographical, international entity. During the nineteenth century, Iraq did not stop its cultural, economic and political movement and its role in the region and the world, especially after the sufferings of world wars by the international community. It was a destination for Arabs and Muslims to seek worldly and religious knowledge, Iraq was the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and many regional and international organizations. The Ambassador expressed these views during a reception he hosted to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Iraqi State. A large number of diplomats, members of civil society and govt officials attended the reception. Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Noorul Haq Qadri was the chief guest. In May 1920, the Twentieth Revolution erupted after the disappointment of Iraqi Natives at Britain's failure to fulfill the promises for an independent state. This led a peaceful march that started from the city of Al-Rumaitha in southern Iraq to demand the formation of an Arab government affiliated to a national council

elected by the people. Later on it turned into armed confrontations with the occupied forces that included all Iraqis. The Twentieth Revolution was an important turning point in the modern history of Iraq in which all the meanings of heroism and sacrifice were embodied. It was a real start in gaining freedom and independence from the British occupation and an explicit rejection of foreign domination and control over the country; as a result a constituent assembly was formed headed by the Prime Minister of the transitional government at the time. The Naqib Al Ashraaf of Baghdad, Abdul Rahman Al-Naqeeb, who performed many tasks, most notably the election of a king to the throne of Iraq, the formation of Iraqi ministries, institutions, departments to perform governmental tasks. That continued until Prince Faisal bin Al Hussein was elected King of Iraq on 23rd August, 1921. The monarchy in Iraq lasted for nearly 37 years, during which three kings succeeded in ruling until 1958. It ended and the government transitioned into a republican type of government. Iraq was one of the first countries that managed to get rid of the British Mandate and gained full independence. According to a resolution of the League Council that was similar to the current UN Security Council, which represented the international legislative authority at that time, issued on 3rd August 1932. It also included the recognition of Iraq as the 57th state



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iraq Hamid Abbas Lafta speaking on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Iraqi State. - DNA

country of the world and a new member of the League of Nations. Iraq was also able to obtain status of the state according to international law on 3rd October, 1932. As you know, due to the recklessness and tyranny of the dictatorial regime that controlled Iraq from 1968 to 2003, the wars and the siege that was imposed on the people, followed by the occupation and terrorism of al-Qaeda and ISIS and the former dictatorial regime made

against the neighboring Islamic Republic of Iran, and against the sister State of Kuwait. The country and the people of Iraq were subjected to difficult, compelling and destructive conditions. Iraq has defended, sacrificed blood and wealth not only for its land, sovereignty and dignity, but also fought ISIS and defended human dignity everywhere for the security and stability of the world and the region. Terrorism did not only

target Iraq but as a matter of fact, it targeted all countries and capitals of the world. Iraq has become and still is a starting point for regional and international cooperation to combat terrorism, takfiri and extremist ideology. It is a platform for information exchange, cooperation, security and coordination against terrorist ideology and extremism. He added, the remembrance of this occasion represents the culmination of the efforts of Iraqis and their continuous quest to form their identity that brings together the different spectrums of the Iraqi people, and the efforts made over the past hundred years to build their free, independent, democratic and pluralistic state in which all Iraqis can live united by a written constitution. It was a time when Iraq held its legislative elections, which represent its inclination to achieve freedom and democracy. Ambassador Lafta said let us declare war on pests that threaten human health, let us declare war on poverty and corruption, and let us declare war on erosion factors that threaten our climate and existence. We strongly value our growing relations with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and opening up horizons for cooperation in cultural and military fields, as well as its efforts to play an effective role in extending regional security and stability.

- Detailed coverage in the coming issue of Centreline

DC expresses severe dissatisfaction in DCC's meeting

The meeting detailed review of the development schemes throughout the district along with Annual Development program was done

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

LODHAN: Deputy Commissioner Captain (R) Shoaib Ali expressed severe dissatisfaction over the performance of the concerned departments in District Coordination Committee's meeting, meeting was held in Deputy Commissioner Office's Committee Room. In the meeting Member Provincial Assembly Chaudhry Zawar Hussain Waraich, Leader PTI Nawab Amanullah Khan, Muhammad Faraz noon, Deputy Director Development Fahad Anwar and other concerned department heads were there. The meeting detailed review of the development schemes throughout the district along with Annual Development program was done.

While addressing with the meeting Deputy Commissioner said that public welfare and provision of basic facilities to the public is Government Punjab's top priority, he added that all departments should work with strong plan of action for public service. All ongoing and new development projects should be completed on time. Deputy commissioner said that suggestions of public representative's for their constituency represents the provision of basic facilities to the public, he added that Government officials should fulfill the suggestions coming from the public representatives according to the rules and regulations and for solution utilize all the resources and complete professionalism. In the meeting detailed review of the ongoing development projects in the district was done. Deputy Director De-

velopment told that in the district in accordance with Annual Development Program 2021-22, work orders of 54 schemes were issued. In the meeting review of 10 schemes including 5 road sector projects, 1 public building, 3 of Sports and Youth Affairs, 1 of Livestock and Dairy Development. He told that throughout the district development of 60 development schemes is in progress which includes 16 of Road Sector, 3 of Higher Education, 1 of Special education, 3 of Primary and Secondary Healthcare, 2 of Government buildings, 1 of Transport Sector, 1 of Governance and Information Technology, 16 of Local Government and Community development and 17 of Water Supply and Sanitation. In the meeting Road Sector Projects include Bypass Road Adda Dhanot, Duniyapur-Mailsi Road, Head Karanwala to Sardarpur Jhandeer, Chowki Soobay Khan, Manjha Kotla Road's extension and maintenance, Lodhran to Jalalpur Pirwala through Bahadurpur 39.80 kilometer road's construction, two-way Khanewal-Lodhran Road's 43 kilometer long metal road patch's construction, 20 kilometer remaining road in accordance to phase two of two-way Lodhran-Kehror Pakka-Mailsi-Vehari Road project were reviewed. In the meeting District Public Prosecutor Lodhran's Office's construction, Kehror Pakka's new stadium's construction, Duniyapur's new stadium's construction, construction of Tehsil Sports Complex in Kehror Pakka and on union council level improvement of Veterinary Services in District Lodhran were reviewed.



KP CS inaugurates anti-polio drive, vows resolve for polio eradication

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr. Shehzad Khan Bangash Friday inaugurated the last anti-polio drive of the year here Friday at Hayatabad Medical Complex (HMC) by administering polio and vitamin A drops to the children. Secretary Health KP Tahir Orakzai, Additional Secretary Health & EOC Coordinator Abdul Basit, Medical Director Hayatabad Medical Complex, Shahzad Akbar, Hospital Director HMC, Shahzad Faisal, Provincial Team Lead Polio, Dr Andrew Etsano and EPI staff were also present on the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Shehzad Bangash reiterated strong political commitment for the eradication of polio virus from the region saying that government was taking every measure to ensure children were protected from the lifelong paralysis by carrying out regular anti-polio drives. He said that government was also ensuring that COVID SOPs were strictly followed by the teams and all stakeholders during anti-polio drives adding that the government was giving equal attention to other antigens of essential immunization to build immunity of children against all the ten deadly diseases. Responding to media query, the top provincial bureaucrat said that strict security measures were taken for the polio campaign

and over 40000 law enforcing personal were deployed with teams to ensure foolproof security and smooth conduct of the campaign. Earlier, Additional Secretary Health & Coordinator EOC Abdul Basit informed media that the five days anti-polio drive will be conducted in all districts including Afghan Refugees camps of the province from December 10, next wherein more than 6.4 million children will be administered polio drops along with vitamin A drops to build their gut immunity against the crippling virus. Abdul Basit said that a total of 30,524 teams have been constituted for the campaign out of which 27,355 are mobile teams, 1902 fixed teams, 1130 are transit teams. Likewise, he said, that 7370 area in-charges have been deployed to oversee the quality of the campaign whereas more than 40000 police officials will be deployed with teams as part of a security plan for the anti-polio drive. He said that this campaign was of high importance as quality campaigns in the low transmission season can help stop virus circulation in the region and knock out the menace for good. "People should not adhere to anti-polio propaganda by vested elements as ensuring healthy life to children was the prime obligation of the caregivers and every responsible citizen of the country," he stated. — APP



LPGA delegation calls on DC

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: The delegation led by Chairman LPG Association Irfan Khokhar called on Deputy Commissioner Ali Shehzad. Additional Deputy Commissioner General Qaiser Abbas Rind, Assistant Commissioners City and Sadder Sahibzada Muhammad Yousof, Mansoor Qazi, Civil Defense Officer Rana Muhammad Abbas, 1122 and Officers of other departments were also present. Chairman LPG Association apprised the problems faced and assured all possible cooperation for further improvement of safety matters. He said that the call for two-day strike has also been withdrawn. He said that implementation of SOPs designed to ensure protection of human lives was being ensured. Welcoming the assistance of the LPG Association officials, the Deputy Commissioner said that administration was working hard to ensure safety issues. However, the problems faced by the LPG Association will also be resolved for which the district administration is active. He also directed the Assistant Commissioners to monitor the LPG shops.



FAISALABAD: State Minister for Information & Broadcasting Farrukh Habib in a group photo after distributing shields among the students during a Pakistan IT Professionals Conference of National University of Computer & Emerging Sciences on late Thursday night. — APP

Modern, quality education imperative: Farrukh Habib

Covid changed the world, adding that education and economy of Pakistan were badly affected by the virus, but the govt took timely decisions and started online education and telemedicine to facilitate people

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib has stressed the need for imparting modern and quality education to tackle the challenges facing the country currently. He was addressing an award distribution ceremony at FAST University, Chiniot Campus, on Thursday evening. He said that the youth were the asset to the country as 60 per cent population of the country comprised of youth in the age group of 18 to 35 years. He advised them to get education with dedication and come up with the new ideas for development of the country. He advised the youth to work hard to become the Shaheens of Dr Allama

Muhammad Iqbal. The minister of state said that COVID-19 changed the world, adding that education and economy of Pakistan were badly affected by the virus, but the government took timely decisions and started online education and telemedicine to facilitate people. He said that the Pakistani nation always faced tough times with courage. He said that Prime Minister Imran Khan was always criticised from cricket grounds to the prime minister-ship, but he had always achieved his goal successfully. He said that Pakistan's IT related exports had touched \$2 billion mark and the government was providing all support to help cross the figure of \$3 billion in the coming months. He said that the government was providing loans to the youth on lowest

mark-up under Kamyab Jawan Pakistan Programme to help them start their own business. The state minister said that the government was spending Rs 31 billion on expansion of the internet system in the country. He said that there was a vast scope of investment in FIEDMC zones in Faisalabad, adding that the government was establishing technology zones in different areas of the country and in this regard, an initiative had been taken from the capital city. He said that 5-G service would start in the country from the next year; however 3-G and 4-G would also be improved. Work on software related exports was also under way, he added. He said that the government had provided scholarships of Rs 50 billion in the country.

SME sector growth engine for economy: APBUMA chief

FAISALABAD: The Small and Medium Entrepreneurs (SME) sector is a growth engine for the national economy and the government must ensure its proper representation in the policy-making process with clear directions to the commercial banks to facilitate the applicants. Addressing an SME clinic,

organised by the All Pakistan Bedsheets & Upholstery Manufacturers Association (APBUMA) in collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Arif Ehsan Malik, central chairman of the Association, said that the global economy had faced severe problems due to COVID-19 pandemic and its ill-effects were still continuing.

He said that the major problem confronted by the SME sector was liquidity crunch and commercial banks must give priority to the sector so that they could exploit their inherent capabilities and enhance their production. Chief Manager SBP Sarfraz Ahmad Nadeem explained in detail various schemes introduced to facilitate the SME

sector. He said that the focus of the SBP was on youth and women, particularly young startups, so that they could materialise their innovative ideas into reality in order to revolutionise the economy. He said that the SBP had issued clear directions to the commercial banks to extend liberal collateral free loans to the SMEs. — APP



LAHORE: Indonesian ambassador to Pakistan Adam Tugio calls on Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Rai Taimoor Khan Bhatti. — DNA (News on Back Page)

PAC organizes conference on Hazrat Zainab (AS)

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council (PAC) organized a conference on the birth anniversary of Hazrat Syeda Zainab (RA) under the auspices of the Markazi Imam Hussain Council here on Friday. The conference was presided over by eminent scholar Dr Ghazanfar Mehdi, Chairman Markazi Imam Hussain Council, while Syed Wajid Hussain Bukhari was the chief guest. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Ghazanfar Mehdi said after the tragedy of Karbala, a convoy of prisoners led by Hazrat Syeda Zainab (RA) and Hazrat Imam Zainul Abidin (RA) reached Damascus, adding, along the way, Bibi Pak delivered 936 speeches, while Bibi Pak's sermon at Yazid's court became the most extensive human rights document in human history. While addressing on the occasion, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader Syed Wajid Ali Bukhari said there was a strange coincidence that the birthday of Syeda Zainab and the International day of human rights commence in the world on the "same day. — APP

Trade officers must play proactive role

Mian Kashif Zia congratulated the newly selected TIOs, pinning hopes that they would play their productive role in enhancing exports in addition to discouraging unnecessary imports

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Newly selected Trade & investment Officers (TIOs) have been entrusted ambitious task to bridge widening import and export gap and in this connection they must take business community into confidence by exploiting their professional skills and expertise in line with the prevailing domestic, regional and global ground realities, said Mian Kashif Zia Chairman Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PHMA) North Zone. He was addressing a meeting with TIO probationers who have been recruited and posted by the Ministry of Commerce. They are currently on a study tour of Faisalabad. During this meeting they had in depth discussions with the business community to understand the practical business related intricacies. They also discussed core issues in the prevailing domestic and international export environ. While giving a brief introduction of PHMA, said that it is an apex body of Knitwear & Hosiery Garments. "It has more than 2000 members comprising large, medium and small

enterprises across the country", he said and added that this sector is producing high value added products and contributing more than 3.8 Billion US dollars towards national exchequer. He said that PHMA also has ITS offices in Faisalabad, Lahore, Sialkot and Karachi. Mian Kashif Zia congratulated the newly selected TIOs, pinning hopes that they would play their productive role in enhancing exports in addition to discouraging unnecessary imports. He said that the main reason for widening gap between imports and export was the lack of communication between stakeholders and policy makers. He said that we should reduce our dependence on foreign loans and increase value added textile exports in order to earn precious foreign exchange for the country as countries which are economically strong are not only prosperous internally but also respected in the international community. Dr. Khurram Tariq Former Chairman Central PHMA said that we



must improve the image of Pakistan and stop the growing extremism under the guise of religion. "Incidents like the Sialkot tragedy are causing irreparable damage to the national repute and image", he said and added we must formulate a comprehensive strategy to curb this growing incidents of extremism. He further said that the private and public sectors have to play a collaborative role in the development of this country as the world has changed since COVID-19 with new opportunities of on line businesses. "We should take full advantage of these opportunities to stabilize our economy on sound footings", he added. In response to a question, he said that Pakistan has surplus power but the main problem is transmission. "World is heading towards value chain integration and hence newly selected TIOs must make space for Pakistani products in this value chain", he added. Nazish Sami, Director, Pakistan Institute of Trade and Develop-

ment, Islamabad, said that the government has started to put the national economy in the right direction by appointing trade and commerce officers purely on merit basis. She said that we have high expectations from the newly deployed officers and hope that they would come up to our expectations. She said that the purpose of this visit is to enhance the close liaison with the main stakeholders so that they could make workable and business friendly decisions while understanding the ground realities while performing their professional duties. Mr. Allah Dad Tarar Director, Fazal-ur-Rehman Rao, Hafiz Kamran, Kashmala Javed from TDAP Faisalabad while from PHMA Shaheen Tabassum, Mubeen Alam, Hafiz Rashid Mahmood, Haji Saleem, Rana Altaf Ahmed, Mohsin Javed, Muhammad Zubair, Hafiz Akbar and other members also participated in the meeting in addition to the probationers. On the occasion, Mian Kashif Zia, Chairman PHMA, presented an honorary shield to Madam Nazish Sami, Director, Pakistan Institute of Trade and Development.

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	05:33 am
Zohr.....	12:00 pm
Asr.....	03:22 pm
Maghrib.....	05:00 pm
Isha.....	06:29 pm



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
-----------------------	---------



Emergency

Rescue (Police).....	15
Bomb Disposal.....	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance..	1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....	9266044
Motorway Police.....	9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....	9222596
Rawalpindi.....	9270601-20



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....	115
PIA Flight Info.....	114
PIA Cargo.....	9280979
Railway Inquiry.....	117
Railway Exchange.....	9270831-20
WASA Rawalpindi.....	5555489
CAA.....	9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....	5611111
MH.....	5611116
Cantt Hospital.....	9270907-11
DHQ.....	5556311-4
RGH.....	9290301-7
Holy Family.....	9290322-7
PIMS.....	9261170-79
Polyclinic.....	9218300-09
Shifa International.....	4603666



Departments

CDA.....	9221334-43
CDA.....	9208301-04
Met Office.....	9250360-6
RDA.....	5555864
TMA.....	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3



Complaints

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



Islamabad Metropolitan

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



Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....	0331-5022125
-----------------	--------------

Political parties acclaim Communist Party of China

Sherry says China friendship unites Pakistani political parties, Mushahid welcomes decision not to attend US 'Democracy Summit', Fakhar Imam urges learning from 'China Model' of poverty alleviation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-China Institute (PCI) organised a first-of-its-kind Webinar on "6th Plenum of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC); What does it mean for China and the World?" under its flagship event series, "Friends of Silk Road (FOSR)". The Webinar was attended by over 70 participants online, and featured five speeches, including Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman Senate Defence Committee & Pakistan-China Institute, Ms Pang Chunxue, Deputy Head of the Embassy of China, Qasim Khan Suri, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Senator Sherry Rehman, Chairman Senate Foreign Affairs Committee & Parliamentary leader of Pakistan Peoples Party in the Senate of Pakistan, Syed Fakhar Imam, Minister for Food Security & Research. The dialogue was moderated by Mustafa Hyder Sayed, Executive Director of the Pakistan-China Institute. Commenting on the Friends of Silk Road Initiative (FOSR), he said that it has emerged as a key platform for bringing political parties, civil society, and key opinion leaders together. Today's conference, he maintained, demonstrates that Pakistan's different parties and leaders maintain the consensus to strongly support China and CPEC. Moreover, he said that we welcome the 6th Plenum of the 19th Central Committee's



historical resolution which is the 3rd most important resolution passed by the CPC in its history, the first two of which were under Chairman Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping. The panelists discussed the 'Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century' which was adopted at the Sixth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on November 11, 2021 and its implications for China and the World in a rapidly changing regional and international political scenario. Senator Mushahid Hussain welcomed the

historic 6th Plenum of 19th Central Committee of the CPC, saying it's results would be far-reaching in terms of policy continuity and stability. He welcomed Pakistan's decision not to participate in the 'Democracy Summit' hosted by the US Administration as it's agenda was driven by ideological geopolitics, a throwback to the Cold War era. Weaponization of democracy is counterproductive in today's era of globalization when challenges like Coronavirus Pandemic and Climate Change require collective efforts through wider cooperation. Senator Mushahid Hussain said the important message from US was not the 'Democracy Summit'

but the December 7 report from Harvard University on 'The Great Tech Rivalry: China vs US'. Quoting from the report, which says: 'China has displaced US as world's top hitech manufacturer producing 250 million computers, 25 million automobiles and 1.5 billion smartphones in 2020'. Senator Mushahid Hussain said this technological prowess and progress of an Asian country like China is the real reason driving the West's new Cold War as they're falling behind China. The Harvard report further says: 'China possesses the might, talent and ambition to surpass the US as the world's leader in AI in the next decade'. And Harvard report has a stark conclusion that China is leading in foundational technologies of the 21st Century: Artificial Intelligence, 5G, Biotech, Semi Conductors and Green Energy. Given this context, and given our national interests, Senator Mushahid said Pakistan is standing on the right side of history and Pakistan-China relations are not tactical nor transactional nor directed against any other country, rather these ties are the drivers of a new regional connectivity based on economy, energy and ecology, ports and pipelines, roads and railways, with both protecting each other's core interests. He also quoted an opinion survey of Harvard University's Ash Center in July 2020 which stated that 'over 85% Chinese people expressed satisfaction with role of CPC', adding this was because CPC had delivered by changing Chinese lives for the better.



ISLAMABAD: CEO Serena Hotels, Aziz Boolani, General Manager ISH Michel A Galopin and others posing for a picture on the occasion of Christmas tree lighting ceremony at Islamabad Serena Hotel.

Senate body on NH Services meets

ISLAMABAD: To probe the matter of non-issuance of No Objection Certificate (NOC) to Legend College, Multan by Pakistan Pharmacy Council (PPC), Sub-Committee of the Senate Standing Committee on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination after talking out the issue has decided to visit and inspect the condition of the said college on 14th Dec 2021. A meeting of sub-committee of the Senate Standing Committee on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination was held here at the Parliament House under the Convener'ship of Senator Sardar Muhammad Shafiq Tareen. Apart from Senator Sana Jamali and Senator Khalid Ateeb, Director General Ministry of Health, Vice President of Pakistan Pharmacy Council (PPC) and member PPC also attended the meeting. Senator Rana Mahmood ul Hassan participated as a special invitee in the meeting. After a detailed discussion on the subject of the non-issuance of NOC to Legend College Multan, the committee agreed to visit the college on Tuesday next week. Senator Rana Mahmood ul Hassan said that the Sub-Committee itself would visit the College to check the reality on the ground and compile a report. If the Legend College Multan does not meet the criteria set by PPC, then NOC should not be issued to them, he added. Member PPC reiterated that if the Legend college Multan fulfils the benchmarks set by PPC then NOC would be issued in due course of time. - APP

Webinar signifies skilled women's role in prosperity

ISLAMABAD: Experts at a webinar have emphasized upon removing gender parity for skills development in labour market as it would not only ensure socio-economic development especially of low income population but also contribute significantly towards national economic stability. The webinar 'Gender-parity in TVET for socio-economic prospects of Pakistan' was organized by European Union-funded TVET Sector Support Programme (SSP), Germany and Norwegian Embassy. Purpose of the event was to emphasize on the inclusion of women in labour market through skills development and to aware the general public about the significance of technical education and vocational training for women to access and excel in the labour market. The TVET SSP has been commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and is being implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in close collaboration with the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), provincial Technical Education and Vocational Training Authorities (TEVTAs) and large number of private sector organizations. The TVET SSP has been striving since the inception of its second phase for more women inclusion through access and conducive environment so that more technical skills are learnt by women and the gender gap is reduced for a durable, positive and strong impact on economic productivity. The webinar addressed the topics of gender balance, equality, improved access and quality of skills training as well as the challenges which are faced in real life leading to gender-incomparability in TVET as well as labour market. Mr. Markus Strohmeier, Managing Director and CEO Siemens Pakistan; Mr. Tobias Becker, Country Director, GIZ Pakistan; Syed Mazhar Ali Nasir, Senior Vice President, FPCCI; and Qurrat ul Ain Naveed, an entrepreneur, skills and entrepreneurship expert, were the panelists of the webinar. Giving his expert opinion in the webinar, Markus Strohmeier said that public-private partnership in the TVET SSP is the way forward for the inclusion of women. "This initiative is the means to polish their skills, and to compete and achieve their goals," he explained. Addressing the audience, Tobias Becker shed light on the role of GIZ Pakistan on behalf of the German Development Cooperation in implementing the TVET reforms in Pakistan. He said, "GIZ Pakistan in partnership with NAVTTTC is successfully implementing the TVET SSP and is delighted to see the positive outcome of this Programme." - DNA

Independent tribunal on Kashmir stressed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A colloquium titled "All Human, All Equal" on "Equality" - the UN-designated theme for International Human Rights Day 2021, was organised by Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution (IICR), an Islamabad based think tank, in collaboration with Legal Forum for Kashmir (LFK), an international advocacy group for Kashmir, and Institute of Research and Reforms (IRR). The event was moderated by Ms Sabah Aslam, Executive Director IICR. The panelists included Justice Ali Nawaz Chowhan, the former Judge at United Nations, Dr Farzana Bari, Ex-Director, Center of Excellence Gender Studies (Quaid e Azam University) and a Human Rights Activist, Dr Sameera Associate Professor National Defence University Islam-

abad, Sheikh Abdul Mateen, Representative of the Chairman All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Mukhtar Baba, media coordinator Muslim League Jammu Kashmir and a journalist from Indian Occupied Kashmir; Ambassador Bou said Al Haissam, International Human Rights Commission (IHRC) UN Geneva, Advocate Nasir Qadri Executive Director Legal Forum for Kashmir, Senator A. Rehman Malik, Former Interior Minister and Chairman Institute of Research and Reforms (IRR). While speaking at the event, Justice Ali Nawaz Chowhan said, Lawfare shall be employed against India because Pakistan cannot fight another battle. Kashmir is a disputed territory, usurped by India is bringing about demographic changes in Kashmir, which need to be countered legally. He called for constituting an

independent tribunal for Kashmir in Turkey under the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). "Why does not Pakistan invoke R2P for the solution of the protracted Kashmir issue," he added. While criticising the Azad Jammu

Kashmir with Pakistan. Speaking at the event, Dr Farzana Bari said the Human Rights Violation in Kashmir is unprecedented, and it is the resilience of Kashmiris which keeps the issue alive. She added that the UN has been unable to resolve the Palestinian conflict and is becoming irrelevant for the people at the receiving end of violence. Pakistan must garner support from the international community to highlight the atrocities carried out by In-

dia against the Kashmiris. "Kashmir belongs to Kashmiris, the Kashmiris must be allowed to decide their fate," she added. Dr Sameera, an Associate Professor at National Defence University, said Kashmir is an unfinished agenda under the UN resolutions. The only solution for Kashmir is to secede with any of the two countries; no third solution is possible as per historical documents. Emphasis must be laid on internationalism and resolution of the Kashmir issue under UN resolutions. No one can be subject to authority without prior consent, which aligns with the idea of peace. The consent must be granted to the Kashmiris in the right of self-determination to choose according to their aspirations. The abrogation of art 370, 35A, violation of human rights, is a grave

form of atrocities employed by Indian authorities in Kashmir. We urge the world human rights bodies to take account of the same. While addressing the event through video-conferencing, Amb Bou Said Al Haissam, Special Representative IHRC UN Geneva, while addressing the event through video link, optimism as the mainframe of work and UN aims to work hard towards no tolerance of human rights violation. "Kashmir issue is older than Palestine issue, the world politics lack resolve, we can't compromise over rights, and rights are non-negotiable." There are obstacles in solving the Kashmir issue; we cannot reach a solution by-passing history. It has to be a hundred per cent in favour of one of the parties. Kashmir belongs to Pakistan and should go back to Pakistan.

50pc Ehsaas beneficiaries are women: Dr. Sania

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant on Poverty Alleviation Sania Nishtar on Thursday has said that several steps are being taken under Ehsaas Programme for welfare of women. Addressing a function in Islamabad, she said fifty percent beneficiaries of all the initiatives under Ehsaas Programme are women, and this number is increasing day by day. The special assistant said women are benefitting from Ehsaas Kafalat, Ehsaas Amdan and Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarship programmes. The Ehsaas organized an event titled, 'Humein Ehsaas Hai Khwateen Ka' held on Friday to commemorate sixteen days of activism against gender-based violence. The event, chaired by Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar, was co-organized by, National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) and Quaid e-Azam University. Addressing on the occasion, Dr. Sania said, "Gender-based violence is not acceptable at any level". She said the incumbent government was fully committed to empower women. To ensure sustainable women empowerment, she said, Ehsaas fifty percent plus rule was squarely embedded in all Ehsaas initiatives including Ehsaas cash transfers, Ehsaas undergraduate scholarships, Ehsaas interest free loans and Ehsaas Amdan asset transfers.

Private Schools call for protests

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Members of All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association have called for protests against the eviction of 8000 private educational institutions from 42 cantonment boards of the country. Malik Abrar Hussain, Central President of All Pakistan Private Schools Association, told a press conference in Islamabad that the responsibility of education lies with the government. There are no education boards for the admissions of millions of students. More than three million students are studying in 42 cantonment boards. He said that All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association had called for protests. Hundreds of educational institutions are given notices. Our standard of education is declining, our number in Asia is after Afghanistan. The future of millions of children is in stake. Two different laws are running in one country which are leading the country towards ignorance. He said that there has been no hearing of the case in the Supreme Court for two years now. Our children and their parents are suffering from mental retardation.

Gang involved in looting people busted

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Koral Police has arrested four accused of a gang involved in looting people at gun point and recovered 11 bikes, five mobile phone, LCD and and weapons from their possession, a police spokesman said. Koral Police team officials while using modern technology and scientific methods of investigation traced the gangsters. The accused were identified as Akash, Riwan, Adnan and Ahsaan and recovered 11 bikes, five mobile phone, LCD and weapons were also recovered from their possession. During the preliminary investigation, the accused have confessed their involvement in numerous incidents of looting people in various areas of city. Separate cases have been registered against the accused and further investigation is underway. SP (Rural) Muhammad Usman Tippu has appreciated the performance of the Police team and directed all police officials to ensure effective policing measures in their respective areas.

Briefs

No confirm
omicron
case in
Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary Health Dr Nosheen Hamid on Friday said there was no confirm case of the omicron variant in the Pakistan, only a suspect detected in Karachi on Thursday.

National Institute of Health (NIH) will confirm after the tests and that will take few days in final result, whether it was omicron or not, she said while talking to a private news channel.

She said the omicron variant spreads quickly, but no need to be panic in this situation, the virus also spread because people were not vaccinated, she added.

She appealed people to get vaccinated at earliest those who have not done yet to avoid this virus and save precious human lives.

She also confirmed that the 35 percent of population have been fully vaccinated and around 53 per cent people were partially vaccinated, adding the government was trying to reach upto 70 per cent at earliest.

She said booster shots of pfizer doses above 50 years citizen have been started which was available on designated pfizer counter. The government was using different tactics to compel people to get vaccinated by stopping them to visit in markets, travelling, malls and other walks of life without vaccination cards. — APP

APHC holds
sit-in
before UN
Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: On international human rights day, All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) Azad Kashmir chapter organized a sit in demonstration in front of the United Nations Islamabad office here on Friday to highlight plight of Kashmiris in the Indian Illegal Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

The speakers at the event said India, despite signing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) document, was violating all human rights in the IIOJK. It was highlighted during the protest that Kashmir was under military lockdown since August 5, 2019.

Under the illegal and humiliating draconian law AFSPA, Indian occupational forces has martyred and disappeared thousands of Kashmiris people, besides completely blinding hundreds of people in Indian occupied Kashmir, the speakers noted. They said India was using different draconian laws to detain and arrest Kashmiris in false and fabricated cases. The APHC leaders urged United Nations to take strict notice of human rights abuses in Indian occupied Kashmir by Indian occupying forces and India should be made responsible of war crimes in international court of justice. — APP

DC notifies
Rs 10 rate
of Roti,
Rs 13 Naan

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Muhammad Ali has notified the rates of Roti and Naan and directed the authorities concerned to launch operation against the violators of the official rates.

The administration has fixed Rs 10, price of 100 grams Pateri Roti and Rs 13, rate of 120 grams Khameri Roti, Naan.

According to a district administration spokesman, the price control magistrates had been directed to conduct raids and check prices of Roti and Naan in different areas and take action against the profiteers. FIRs would also be lodged against the nabais, violating the official rates, he added.

Earlier, the administration had also notified the rate of imported sugar, Rs 90 per kg, local sugar Rs 89.75 and Chakki Atta, wheat flour Rs 58 per kg. A large quantity of imported sugar had been made available in the open market in Rawalpindi district. — APP

Pakistan advised to learn
from China's experience

Pakistan should also capitalize on its already existing goodwill in Africa owing to its historic role in the decolonization of several African nations and its significant contribution to the UN peacekeeping missions in the conflict zones of the continent

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan can learn a lot from China's successful foreign policy on Africa, which has remained consistent over the years and was aimed at human and infrastructure development in the neglected continent. The approach has earned China many economic and diplomatic dividends. Pakistan should also capitalize on its already existing goodwill in Africa owing to its historic role in the decolonization of several African nations and its significant contribution to the UN peacekeeping missions in the conflict zones of the continent.

This view was presented at a seminar titled 'Understanding East Africa' organized by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) under its 'Understanding Africa Program'. Ambassador (r) Tajammul Altaf, a senior research associate at IPS, was the session's keynote speaker, which was chaired by the IPS' Vice Chairman Ambassador (r) Syed Abrar Hussain.

Underlining the potential of the East African region in his presentation, Altaf said that it is the most populous region in Africa comprising 19 countries which are rich in natural resources, minerals, oil and gas, diamonds, gold, and iron ore. However, terrorism, abject poverty, poor governance, conflicts, and uneven models of development are biggest challenges in the region, he pointed.

Regarding China's economic development model in Africa, the keynote speaker was of the view that the Africa policy of China has remained consistent till date and Xi Jinping after assuming the presidency of China in 2013 has further augmented it by



increasing Chinese investment manifolds, which now stands at \$200 billion. Moreover, China has invested in building 24 seaports in 20 African countries apart from apportioning preferential loans for them, and pumping money in various sectors including infrastructure, communication, transportation, mining and extraction.

Commenting on the Engage Africa Policy initiative of the incumbent government, Tajammul Altaf rued that the government reneged on its decision of opening five new embassies/high commissions in Africa as the only high commission that has been opened in Africa in the last three years is operating in Rwanda. Besides, there are only nine functional embassies/high commissions in east Africa despite the fact that the region offers Pakistan tremendous economic and development opportunities.

He also deplored the fact that no Pakistani prime minister or high-level government official has visited Africa in the past several years reflecting the importance of Africa in the eyes of the policymakers, whereas first three foreign visits out of four of Xi Jinping, after assuming the presidency of China in 2013, were to Africa.

The former ambassador also urged the Pakistani leadership to formally visit East African countries and invite their defence ministers and senior officials to the International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS). He also stressed the need to open new missions in countries where Pakistan had deployed its troops under UN peacekeeping missions to tap on the existing goodwill.

To strengthen people-to-people contacts between Pakistan and east Africa, the speaker pressed for allocating more seats for East African students in Pakistani universities and offering capacity-building courses to state officials.

Moreover, he advised the government of Pakistan to join hands with friendly countries like China, the UAE, and Turkey that have invested heavily in the region to build long-standing bilateral and multilateral relations with African countries.

Concluding the session, Syed Abrar Hussain lauded Ambassador (r) Tajammul Altaf on giving the elaborate presentation, and underscored the need for Pakistan to rid of a myopic view of Africa which has kept Pakistan away from reaping the benefits of its existing goodwill in the region.

CDA starts
upgrading
tourist spots

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad—the beautiful is ready to regain its past glory as the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has stepped up its efforts to renovate all the tourist spots for boosting tourism in the city.

The authority has mobilized all its machinery to carry out renovation work at various sites to the convenience of the visitors, a CDA spokesman said on Friday.

Talking to APP, he said the CDA chairman himself was visiting the places to review the progress into the work. The work was underway at Lake View Park, Shakarparian, Damane-Koh and others.

The management of the civic agency had taken inclusive steps to make recreational places of Islamabad as model points, he said, adding the provision of missing facilities at these spots were also being ensured to avoid any inconvenience to the visitors. He said lavatories would be constructed at Lake View Park and Damane-Koh to facilitate the special persons. — APP

Three-day
food festival
'Taste Plus'
starts

ISLAMABAD: A three-day food festival featuring food and music titled "Taste Plus" started here on Friday at Jinnah Convention Center.

The festival was being organized by Media Sniffers in collaboration with various food outlets.

The three-day festival would entertain the visitors with food, music, entertainment and culture all under one roof. The opening ceremony was attended by a large number of families of Islamabad, Rawalpindi and surrounding areas.

On the first day famous singer Akhtar Chahal entertained the audience with his traditional style singing. Singer Mustafa Zahid and MZ would also perform in the three days festival. Abid Brohi will also entertain visitors at Taste Plus. — APP

NCRC
believes to
protect basic
human rights

ISLAMABAD: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, said Chairperson National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC), Afshan Tehseen Bajwa here on Friday.

In her message regarding International Human Rights Day being observed today across the world including Pakistan, she said the NCRC believes on ensuring and protecting basic human rights which were not only morally incumbent on all of us, but also guarantee an equitable and progressive country.

"We need to enable children and the youth in recognizing their rights and build their confidence so that they can grow up to be leaders who are champions of human rights", she said.

She said, "The NCRC is reaffirming its commitment to deliver the inalienable child rights to all the children under the age of 18. It is the role of the government, relevant authorities, and the society at large to prioritize human rights and child rights in the national development agenda so that we can prosper as a country. As a Commission, we vow to strengthen intra-provincial efforts and deliver our mandate as given to us by the National Commission on the Rights of Child Act, 2017. Let us remember: child rights are human rights."

Keeping in mind the recent Sialkot tragedy, the Commission calls upon the State, government, law enforcing agencies, civil societies, and all segments of the country to come together to ensure that people have access to their basic human rights with dignity and respect. It is only when people have full rights that the society is steered towards positivity, peace, tolerance, interfaith harmony, non-discrimination and justice, she added.

She said, the NCRC has been instrumental in advancing human rights since its inception through proposing nationwide and provincial policy recommendations, engagement with parliamentarians, and awareness raising. — APP

IG Islamabad recovers
'illegally held' people
from Secretariat PS

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Ahsan Younas on Friday recovered five people illegally detained at the Secretariat police station and suspended multiple cops.

According to details, Ahsan Younas, who has assumed his charge as IG Islamabad days back, visited the Secretariat police station and found that five people were illegally detained by the cops there.

"All five of them were arrested on drug peddling charges, however, after questioning it emerged that they had nothing to do with it," the sources having knowledge of the entire episode revealed. "The IG Islamabad then apologized to them and directed to release them immediately," they added. Moreover, SHO, additional SHO, and head Muharar of the police station were suspended over their alleged involvement in illegal confinement while DSP was issued a show-cause notice over it.

The appointment of Ahsan Younas as IG Islamabad has been welcomed by many quarters owing to his outstanding performances previously in the wake of rising street crime and robbery acts in the capital.



ISLAMABAD: A girl taking selfi on the occasion of lighting of Christmas Tree at the Islamabad Serena Hotel. — DNA

Authorities directed to
take strict action
against
smoke emitting
vehicles

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi, Muhammad Ali directed the authorities concerned to take strict action against smoke emitting vehicles.

According to a district administration spokesman, the DC issued instructions to the administration officers that no vehicle should be allowed to ply on roads without fitness certificate and strict action should be taken against vehicles emitting smoke so that the air quality of Rawalpindi could be kept at a good standard.

Regional Transport Authority had been directed to launch a special campaign in collaboration with traffic police to make the citizens aware about the inspection of their vehicles. The administration was making earnest efforts to control smog in Rawalpindi district while the authorities concerned were conducting raids against factories and brick kilns violating the rules.

He informed that 150 smoke emitting vehicles were impounded in different police stations and imposed fines amounting to Rs 150,000 during November.

He said 13 factories and brick kilns causing pollution were also fined amounting Rs 1.8 million during the said period. The spokesman said the DC had instructed the Assistant Commissioners and other administrative officers to personally inspect brick kilns and factories and take strict action against those polluting the environment. — APP

ARCS delegate visits Pakistan
Red Crescent
Society office

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A five-member delegation from Afghanistan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) visited Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS). They met PRCS team led by Chairman PRCS, Abrar ul Haq and discussed common areas of interest. The ARCS delegation was led by acting President Afghanistan Red Crescent Society, Moulvi Mati-ul-Haq Khalis. The other members of delegation included: Gulam Habib Hassam, Inamullah, Abdul hai, and Abdul Baseer. Vice Chairman, Mr. Asif Bajwa, Secretary General, Dr. Adeel Nawaz and other PRCS officers were also present on the occasion. In the discussion, President Afghanistan Red Crescent Society, Moulvi Mati-ul-Haq Khalis shed light upon the activities and humanitarian endeavors being undertaken by ARCS in Afghanistan. He particularly, praised contribution and cooperation of Pakistan Red Crescent Society in miti-



gating the suffering of Afghan people. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman PRCS, Abrar ul Haq said that Afghanistan is not just our neighbor but also a brother country. He further asserted that the PRCS would continue to provide its services for the Afghan people. He expressed that PRCS, would continue to help and serve the humanity to the best of its ability without any discrimination based on caste, color or creed.

Abrar ul Haq emphasized that con-

flicts, droughts, epidemics, pandemics, food shortages and translocations had impacted Afghan people massively. He asserted that in view of current challenges, we would not leave Afghan people alone in these tough times. "Pakistani nation is always standing with Afghan people, both Pakistan Red Crescent Society and Afghanistan Red Crescent Society, together, would make efforts for relief and service of Afghan people", he added.

Wajiha Qamar visits Aghosh College Murree

Honorable guests highly praised the efforts of Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan in providing state of the art educational and boarding house facilities to such a vulnerable strata of the society

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Education Mrs. Wajiha Qamar visited Aghosh College Murree on December 09, 2021. She was accompanied by Mr. Nasir Chaudhry, Chaudhry Afzaal, Imtiaz Abbasi, Ata ur Rehman Abbasi and other businessmen and political figures of Islamabad and Murree. The guests were welcomed by students of Aghosh College Murree. The Principal gave a thorough briefing on Alkhidmat and Alkhidmat's Orphan Care Program. The delegate visited the entire campus and witnessed the educational and boarding house facilities being provided to the resident students. Mrs Wajiha Qamar interacted with students and appreciated their talent and discipline.



Honorable guests highly praised the efforts of Alkhidmat Foundation Pakistan in providing state of the art educational and boarding house facilities to such a vulnerable strata of the society.

The guests joined the students at lunch and expressed their keen affection for them. Parliamentary Secretary for Education Mrs Wajiha Qamar pledged for all kind of support for Aghosh

College Murree through her office. She also endorsed her comments of appreciation in the visitors book. On this occasion Mr. Afzal Chaudhry generously contributed

for welfare of students at Aghosh College Murree. The honorable guests were presented the commemorative souvenirs by the Principal Aghosh College Murree.

What Taliban must do

Allegations made by Human Rights Watch (HRW) that the Taliban regime has been carrying out summary executions and kidnappings of former security personnel are very troubling because, if true, they go against promises made by the Taliban during Doha talks that preceded the US withdrawal and will serve only on purpose. And that is to delay the arrival of aid money as well as formal recognition of the regime, without which it can look forward to an unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe on its hands. The Taliban have denied any such assassinations or kidnappings, of course, but this matter will not go away so easily, not the least because they have yet to fulfill other promises, like inclusive government and women and minority rights, etc, as well. Now dozens of countries, headed by the US and EU, are demanding a thorough and transparent investigation into HRW's allegations. Kabul now has no option but to provide them with the proof they need because it is dependent on their recognition as well as aid money to keep the country running. Aid agencies are warning that hunger and starvation could now kill more people in Afghanistan than four decades of war and suffering put together. A very cruel winter has already set in and without food or adequate shelter, a very large majority of Afghanistan's population faces certain death if something is not done very urgently. Washington has faced very stiff criticism for holding back aid for political reasons because it is meant for the people of the country who have no business with politics or war. But since it is not budging from its position, and the Taliban made a long list of commitments before the war originally ended, surely it favours Afghanistan to honour those promises and get on with the business of rebuilding the country. There's no doubt that the Americans are adding insult to injury by keeping Afghanistan's money hostage, but the Taliban are doing themselves no favours either by forcing a stalemate. The effort that went into winning the war will amount to precious little if the country suffers even more after it. Presently, the Taliban's refusal to honour their own word is compounding the suffering of Afghanistan's people, and hurting the standing of countries that are lobbying for its recognition.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 183

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



New Threat

WITH the first suspected case of Omicron detected in Karachi, it is important for the public to not panic and the government to take immediate action. True; the new strain has been established to have a higher transmissibility rate than the delta variant. It is also now confirmed that the new strain also has improved vaccine resistance. But regardless, with two years of the pandemic under the belt, we are well-versed with most of the procedures we now have to implement. Contact tracing must be made a priority going forward. Once genome-sequencing has confirmed that this case was indeed the Omicron variant, all individuals that might have come into contact with the infected must be screened and kept under watch immediately. Having said that, it is likely that if one case has surfaced, others will be detected soon enough as well. The track and trace strategy can never be implemented perfectly in any case. This is why continuing the vaccination campaign and increasing the number of fully-vaccinated individuals is the most important step. There have been arguments made against this, since the vaccination efficacy rate reduces with the new variant, but this does not mean that the inoculation becomes completely ineffective. The shot can still be the difference between life and death. So far we have managed to only vaccinate over 54 million people fully. While that is a large number in absolute terms, compare it to Pakistan's total population of over 220 million, and that figure is only about 25 percent. It is time to be cautious; the government and the public have an equal part to play in this. We have been through this drill before with Delta and other instances of increased virality due to a mutation. Let us continue the good work.

Saudi Arabia targets banned ultra-conservative proselytisers

James Dorsey

Mufti Akbar Hashmi, an Indian Tablighi Jamaat cleric, appeared to confirm the ministry's concern in a head-on response to the campaign that denied the legitimacy of the kingdom's ruling Al-Saud family. "Why is Saudi Arabia afraid of Tablighi Jamaat? Why?... The Saudi government is extremely scared that people in the kingdom affiliated to the Taliban (Tablighi Jamaat) may rise against the government..."

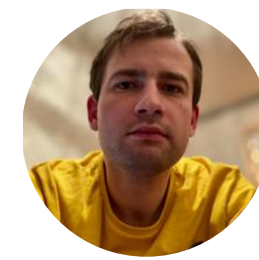
SAUDI Islamic affairs minister Abdullah bin Abdulaziz al-Sheikh has ordered imams in the kingdom to identify one of the world's largest Muslim movements as misguided, deviant, dangerous, and a breeder of militancy. Mr. Al-Sheikh's offensive against Tablighi Jamaat or Society for Preaching, a secretive transnational ultra-conservative Sunni Muslim missionary movement of South Asian origin long banned in the kingdom, came in response to members of the group celebrating the Taliban victory in Afghanistan and openly criticizing Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's social reforms. The Twitter account of Mr. Al-Sheikh's ministry

instructed imams to point to the group's "most prominent mistakes... mention their danger to society" and emphasize that Saudi Arabia forbids any "affiliation" with the group. To be fair, the ministry last month waged a similar campaign against the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood and the late scholar Muhammad Surur whose fusion of the Brotherhood's political ideology with Saudi Wahhabism's theological purity influenced prominent reformist clerics in the kingdom. The Tablighi, the largest group of proselytizers of any faith, insist that they are religious and spiritual, not a political group, and have nothing to do with politics or militancy. While largely accurate, it fails to explain why a fair number of Tablighi youth have over the decades joined Islamist and jihadist groups. Zahaack Tanvir, the Saudi-based editor of The Milli Chronicle, an online publication in Britain, who describes himself as an anti-Islamist "traditional Muslim," noted that the targeting of the Tablighi followed the resurrection of a year-old tweet criticizing the municipality of the holy city of Medina's plans for a shopping mall with cinemas and western-style entertainment venues. The controversial tweet was retweeted by Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani, one of Pakistan's most prominent Islamic scholars and a former Pakistani supreme court judge and ex-member of the Council of Islamic Ideology, the state-appointed body created to ensure that Pakistani legislation does not violate Islamic law. Mr. Usmani heads Wifaq ul Madaris Al-Arabia, the most extensive grouping of religious seminaries in Pakistan with some 23,000 associated madrassas. His membership in the Jeddah-based International Islamic Fiqh Academy that studies Islamic jurisprudence and law reflects his ties to Saudi Arabia. So does his chairmanship of the Sharia board of the Bahrain-headquartered Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) which promotes Islamic legal standards for Islamic financial entities. Mr. Usmani's criticism of the Jeddah development plan may have been particularly stinging, given his ties to the kingdom and status as a scholar. The targeting of the ultra-conservative proselytisers comes as reformist Saudi clerics are either incarcerated or forced to remain silent at the risk of imprisonment, and those aligned with the government are reduced to publicly rubber-stamping

Mr. Bin Salman's policies. Mr. Tanvir said that Mr. Usmani's tweet had sparked widespread criticism among conservative South Asian Muslims of the Saudi reforms, including lifting a ban on women's driving, expanding women's rights, and loosening of social restrictions and gender segregation, and greater professional opportunity for women. "Taqi Usmani's problem with Saudi reform reflects the anxiety of many Pakistani clerics who view themselves as bastions of Islam and having the right to act as caretakers of the Muslim world based on Pakistan being one of the first Muslim-majority countries to have been formed. The reforms also threaten the kingdom's patronage of Pakistani clerics," a Pakistani analyst said in an interview. Mr. Tanvir said in an online text message interview that the ministry's sensitivity was partly driven by the fact that the influential group, despite the ban, continued to raise funds in the kingdom and meet in private homes and hotel rooms. He did not hide his antipathy towards the Tablighi and the ultra-conservative Deobandi strand of Islam that shapes their worldview. Mufti Akbar Hashmi, an Indian Tablighi Jamaat cleric, appeared to confirm the ministry's concern in a head-on response to the campaign that denied the legitimacy of the kingdom's ruling Al-Saud family. "Why is Saudi Arabia afraid of Tablighi Jamaat? Why?... The Saudi government is extremely scared that people in the kingdom affiliated to the Taliban (Tablighi Jamaat) may rise against the government..." At about the same time, Tablighi mass prayers in Malaysia and Indonesia contributed to spreading the virus in Southeast Asia. Similarly, Pakistan quarantined 20,000 people in April of last year and searched for thousands more who attended a Tablighi congregation near the city of Lahore. Eleven Saudi nationals detained in last year's Indian government sweep of participants in the Tablighi gathering walked free after paying a US\$130 fine for visa violations that included illegal missionary activity and attending a religious congregation. The Saudi minister's targeting of the group suggests that they may not have had a warm welcome once they returned to the kingdom. — Dr. James M. Dorsey is an award-winning journalist and scholar and a Senior Fellow at the National University of Singapore's Middle East Institute.

No, Russia is not going to launch a mass invasion

Illia Ponomarenko



The Kremlin wants Ukraine to be its own, an untouchable part of its sphere of influence — and it is ready to go pretty far in this regard. But, of course, not too far. As powerful as it is, Moscow has to balance its goals and the price it is willing to pay. But what the Kremlin has achieved with its in-your-face military movements near the Ukrainian border is a high-stakes conversation with US President Joe Biden, who is trying to stop...

MOSCOW is using the crisis in Ukraine to secure leverage. Here's what the West needs to do to counter it. Ukraine is once again nervously anticipating a big war with Russia. It's the second time in the year 2021 that we, in Kiev, have this doomsday feeling as nearly 100,000 Russian troops surround the country. It's all over the news now. The Kremlin's warlike rhetoric, the satellite pictures, the maps predicting key attack directions. The streets of Ukraine's capital are calm and busy as usual. But some of us here have already googled "how to get a wartime emergency backpack ready". But this time around — if we put emotions aside — no, a grand invasion is unlikely in the form we expect. We shouldn't forget that Ukraine is a country of 41 million, the size of France. And it has a flawed, though very motivated military. Its civilian population has also proved its ability to form volunteer paramilitaries that fight desperately, wearing nothing but old sneakers and hunting gear. Invading, defeating, and swiftly occupying Ukraine for the sake of forcing its political leadership into a political deal would require a massive, multilayered military action equal to the scale of the Iraq War of 2003 or even greater. No matter what, Russia is currently not fully capable of achieving such a goal, either economically or politically. And we're not even talking about all the billions belonging to the Russian elite inner circle in the West that can be easily extorted, or the sanctions that could shutter the Russian economy and make the occupation even more costly. The price just does not match the possible prize of conquering Ukraine, to put it simply. Our enemy is evil but not stupid, and it loves its money and its villas in Italy. We know this, and they know this. What is happening in Eastern Europe right now is another giant intimidation campaign — and a pretty effective one at that, as we can see from the latest developments. As the previous crisis in April demonstrated, all the fear and all the tension involuntarily caught and spread by the media can become a very powerful tool for securing leverage. In many ways, the spear is, again, pointed at the West, not exactly Ukraine. So if it's not actual war and occupation,

what could the Kremlin want? Their wish list could be indefinitely long. But there's one thing that President Vladimir Putin of Russia has voiced loud and clear. Moscow wants a deal with the West on Ukraine. On December 1, the Russian leader overtly demanded that NATO assume legal obligations regarding non-extension into Eastern Europe. This automatically means giving the red light to any Ukrainian hopes of joining the Alliance in the foreseeable future, while our country is desperately seeking membership to save itself from the Kremlin's dark embrace. Putin doesn't want the West to send any military instructors or sell Ukraine any weapons, or establish any sort of military infrastructure in Ukraine. He even reportedly issued complaints to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey because of the sale of Bayraktar TB2 attack drone systems to Kiev that had seen their combat debut in Donbas in late October. The Kremlin wants Ukraine to be its own, an untouchable part of its sphere of influence — and it is ready to go pretty far in this regard. But, of course, not too far. As powerful as it is, Moscow has to balance its goals and the price it is willing to pay. But what the Kremlin has achieved with its in-your-face military movements near the Ukrainian border is a high-stakes conversation with US President Joe Biden, who is trying to stop his Russian counterpart from breaking all hell loose on Ukraine. In other words, for the first time in years, the Kremlin has managed to resume dialogue with the West regarding Russia's "red lines" in Eastern Europe, particularly Ukraine, and its exclusive sphere of influence. By threatening war, and therefore a giant refugee crisis in the region, Putin welcomes the West to take the easiest route possible and make concessions for the sake of peace and business as usual — again. And let's not forget that yet another sweet child of Moscow — the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project — is currently having a hard time being certified for full-fledged use in Europe as Germany welcomes a new government and a new chancellor. Let us admit that the threat of war is too tempting an instrument to avoid, especially when the time is right for Moscow. And besides, in many ways, the ongoing war scare in Europe serves the Russian regime well. It's all about what the Russian audience is currently seeing on their TV screens. The motherland is in danger again, a great war is coming again, brace yourself and stay united behind the national leader. Meanwhile, the Russian economy is plummeting, and Putin is facing yet another presidential campaign in less than two years. This works well in Russia's domestic context, reminiscent of the constant scares of the Cold War. The Russian regime relies heavily on this narrative, and it needs a war — but only on its TV screens. So, if the Kremlin keeps successfully over-using this instrument. What can be done in this situation? It comes as no surprise that Russia's most painful spot is the fact that the whole of the Kremlin elite prefers to keep their money, their assets, and their families in the West while robbing their own sorrowful country. The prospect of saying goodbye to the Kremlin's billions in the West is more than an effective tool of not only deterring a major war on Ukraine but also of making the Kremlin think twice before trying to please its ever-increasing ambitions. Even though the Russian war on Ukraine has continued since 2014, so far we have not seen the West's readiness to go that far. In many ways, this lack of resolve has led us where we are all now. But as fearful as it is, the new situation can be easily illustrated from anyone's experience from the streets. A street thug is not going to be impressed by one's desire "not to provoke," or "to establish an even dialogue," or "giving diplomacy a chance." What stops a street thug from coming for your purse is the following: the clearly demonstrated ability to meet his assault with a good old punch in the face. — Illia Ponomarenko is a defence reporter with the Kyiv Independent, a Ukrainian English-language publication. Source: TRT World

Don't let the crisis in Bosnia spiral into another catastrophe

Cj Werleman



Europe needs to create and integrate a genocide prevention strategy to keep history from repeating itself in the Balkans

THE UK Parliament recently debated the rapidly deteriorating situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), with elected lawmakers warning the country is teetering on the brink of civil war — one that will likely usher in a repeat of the violence that swept the former Yugoslav state during the mid-1990s and culminated in the mass killing of 8,000 Bosniak men and boys in what is commonly known as the Srebrenica genocide. The violence was also marked with systematic rape of thousands of Bosniak women. Alarmingly, the same political forces from three decades ago are playing the same dangerous game today. The seventh and current Bosnian Serb leader, Milorad Dodik, mimics the first — the convicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic — by weaponising Islamophobia and framing Bosnian Muslims as an existential threat to the Serbian people, while egged on by Europe's anti-liberal

leaders, including Russian President Vladimir Putin. The current crisis was triggered by Dodik's threats to dismantle the Dayton Accords and secede the Serbian entity Republika Srpska from BiH. It was response to a move by the Office of the High Representative (OHR) in July to ban Srebrenica genocide denialism, which has reached levels that are getting "out of hand" in recent years because of rising ultranationalism among Bosnian Serbs. "For all that painful history, the same Serbian ultra-nationalist forces have recently amped up their efforts to both deny the reality of the genocide and glorify the violence that contributed to it," observes Bosnian American commentator Riada Asimovic Akyol. "Serbian nationalist songs about slaughtering Muslims are frequently blasted during the day or night in order to terrorise the sparse population of Bosniak returnees in Srebrenica." Members of the UK Parliament have described the current situation as "truly frightening", prompting the government to send a new Special Envoy to the Balkans. But Labour Party MP Fleur Anderson, who chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the Prevention of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity, has urged Prime Minister Boris Johnson to go further. "There is much focus on diplomatic action and on the strengthening of NATO — and these are essential. But missing from the Government's response is peacebuilding in communities — also called civilian-led atrocity prevention — and having a genocide prevention strategy," she recently wrote. Her words were echoed by the International Development Committee (IDC), which has not only been commissioned to conduct an inquiry into the effectiveness of the UK approach to atrocity prevention within and outside conflicts, but also warns the UK and European Union must include and integrate a genocide prevention strategy to prevent "history repeating itself" in the Balkans. Sarah Champion MP, and chair of the IDC, says: "Atrocity prevention is cheaper, quicker

and more effective than trying to deal with the consequences of conflict... It is so obviously a good investment, not least because we could prevent human suffering and stop situations spiralling out of control." Both the IDC and APPG have outlined a genocide prevention strategy for Bosnia that adopts "better analysis systems" to not only spot and identify early warning signs of atrocities, but also prevent them. The first step, according to Anderson, is for the UK and EU to make a forceful statement condemning genocide denial and remembering the 8,000 Bosniak victims of the Srebrenica genocide, which will pave the way for greater diplomatic engagement from Brussels, NATO and the United States. Such "engagement" would include the imposition of sanctions on countries that support Serb separatist threats or ambitions and undermine the Dayton Accords; support for the OHR and its UN High Representative Christian Schmidt; and diplomatic and financial building blocks that encourage peace building efforts in Republika Srpska. This is a catastrophe that could be avoided with minimal resources, according to Karcic, who says NATO should "repeat the blueprint of the post-war deployment" by establishing a presence in Sarajevo and securing the strategic town of Brcko in the country's northeast. While a return to war and genocide in BiH is not inevitable, the EU and NATO must act swiftly and decisively, given Russia, China and Serbia are coalescing behind the Bosnian Serb leader and vowing to intervene if the West imposes sanctions on Republika Srpska. Ultimately, the promise of "never again" will remain unfulfilled if European and American leaders have forgotten it was their initial hesitancy and inaction that failed to prevent Serb forces from committing the first genocide on the continent since the Holocaust. — CJ Werleman is a journalist, author, and analyst on conflict and terrorism. Source: TRT World

Briefs

Green Line bus project inaugurated

FROM PAGE 01
the country's largest city's transport system. "I am witness to Karachi's degeneration in the past 50 years. We have seen its transformation into a cave because we did not focus on its administration," he said.
He said under the project, 30 buses would operate on the track, while 135,000 passengers would be able to avail the facility daily. He informed that the completion of the project cost the government over Rs35 billion.
The prime minister, on the occasion, congratulated Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms Asad Umar and Sindh Infrastructure Development Company Limited (SIDCL) on remaining determined and steadfast to ensure completion of the much-awaited project. Earlier, Asad Umar thanked the SIDCL and parliamentarians from Karachi for their efforts for the project. He said the Sindh governor was 'supervising' the project since the PTI came to power in 2018.
The minister recalled that although the project had been approved in 2016, but the PML-N government which stayed in power for the next 28 months even failed to build the project's infrastructure. "The order for the buses was also not placed and neither was the payment system designed," the federal minister said, and added the operation and maintenance tender was also not placed.
He added that the PML-N only thought about building a track surrounded by grills with no other facilities available. Earlier, PM Imran inaugurated the project, which will operate on a trial basis for the first 15 days before becoming fully operational on December 25.

PML-N slams PTI govt

FROM PAGE 01
He was of the view that only by getting rid of this government could people of the country heave a sigh of relief. "The anger and hatred welling up inside the people is not a good omen for Pakistan," he opined.
Former Prime Minister and PML-N leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has nothing to do with the Green Line project, three months project was completed in three and a half years.
He said there is neither a democratic system nor a stable parliament in this country. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi while talking to the media outside the accountability court Karachi said that the proceedings should be shown live to the people by installing cameras in the courts.
False references are made to suppress the opposition, everyone goes round the courts, who is responsible for this? Doesn't Chairman NAB have to answer for making fake references?, Abbasi added.
Shahid Khaqan Abbasi further said that the chairman NAB works on daily wages, one day he will also see the accountability of so-called chairman and justice will be served.

Saudi Crown Prince in Oman, Kuwait

FROM PAGE 01
I, and the accompanying delegation, received," the crown prince said, in a report from state news agency SPA. He added that the joint talks the countries held confirmed the strength of ties between them and the desire to deepen co-operation and strengthen relations in all fields.
He further wished Bahrain further progress and prosperity. Prince Mohammed was earlier received by King Hamad and his Bahraini counterpart Prince Salman bin Hamad upon his arrival at Sakhr Air Base airport in the capital, Manama.

Biden assures Ukraine's leader of US support

Biden spoke with Volodymyr Zelenskyy by phone for more than an hour Thursday. Biden assured Zelenskyy of support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden reached out to Ukraine's leader Thursday as the United States moved to take a more direct role in diplomacy between that country and Russia, part of a broader effort to dissuade Russia from a destabilizing invasion of its western neighbor. But any negotiations to peacefully resolve Europe's tangled East-West rivalries will present minefields for the U.S. president. Biden made his offer of American diplomacy during a two-hour online session with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday. Biden proposed joining the Europeans in negotiations not just to settle the conflict in eastern Ukraine but to address Putin's larger strategic objections to NATO expanding its membership and building mil-

itary capacity ever closer to Russia's borders. Biden spoke with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy by phone for more than an hour Thursday. Biden assured Zelenskyy of support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He also renewed a pledge that the U.S. and its allies would hit Russia with economic sanctions and intensify defensive aid to Ukraine and NATO allies nearest to Russia if Russia did invade, the White House said. The two called on Putin to calm the crisis and urged diplomacy. Biden said the U.S. was prepared to help with "confidence-building measures" to implement a 2015 peace deal. In a statement after the call with Biden, Ukraine said Zelenskyy was offering "clear proposals to



unblock the peace process and is ready to discuss them in various formats." Administration officials have suggested that the U.S. will press Ukraine to formally cede a measure of autonomy within its eastern Donbas region, which is now under de facto control by Russia-backed separatists who rose up against Kyiv in 2014. Decentralization of Ukraine

and a "special status" for Donbas were laid out in an ambiguous, European-brokered peace deal in 2015, but it has never taken hold. More autonomy could formally give residents of that region more authority over some local issues. The administration officials made no mention of ceding any territory. Biden also will have to finesse Ukraine's desire to join NATO. The

U.S. and NATO reject Putin's demands that they guarantee Ukraine won't be admitted to the Western military alliance. But senior State Department officials have told Ukraine that NATO membership is unlikely to be approved in the next decade, according to a person familiar with those private talks who spoke on condition of anonymity. For Biden, the challenge will be encouraging Kyiv to accept some of the facts on the ground in eastern Ukraine, without appearing to cave to Putin — a perception that could embolden the Russian leader and unleash a fresh line of condemnations by Republicans as Biden's popularity is already in decline. Ukraine may be asked "can you make some step forward on these areas," said

Steven Pifer, a former US ambassador to Ukraine. That could include measures such as allowing the Russia-allied Donbas region to control its own health care, police and schools, he said. "But I don't see Washington pushing the Ukrainians to take steps that would compromise their sovereignty or the ability of the national government when it came to making decisions," Pifer said. Ukraine, a former Soviet republic with deep cultural and historic ties to Russia, has in recent years sought closer integration with the West and membership in NATO. The alliance has held out the promise of membership but it has declined to set a timeline. Even before the current crisis, Ukraine was a long way from joining.

Napoli knock Leicester out of Europa League

DNA

LONDON: Brendan Rodgers admitted he doesn't know what the Europa Conference League is after Leicester's 3-2 defeat at Napoli condemned them to a place in the unheralded competition. Napoli sent Leicester crashing out of the Europa League as the Italian side advanced to the knockout stages in a dramatic conclu-

sion to Group C. Leicester were top of the group going into the final round of matches, but the defeat in Naples dropped them to third place, meaning they will enter UEFA's third-tier tournament in the knockout play-off round in February. "I've got to be honest I don't even know what the competition is," Rodgers said of the Europa Conference League. "I was focused on the Europa League and win-

ning this group or at the very least finishing second. I'm not sure what it is, but I'm sure we will find out soon enough." Napoli had blown a two-goal lead as Leicester hit back to level by half-time, but Eljif Elmas's second goal of the game won it for the hosts after the interval. Spartak Moscow finished top of the group after a 1-0 win at Legia Warsaw, secured by Zelin Khan Bakaev's 17th-minute goal. Leicester,

beset by Covid-19 cases and other illnesses, would have salvaged their Europa League place if Legia's Tomas Pekhart hadn't missed a stoppage-time penalty. Napoli ended in second place, two points ahead of Leicester, and will feature in the Europa League knockout round play-offs in February. Injury-hit Napoli took the lead in the fourth minute as Adam Ounas marked his first start for the club since 2019 with a clinical low strike from just inside the penalty area. Napoli struck again in the 24th minute when Andrea Petagna beat Leicester's offside trap and squared his pass to Elmas, who slotted past Kasper Schmeichel with ease. Jonny Evans gave Leicester hope when he fired home after Napoli failed to clear James Maddison's 27th-minute free-kick. Evans' first goal in Europe for eight years was followed in the 33rd minute by Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall's maiden goal for Leicester. Maddison's free-kick was only cleared to the edge of the area, where the 23-year-old midfielder smashed a superb volley into the bottom corner.



Root and Malan lead England fightback in first Ashes Test

BRISBANE: Joe Root and Dawid Malan put on a defiant unbeaten partnership of 159 to give England hope of salvaging a draw in the opening Ashes Test at the Gabba on Friday. A rejuvenated England were 220-2 at the close of play, with skipper Root on 86 and Malan 80, only 58 runs behind Australia. After England lost both openers in the session before tea, Root and Malan looked increasingly comfortable on the third-day Gabba pitch as they steadily wore down the Australian attack. Root's classy 86 not out is one short of his highest score in Australia and took him past 1,500 runs in a calendar year, the most ever by an Englishman, surpassing Michael Vaughan's 1,481 in 2002. Leading by example, the skipper barely offered a chance in his innings, stroking 10 boundaries including a sublime reverse sweep off spinner Nathan Lyon. After England's dismal start to the Ashes, when they were bowled out for just 147 in their first innings, it was just what they needed. "For him to carry on the form he had in our summer and the early English winter is fantastic and it's great signs for us as a team that Joe's playing well out here, and is leading from the front," Malan said. Lyon, still searching for his 400th Test wicket, never looked like breaking through. The South African-born Malan scored his only Test century on the last tour of Australia and although not as comfortable as his captain, he also looked in control. He did struggle with fatigue towards the close, however, and went down with cramp. Earlier, Travis Head scored a superb 152 to put Australia in what seemed a commanding position after their first innings. Australia were finally dismissed for 425 on Friday, 30 minutes before lunch, a handsome lead of 278. England then survived a tricky period and went to lunch 23 for no wicket. Rory Burns, who was out first ball of the series on Wednesday when clean-bowled by Mitchell Starc, was lucky to survive the dreaded pair when he was adjudged leg-before-wicket on Starc's sixth ball of the first over of the day. But after reviewing the decision, replays showed the ball was just missing the top of middle stump, and a relieved Burns survived. But he didn't last long after lunch and gloved a ball to wicketkeeper Alex Carey off Australian captain Pat Cummins. Haseeb Hameed looked in great touch and eased to 27, but he tried to glance a wide ball from Starc, only to get a faint touch to Carey. Malan knows that plenty more work lies ahead despite England's improved showing. "To come here today and do what we did after a day and half of hard fielding is fantastic, but that's only half the job," he said. — DNA

Diplomatic Olympic boycotts 'insignificant': Macron

French President Emmanuel Macron has confirmed that France will not be joining in a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic games, calling the move by others nations including the U.S. "symbolic and insignificant," reports the BBC. "I don't think we should politicize these topics, especially if it's to take steps that are insignificant and symbolic," Macron said on Friday. Macron has also said that he does not believe that the Olympics ought to be taken that held a "useful effect," accorded a complete boycott, and don't things with useful actions," Macron state that France would stand alongside the International Olympic Committee to protect athletes, which disappearance and treatment of the French Education Minister that France would not be joining a diplomatic boycott of Beijing's Olympics which must be protected from political he discussed France's rationale for not States, the United Kingdom, Australia, instating a diplomatic boycott of Beijing's tary Jen Psaki has said that countries must to diplomatically boycott the Olympics and that the White House would not be pressuring other countries to join the United States in doing so. France is scheduled to host the 2024 Summer Olympic games in Paris. — Agencies



Jerusalem is common cause of entire Islamic world

Erdogan also touched upon the recent crisis in Afghanistan and said that it is our common wish for Afghanistan to achieve lasting peace and stability. "We cannot afford to turn our backs on the Afghan people," he added

WEB DESK

ISTANBUL: The Jerusalem cause is not just the cause of a handful of brave Muslims, but the common cause of the entire Islamic world, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Friday. Speaking at the opening session of the 16th conference of the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (PUIC) in Istanbul, Erdogan said that defending Jerusalem means defending humanity. He also called on all member countries to avoid any action that can harm the Palestinian cause. "It is unfair and unscrupulous to make the Palestinians pay the price for the genocide against the Jews in Europe during World War II," he said, adding that as the descendants of an ancestor who ruled Jerusalem justly for 400 years, they do not want to see blood, tears and oppression in Palestine.

"We resolutely maintain our sensitivity regarding the status of East Jerusalem and the sanctity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque," he underlined. The way to permanent peace and stability is through the establishment of an independent, sovereign, territorially integrated Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital, Erdogan also said. Turkey may fix relations with Israel if the Tel Aviv administration takes concrete steps regarding Palestine, Erdogan said Wednesday. The president noted that Turkey is in favor of living in peace and establishing regional peace. "I'd had talks with Israel in the past but Israel needs to act more sensitively regarding its regional policies on Palestine," Erdogan said, adding that Tel Aviv needs to act responsibly on the issue of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque. Ankara would immediately start reciprocating if it sees Israel do-

ing its part, the president said, adding that the two countries can reapoint envoys the moment Israel acknowledges actions that are considered red flags by Turkey. Known for its unbreakable solidarity with the Palestinians, Turkey solution to the Palestinian issue within the framework of international law and United Nations resolutions. Turkish officials continue to criticize Israel's policies targeting Palestinians, including the illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem and the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Israel occupied East Jerusalem during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. It annexed the entire city in 1980, in a move that has never been recognized by the international community. Israel sees all of Jerusalem as its undivided capital — a status not recognized internationally. Palestinians want East Jerusalem as the capital for their future state. Gaza has also been under a tightened Israeli blockade since 2007 and most basic goods enter the region through highly restricted measures. Erdogan also touched upon the recent crisis in Afghanistan and said that it is our common wish for Af-



ghanistan to achieve lasting peace and stability. "We cannot afford to turn our backs on the Afghan people," he added. He also criticized the Western countries' stance on the migration waves stemming from war-torn countries. "In fact, countries like us, which are neighbors to the crisis regions, bear the main burden on the issue of migration and refugees, rather than the vocal Western countries," Erdogan said. The international community needs to deliver humanitarian aid to the Afghan people, Foreign Minister Mevlüt Cavuşoglu said Monday, underlining that the sensitivity shown by Qatar and Turkey should set an example. Turkey has been a key transit point for irregular migrants who want to cross into Europe to start new lives, especially those fleeing war and persecution such as the Syrian civil war that began in early 2011.

Foolproof security for Australian team

ISLAMABAD: A security delegation of Cricket Australia held a meeting with Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed here on Friday to discuss the security arrangements for the upcoming Australia tour to Pakistan during March-April next year. During the meeting, Rashid assured the delegation that foolproof security arrangements has been made during the team Australia's stay in Pakistan. He further added that he has been directly in contact with the security agencies, Sindh and Punjab governments. He also added that the Pakistanis are big fans of cricket and have been waiting long for the Pakistan-Australia series. "I hope the fans get to see some quality cricket," Sheikh Rashid stated. The minister said that the team Australia would be warmly welcomed by the Pakistanis on their arrival. The delegation will inspect the security arrangements at hotels, stadiums and routes leading to and from stadiums and hotels. Australia will visit Pakistan for a full tour in 2022. The tour will comprise of three Test matches as well as three ODIs, and only T20I. — APP

Climate change drives terrorism

UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has told the UN Security Council that environmental degradation enables armed groups to extend their influence and manipulate resources to their advantage, highlighting that conflict-prevention initiatives need to factor in climate risks. In Iraq and Syria, terrorist group Da'esh, also known as ISIL, has exploited water shortages and taken control of water infrastructure to impose its will on communities, while in Somalia charcoal production provides a source of income for Al-Shaab, the UN chief said during a debate on "Security, in the Context of Terrorism and Climate Change" on Thursday. "Climate change is not the source of all ills, but it has a multiplier effect and is an aggravating factor for instability, conflict and terrorism," he said, urging the 15 Council members to address these challenges in an "integrated matter" to create a "virtuous circle of peace, resilience and sustainable development". Guterres reminded that currently the regions that are most vulnerable to climate change, also largely suffer from insecurity, poverty, weak governance and the scourge of terrorism. "Climate impacts compound conflicts and exacerbate fragility...When the loss of livelihoods leaves populations in despair, the promises of protection, income and justice - behind which terrorists sometimes hide their true designs - become more attractive", he emphasized. — APP

Qatar sign Cyprus gas deal despite Turkey opposition

NICOSIA: US giant ExxonMobil and Qatar Energy signed a contract Friday for oil and gas exploration and production-sharing off the divided island of Cyprus despite Turkey's opposition to the deal. Cypriot Energy Minister Natasa Pilides, Varnava Theodosiou, CEO of ExxonMobil Cyprus, and Ali al-Mana, director of Qatar Energy's International Upstream and Exploration, signed the contract in Nicosia. It is the second gas exploration contract that the consortium has signed for Block 5 in the island's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In February 2019, the consortium discovered a huge natural gas reserve off Cyprus in Block 10, the island's largest find to date, holding an estimated five to eight trillion cubic feet. The consortium plans to drill an appraisal well on Block 10 in late December, with results expected by the end of February. Oil and gas drilling off Cyprus has been interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. — APP

Briefs

54 migrants killed in truck crash in Mexico

FOREIGN DESK

BOGOTA: At least 54 migrants were killed and dozens more injured when the cargo truck they were traveling in crashed Thursday into a bridge in southern Mexico, local authorities reported.

Initial reports said that more than 100 people were traveling in the vehicle on a highway in the Chiapas state, and the majority of the deceased were of Honduran nationality.

According to the Department of Civil Protection, the cause of the crash is still unknown, but local authorities said the driver may have lost control of the truck due to excessive speed.

Bordering Central America, Chiapas is one of Mexico's most prominent hotspots for migration where most Latin American migrants trying to cross the US border enter Mexican territory. Out of over 108,000 asylum seekers reported in Mexico from January to October this year, more than 74,000 have been registered in the city of Tapachula in south-east Chiapas, where according to rough estimates there are three migrants for every 10 inhabitants.

Bosnia unearths 10 bodies from mass grave

WEB DESK

BELGRADE: Bodies of 10 war victims have been found in a mass grave in Bosnia and Herzegovina earlier this year, authorities said on Friday. The remains were unearthed in a mass grave that was found this July near the town of Klanovik, close to Srebrenica, according to Bosnia and Herzegovina's Missing Persons Institute. Emza Fazlic, a spokesperson for the organization, said DNA tests will be conducted to identify the victims of the July 1995 Srebrenica genocide.

Thousands of bodies were buried in mass graves or left in remote woods after Bosnian Serb forces attacked the town of Srebrenica and killed more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys. The Serb forces were trying to wrest territory from Bosnian Muslims and Croats to form a state.

In the spring of 1993, the UN Security Council declared Srebrenica a "safe area." However, troops led by Gen. Ratko Mladic - who was later found guilty of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide - overran the UN zone.

Dutch peacekeeping troops failed to act as Serb forces occupied the area, killing some 2,000 men and boys on July 11 alone. About 15,000 residents of Srebrenica fled to the surrounding mountains, but Serb troops hunted down and killed 6,000 more people.

Nationwide 'silent strike' in Myanmar

AGENCIES

BANGKOK: Opponents of military rule in Myanmar on Friday held one of their biggest nationally coordinated protests in months, successfully calling on people across the country to shut their businesses and stay at home on International Human Rights Day.

The "silent strike" was staged in cities and towns from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and came at a time of increasing violence in the political crisis triggered by the army's seizure of power in February and ouster of the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

On Tuesday, there was a widely reported massacre in the country's northwestern Sagaing region in which soldiers were accused of rounding up and killing 11 civilians whose charred bodies were later discovered by fellow villagers. The military-installed government has denied its soldiers were involved, but it is staging an offensive in northwestern Myanmar against persistent resistance from anti-military militias.

Aliyev signs decree to speed up development of Karabakh

Improving the entrepreneurial activity of newly liberated territories the Azerbaijani Cabinet of Ministers was charged with the implementation of new reforms

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev signed an order on some measures to speed up the economic development in the liberated Azerbaijani territories, Trend reports. In accordance with the order, to create favorable conditions for accelerating the economic recovery in the liberated territories and increasing investment attractiveness, creating the modern and efficient production, trade, and service infrastructure, introducing innovative technologies, realizing industrial potential, preparing optimal benefits, incentive mechanisms and improving the entrepreneurial activity, the Azerbaijani Cabinet of Ministers was charged with the implementation of following issues:

1. prepare the proposals on the below-mentioned spheres within three months and submit them to the Azerbaijani President:
- 1.1. Effective management of economic resources and workforce in the liberated territories, the use of tax incentives, social insurance and other benefits to creating the processing industry and service infrastructure;
- 1.2. Stimulating private initiatives in the liberated territories, improving investment promotion mechanisms, introducing customs and tax incentives for the import of raw materials and other materials for entrepreneurs engaged in production in these territories;
- 1.3. Introducing benefits on utilities, namely, electricity, natural gas and water con-



sumption, for entrepreneurs engaged in production in the liberated territories;

- 1.4. Attracting qualified specialists to the liberated territories, as well as introducing a quota for migrant workers and improving the procedure for issuing the work permits;
- 1.5. Expansion of opportunities for access to the funds for entrepreneurs operating in the liberated territories, and strengthening of the necessary state support in this sphere;
- 1.6. Support for investors introducing environmentally friendly technologies in the liberated territories, creating "green growth" and using renewable energy sources;
- 1.7. Development of partnership between the public and private sectors for the construction of residential areas in the liberated territories.
2. To resolve other issues arising from this order.

Azerbaijan foils Armenian provocation

BAKU: Azerbaijan has foiled Armenia's provocative attempts near Kalbajar region on the state border, the Azerbaijani Defence Ministry reported on December 10. Armenia's armed forces committed another provocation in Basarkechar region of the state border, assembling additional manpower and military equipment. Starting from 1200 on December 10, the opposing side tried to keep the Azerbaijani army positions stationed in Kalbajar region under fire, the ministry said. "As a result of the retaliatory actions undertaken by the Azerbaijani army units in a short period of time, the opposing side was suppressed and its provocative attempts were stopped. The Azerbaijani army units control the operational situation," the report added.

Earlier, the ministry reported Armenian troops shelled Azerbaijani army positions in Kalbajar at about 1500 on December 9. On the night of December 8, Azerbaijani army servicemen Asif Aliyev was killed in a provocation committed by the Armenian armed forces near Kalbajar.

From 1435 to 1530 on December 8, the Armenian armed forces shelled Azerbaijani army positions in Kalbajar region's Zaylik settlement. The worst escalation of tension was regis-

tered on the Azerbaijani-Armenian state border on November 16. As a result, seven Azerbaijani servicemen were killed and 10 were wounded during military operations in Kalbajar and Lachin on the state border with Armenia on November 16.

The trilateral ceasefire deal signed by the Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian leaders on November 10, 2020, ended the three-decade conflict over Azerbaijan's Karabakh region which along with the seven adjacent regions came under the occupation of Armenian armed forces in the war in the early 1990s. On January 11, 2021, the Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian leaders signed the second statement since the end of the 44-day war. The newly-signed statement was set to implement clause 9 of the November 2020 statement related to the unblocking of all economic and transport communications in the region. On November 26, 2021, the Azerbaijani, Russian and Armenian leaders signed a statement and agreed on a number of issues, including the demarcation and delimitation of the Azerbaijani-Armenian border by late 2021, some points related to humanitarian issues and the issue of unblocking of transport corridors which applies to the railway and to automobile communications. - News Desk

Germany's Scholz eyes stronger EU

PARIS: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz headed to Paris on Friday for talks with French and European Union leaders, as the bloc faces a growing list of foreign policy crises. With the 27-member bloc confronted with growing tensions on the Russian-Ukrainian border, negotiations on reviving the Iran nuclear deal, as well as divisions over the Nord Stream 2 pipeline and relations with China - Scholz is looking to hammer out a unified EU strategy, as France prepares to assume the six-month rotating Council presidency.

The newly sworn-in German chancellor first traveled to Paris for a working lunch with French President Emmanuel Macron. First on the menu was how to deal with Russia, as tensions endure over Moscow's military presence near the border with Ukraine.

Scholz called for renewed efforts, starting with fresh four-way talks with Russia. "We have a good basis that needs to be revived - for example the talks in the Normandy format," Scholz said in a joint news conference with Macron, referring to discussions between Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine aimed at solving the crisis.

Repeated US warnings about the build-up of Russian troops near Ukraine's border have highlighted the scope for redoubled diplomatic efforts to calm the conflict in Ukraine's east. Moscow denies having any intention of invading its neighbor, "unless we're provoked by Ukraine, or by somebody else," according to Russian deputy ambassador to the UN Dmitry Polyanskiy. - Foreign Desk



ISTANBUL: Speaker of Turkish Parliament Prof. Mustafa Şentop received Pakistan Deputy Speaker National Assembly Muhammad Qasim Khan Suri and his accompanying parliamentary delegation at the 16th Conference of ISIPAB. - DNA

Rising energy prices unsustainable

BRUSSELS: The EC president has touted renewables as a way forward in dealing with unsustainable, rising energy prices in the EU block which she says is "way too dependent on gas."

During her speech at the European Economic and Social Committee Plenary debate, Ursula von der Leyen said Europe's future energy security "clearly depends on clean home-grown energy" and she called on member states to invest in renewable energy, support businesses and consumers through state aid and to cut energy taxes and bills.

Fossil fuels have become more and more expensive over the last years and this has impacted the EU which is highly dependent on gas,

90% of which is imported. "Rising energy prices concern all of us. They tell us that we are way too dependent on gas. We have seen it in the last few weeks. Rising energy prices are because of rising gas prices. This is not sustainable," she said.

To help deal with this issue in the medium term, she explained that the block is discussing a European strategy on gas reserves and the possibility of common procurement. However, in the long term, she recommended that renewable energy, which has bucked the trend in rising energy prices, offers a solution for the block to become more energy independent by investing in home-grown renewable energies. - Agencies

Pak students amazed by China's poverty relief achievement

At Bailing village, these students were greatly impressed by the clean lanes, beautiful and livable environment

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: "Chinese government is indeed amazing (in poverty reduction)," said a Pakistani student when visiting a once poor village at Heyang County, Shaanxi province, China.

China Economic Net reported on Friday that a total of 20 international students from Northwest Agriculture and Forestry University (NWAUFU) and Shaanxi University of Chinese Medicine paid a visit to the once poverty-stricken county, saw the new image of rural villages and experienced Chinese culture.

At Bailing village, these students were greatly impressed by the clean lanes, beautiful and livable environment.

When knowing Bailing village is just one of the epitome of beautiful villages under the rural vitalization strategy, Naseer Muhammad Asad from NWAUFU praised the Chinese government's achievement. At a Qichuan's gourd planting and processing cooperative, these students showed keen interests in the delicate gourd sculpture.

On knowing gourd sculptures were made by the disabled, students gave a thumbs-up sign for not only these people's exquisite craftsmanship but also local government's pragmatic measures to help people get rid of poverty.

Among the 20 students, a Pakistani student from NWAUFU, Mansoor Ahmed Koondhar was extremely popular with the pupils at Nangou primary school. Koondhar isn't a stranger to the pupils

as he has been their volunteer English teacher since October 2021.

When seeing the teacher, pupils excitedly gathered around Koondhar and strived to be the first to talk with him. "Mr Koondhar, will you stay for a longer time?" "I have learnt another English song..." Koondhar was also very excited to meet his students again.

At a square of Nangou village, international students, pupils and local residents gathered together and performed traditional songs and dance. The last one was a traditional Pakistani dance. The audience also joined to dance together.

Zhang Huahai from NWAUFU said the international cultural activity is meant to enhance mutual understanding and close people-to-people ties.

Uzbekistan launched "Young Leaders Program"

The parties welcomed the beginning of practical cooperation between the Ministry of Government Affairs of the UAE and the Agency for Strategic Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan, created this year

FOREIGN DESK

TASHKENT: In Dubai, on the sidelines of the EXPO 2020 DUBAI World Exhibition, a meeting was held between the Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sardor Umarzakov with the Minister for Government Affairs of the United Arab Emirates by Mohammad bin Abdullah al-Gergawi.

During the talks, issues of bilateral cooperation were discussed, in particular, the progress in implementing the program to improve the efficiency of public administration, which has been implemented jointly with the Emirates since 2019.

The progress achieved in promoting all 25 directions of the program was substantively discussed, including such projects as "One million Uzbek programmers", "Government accelerator", "Safe city", as well as other areas of interaction within the program: development of a national development strategy, improvement of the sphere insurance, digitalization of public services, implementation of innovations, development of industrial potential.

It should be noted that over the past 2 years,



within the framework of the program, 124 thematic seminars were held, the implementation of about 100 events in 25 areas of the program was completed, more than 5 thousand people took part in specialized trainings organized both in Uzbekistan and in the UAE.

The parties welcomed the beginning of practical cooperation between the Ministry of Government Affairs of the UAE and the Agency for Strategic Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan, created this year.

This was evidenced by the launch of the

"Young Leaders Program" for youth representatives, in which the heads of the delegations of the two countries took part. The concept of the project envisages the organization of training and internships in state institutions of the UAE for young specialists from various ministries and departments of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The program is aimed at forming a personnel reserve and training young specialists for the ministries and departments of Uzbekistan in accordance with the best practices of the UAE. The term of study, which will be conducted both in full-time format and online, is 2.5 months.

The training will take place in such areas as investment and financial management, entrepreneurship support, export promotion and other areas.

At the initial stage, 22 representatives of various departments of the country took part in the program, who were pre-selected according to the relevant criteria for qualifications and personal qualities.

Following the talks, the parties expressed their commitment to further cooperation in the implementation of the program and agreed to work together to deepen the mutually beneficial partnership between the two countries.

Serbs to vote on weakening Bosnia, step up secession drive

AGENCIES

BANJA LUKA: The Bosnian Serb parliament convened on Friday to vote on steps that would weaken the war-ravaged Balkan country's central authority. The session came as the Bosnian Serb leader is stepping up his secession campaign despite a threat of new U.S. and other sanctions.

Lawmakers are expected to vote on starting a procedure for Bosnian Serbs to withdraw from the Bosnian army, security services, tax system and judiciary. That would be another substantial move following repeated threats by Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik to secede, which could lead to about half of Bosnia being incorporated with neighboring Serbia.

Dodik, the Bosnian Serb member of the tripartite Bosnian presidency, said Friday's was a historic parliament session that would strengthen the Bosnian Serb mini state - formed as part of a U.S.-sponsored peace agreement that ended the Bosnian war in 1995. Dodik called Bosnia a "paper state" and told parliament that a referendum should be held in the Serb entity in Bosnia on the formation of its own army, security service, high judiciary and tax authority and that a new state constitution should be drafted.

Opposition leaders in the parliament criticized Dodik's policies, saying they are hasty, bring back uncertainty and even possible clashes to the still-volatile Balkan region.

South Korea reports worst virus surge

SEOUL: New coronavirus infections in South Korea exceeded 7,000 for the third consecutive day on Friday, as the worst surge since the start of the pandemic overwhelmed hospitals and depleted health care workforce.

Critics have blamed the spread on complacency by the government, which dramatically lowered social distancing rules at the start of November in what officials described as the first step toward restoring pre-pandemic normalcy.

Even as cases began to soar in recent weeks, officials were initially hesitant to tighten social distancing, citing exhaustion and frustration by the public with restrictions and their impact on livelihoods. But as the contagious delta variant reduced the effectiveness of vaccines and most people in their 60s or older are still waiting for their booster shots, and the first cases of omicron were discovered, the sense of urgency became apparent.

Prime Minister Kim Bokkyum, the No. 2 behind President Moon Jae-in, said during a video meeting that the country could be forced to take further "extraordinary" measures if it fails to slow the spread of the virus soon.

Officials issued administrative orders requiring hospitals around the country to designate 2,000 more beds combined for COVID-19 treatment. - Agencies

Hungary court strikes down Orban

BUDAPEST: Hungary's constitutional court on Friday struck down a bid by Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government to challenge a ruling by the EU's top court against Budapest's harsh asylum policy.

Budapest had asked the court earlier this year to review a ruling from the European Court of Justice ordering it to suspend a law that allows police to deport or physically "push back" asylum-seekers across the Serbian border.

The petition by Justice Minister Judit Varga "cannot be the subject of a review of the ECJ judgment," nor can it lead to an "examination of the primacy of EU law," the Hungarian court said.

But it said that in areas of joint legal jurisdiction between Brussels and Hungary, Budapest has the right "to ensure the effectiveness of the joint exercise of competences". - APP

Briefs

Chairman PPP thanks nation

DNA

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed gratitude to the people of Pakistan for staging nationwide protests against increase in prices of petroleum products and food inflation. He said that on my appeal to protest against price-hike, the people of Pakistan staged demonstrations across the country and hence pronounced their verdict against the government. In a statement, Chairman Bilawal said that the People of Pakistan do not stand with Imran Khan and Khan has no right to be the Prime Minister without public support. "I am also thankful to the local organizations of PPP and Jiyalas for organizing protests in different cities of the country" chairman PPP said. Public protests against inflation in Punjab, Waseb, KPK, Balochistan, Sindh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan are charge sheets against the government. The people will not tolerate continuous increase in inflation by Imran Khan at the behest of IMF, he concluded.

CJ Shamim case: IHC terms replies unsatisfactory

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday has termed replies of all the parties including former Chief Justice of Gilgit-Baltistan Rana Shamim as unsatisfactory. During the hearing, the court remarked that being salient for three years raises questions on the innocence of Rana Shamim. Earlier, IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah had directed Rana Shamim to submit his original affidavit till December 13 and also warned of indicting him in the case if he fails to present the document. Previously, IHC judge asked Rana Shamim whether he accepts the content written in the affidavit over which he stated that he hasn't seen the affidavit which was submitted in this court as the original one is locked in his locker in United Kingdom. Attorney general said it is strange that ex-CJ doesn't remember what is in the affidavit. Every day of this court is important as it is the "season" of leaks, he added. It is to be mentioned here that the high court had taken notice of revelations leveled by former chief justice of Gilgit-Baltistan Rana Muhammad Shamim regarding PML-N leaders Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz and summoned all the parties and Attorney General Khalid Javed Khan in personal capacity.

Former CJCS laid to rest

RAWALPINDI: The funeral prayer of former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) General (R) Shamim Alam Khan was offered here on Friday at Army Graveyard Rawalpindi. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Nadeem Raza, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi and large number of civil and military officials including senior retired Army officers and relatives of deceased attended the funeral, said an ISPR news release. Earlier CJCS, COAS, CNS and Chief of Air Staff expressed their heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of former CJCS General (R) Shamim Alam Khan. "May Allah bless his soul & give strength to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss, Ameen," said the ISPR DG in a tweet. - APP

Development of youth as an individual; true citizen

National leader Heydar Aliyev contribution undeniable: Envoy

President Ilham Aliyev rightly stressed that physical education and health of young people is one of the main priorities

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov has said National leader Heydar Aliyev has an undeniable contribution to the formation of our youth as an individual, a true citizen of Azerbaijan. Youth policy has always occupied a special place in the rich and magnificent state activity of the Great Leader. Back in the 70s and 80s of the last century, on the instructions of a wise leader, hundreds of young Azerbaijanis were sent to the leading universities of the former USSR, including Moscow, to study in various specialties. Suffice it to mention the fact that in 1970, on the initiative of Heydar Aliyev, more than 1,500 young Azerbaijanis were covered by this care.

Ambassador of Azerbaijan expressed these views while speaking at seminar held at the COMSTAS University.

He further said, In 1970-1985, the number of Azerbaijani youth studying in 170 well-known higher education institutions of the Soviet Union reached 3,500. It was these young people who later began to work in our country as skilled personnel in various sectors of the economy as highly educated specialists. Every year, 800 students were sent abroad to study. Young people studied in St. Petersburg, Kiev, Kharkov and Minsk. They had to solve the problems of the new era, which would include the Republic of Azerbaijan. National leader Heydar Aliyev considered the proper conduct of youth policy in the country very important and significant: "For me, the most precious blessing is the children of Azerbaijan, the youth of Azerbaijan. Because today, as the President of Azerbaijan, I also think about the great future of Azerbaijan. The future of Azerbaijan depends on the youth and children of Azerbaijan.

He added, in 1995, the National Council of Youth Organizations was established. In order to increase the role of Azerbaijani youth in the development of society and the solution of many important problems, to increase their participation and responsibility in the future development of the country, national leader Heydar Aliyev initiated the Azerbaijani Youth Forum in 1995. Thus, on February 2, 1996, the First Youth Forum was held. The first Forum played an important role in defining youth policy



DNA

in Azerbaijan. By the way, World Youth Day was declared only in 1999 by the UN. On February 1, 1997, on the occasion of the anniversary of the forum, great leader Heydar Aliyev received a group of young people and signed an order declaring February 2 - Azerbaijan Youth Day. Noting that the achievements of Azerbaijani youth in the field of sports in recent years are particularly noteworthy, President Ilham Aliyev rightly stressed that physical education and health of young people is one of the main priorities. Azerbaijani athletes worthily represent our country in international competitions, Olympics, world and European championships.

As a result of the policy pursued and the work done, we can say with full confidence that today the youth of Azerbaijan has gained an enviable reputation among the world's youth with its intellectual, creative and spiritual-ideological maturity. While talking about Quaid's message for directionless youth the ambassador said 'Mairi Nojawan' or 'Pakistan kay Jawano' phrases of calling out youth and addressing them has its deep roots in Pakistan movement and its political history. During Pakistan Movement, major contribution of different student federations cannot be overlooked. Young students of different provinces played their vital role in spreading the message of an independent land with

their demonstrated faith, unity, discipline, determination, sacrifice and relentless work. Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah had high hopes from Pakistani youth and in all his important addresses to students, he stressed upon youth's vision in life. Quaid also believed in training the youth through educational reforms. In order to show relevancy of Quaid's vision to education system we need to view his message to the first Education Conference in November 1947, when he said: "the future of our state will and must accordingly depend upon the type of education we give to our children, and the way in which we bring them up as future citizens of Pakistan".

People praise Hugarian embassy's goodwill gesture

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The people living in the slum area of Sector H 9 have praised the goodwill gesture of the Hugarian embassy in Islamabad for taking care of their needs. The Hugarian Ambassador Bela Fazekas along with his staff visited the area and distributed food stuff among the needy people.

The ambassador and the embassy staff remained with them for quite some time

and exchanged views with them besides getting first hand information about their issues. The ambassador assured to continue such efforts even in the coming days. The people present on the occasion told this correspondent that they were greatly touched by the kind attention and support extended to them by the Hugarian embassy. They hoped that other philanthropists would also come forward following the example set by the Hugarian embassy.



Rupee slides further down against dollar

KARACHI: Pakistani currency downward slide continued on Friday as the local unit edged lower by 0.06% to settle at Rs177.71 against the US dollar in the inter-bank market. The local currency surpassed Thursday's record low of Rs177.61 due to increased demand from the importers and a lack of sufficient supplies. According to a poll of key financial market participants conducted by Topline Securities, the majority of the participants (43%) expect the Pakistani rupee to stay within a range of 180-185 by the end of FY22, while 33% of participants expect it to be in the range of 175-180. - APP



ISLAMABAD: EU Ambassador Ms. Androulla Kaminara giving away an award to a participant during Agahi Awards distribution ceremony Shaping the Future of Journalism at PNCA. - APP

Bond red carpet premiere hosted

ISLAMABAD: The premiere of one of the biggest movies since the pandemic, James Bond: No Time To Die, was jointly hosted by British High Commissioner Christian Turner and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry at the Islamabad Club on Thursday. The red-carpet premiere was a high-profile event attended by Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazhar, Minister for Energy Hamad Azhar, Minister for Industries Khuroso Bakhtiar, National Security Advisor Moeed

Yusuf, music legend Attaullah Khan and others. The guests also attended a special Bond-themed reception. The British High Commissioner and Minister for Information reiterated the deep ties between the UK and Pakistan and the potential for greater cultural exchanges, including in film and arts. British High Commissioner to Pakistan Christian Turner, said: "James Bond is a cultural icon of the UK's world-class film industry. As we mark Pakistan's 75 years of independence in 2022, I hope we can have even more

collaboration between our countries in the creative industries; the new partnership with Patakha Films is an example of that." Minister for Information Fawad Chaudhry said: "I am grateful to British High Commissioner Christian Turner for his unequivocal support for restoration of international cinema in Pakistan. The Bond premiere in Pakistan with cooperation of the British High Commission is a step forward for further cultural collaboration between Pakistan and the UK. - DNA

Taiwan loses diplomatic ally Nicaragua to China

"The more successful Taiwan's democracy, and the greater the international support, then the greater the pressure from the authoritarian camp," Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen

US slaps sanctions on Xinjiang leaders

TAIPEI: Taiwan lost Nicaragua as a diplomatic ally after the Central American country said it would officially recognize only China, which claims self-ruled Taiwan as part of its territory. "There is only one China," the Nicaraguan government said in a statement Thursday announcing the change. "The People's Republic of China is the only legitimate government that represents all China, and Taiwan is an inalienable part of the Chinese territory." "As of today, Nicaragua breaks its diplomatic relations with Taiwan and ceases to have any official contact or relationship," it added. The move increases Taiwan's diplomatic isolation on the international stage, even as the self-governed island steps up official exchanges with countries such as Lithuania and Slovakia, which do not formally recognize Taiwan as a country. Now, Taiwan has 14 diplomatic allies remaining. "What is most important to Taiwan is the number of countries with which it maintains diplomatic relations," Ja-

son Marczak, director of the Atlantic Council's Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center, said in an email. "In Central America, Nicaragua is now the third country that has switched recognition from Taiwan to China in the last four years. I wouldn't be surprised if more are to come." Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed "sadness and regret" and said it would immediately recall its diplomatic staff. "The more successful Taiwan's democracy, and the greater the international support, then the greater the pressure from the authoritarian camp," Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen said Friday in response. "Whether it's diplomatic pressure or military intimidation, we will not change our

determination to adhere to democracy and freedom, to go on the international stage and participate." China has been poaching Taiwan's diplomatic allies over the past few years, cutting down the number of countries that recognize the democratic island as a sovereign nation. China is against Taiwan representing itself in global forums or in diplomacy. The Solomon Islands chose to recognize China in 2019, cutting diplomatic ties with Taiwan. The Nicaraguan government signed an official communique to reestablish diplomatic ties with China in Tianjin on Friday, according to Chinese state broadcaster CCTV. Under the agreement, Nicaragua promises not to have any official contact with Taiwan going forward. "The resumption of diplomatic ties between China and Nicaragua is a policy decision, and definitely not a trading of bargaining chips," China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Wang Wenbin said at a daily briefing Friday. He denied that there were any "economic preconditions" to establishing ties. - Agencies

Indonesian envoy meets Punjab Sports Minister

LAHORE: Ambassador of Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan Mr Adam M Tugio called on Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Rai Taimoor Khan Bhatti at State of The Art Punjab International Swimming Complex here on Friday. Director General Sports Punjab Javed Chohan, Director Sports Nadeem Qaiser, Deputy Director Youth Affairs Syed Omair Hasan and other top officials were also present on this occasion. The friendly relations, growth of sports ties between Pakistan and Indonesia, exchange of delegations, youth and exchange programme were discussed at length during the meeting. Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Rai Taimoor Bhatti and Mr Adam M Tugio also exchanged souvenirs on this occasion. - APP