

## CPEC projects continue unhindered TTP to be nipped in the bud: DG ISPR

DG ISPR Maj. Gen Babar Iftikhar says fencing on the Western border to continue; rules out presence of ISIS in Pakistan; dispels impression of any political deals

### **ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI**

RAWALPINDI: Director General ISPR Major General Babar Iftikhar has said the work under the western border management regime will be completed in the stipulated period. He further said no talks were underway with the Tehereek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) adding that the operation against TTP shall continue till the outfit is fully eliminated. Briefing the media persons in Rawalpindi he said 94 percent fencing work along Pak-Afghan border has been completed whilst on Pak-Iran border, 71 percent work has been achieved. The DG ISPR emphasized the importance of fencing on Pak-Afghan border saying it is important for the security of people on both sides of the border as well as to regulate trade activities. It is not aimed at dividing the people but securing them.

Major General Babar Iftikhar said the border management system with Afghanistan will be made more effective

## **Turkish General** meets CJCSC

The visiting dignitary remained appreciative of the sincere efforts of the Pakistan Armed Forces in bringing peace to the region

RAWALPINID: General Selcuk BYRAKTAROGLU, Deputy Chief of Turkish General Staff called on General Nadeem Raza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi today. Besides security and regional issues, particularly the latest development in Afghanistan, matter relating to enhance the level and scope of bilateral military engagements and cooperation were discussed. Both sides reaffirmed the commitment; that being 'all-weather' friends, Pakistan and Turkey would continue to forge deeper strategic ties. Chairman JCSC highlighted that visit of Deputy Chief of Turkish General Staff is a manifestation of the multifaceted long-term collaboration that exists between the two Armed Forces. The visiting dignitary remained appreciative of the sincere efforts of the Pakistan Armed Forces in bringing peace to the region especially the Afghan Peace Process. He also acknowledged the sacrifices made by Pakistan in the war against terrorism. - DNA

with the passage of time. He said the blood of our martyrs is included in the erection of this fence. He said this is a fence of peace and it will be completed and stay intact.

The DG ISPR said sixty seven new wings of FC Balochistan and FC Khyberpakhunkhwa were established in the year 2021 to further strengthen the border security. He said the process has also been started to establish six more wings. Without taking names, the DG ISPR ruled out the possibility of any deal with Nawaz Sharif adding all those who are spreading such baseless and false rumors were not doing any service to the nation or country. He also called upon the media and general public not to pay any heed to such rumors.

As regards the achievements made under Radd-ul-Fasaad Operation in the year 2021, the DG ISPR said that sixty thousand intelligence based operations were carried out which helped dismantle

**Continued on Page 06** 

## Hungary willing to support Pak in sports

Ambassador Bela Fazekas says Hungary has expertise in setting up sports academies and coaching, especially in the sports of football



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Hungary Bela Fazekas in a meeting with SAPM Usman Darm. - DNA

#### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD Hungary is willing to support Pakistan in sports development said Bela Fazekas, Hungarian Ambassador in Pakistan who met with SAPM on youth affairs Usman Dar along with Mr. Tivadar Takacs. Welcoming the ambassador, Mr. Dar briefed the envoy regarding Kamyab Jawan Programme; envisioned for youth development in Pakistan. He said that Kamyab Jawan Programme is working in three areas including education, employment and engagement of youth through various initiatives. "We have disbursed more than Rs. 30 billion against the target of Rs. 100 billion among youth for business loans encouraging entrepreneurial culture and creating employment opportunities in the country. We have a Rs. 10 billion ongoing project for technical skills education, especially in hi-tech fields. We have recently rolled out Rs. 4 billion sports and youth engagements projects with the collaboration of Higher Education Commission of Pakistan", said Mr. Dar.

Mr. Bela Fazekas congratulated SAPM and his team for the mega sports event recently held in Islamabad. " It was fascinating development for sports in Pakistan. We are willing to collaborate and cooperate for development of sports in Pakistan", said the ambassador. The Ambasador further said Hungary has expertise in setting up sports

## **Briefs**

## PM welcomes **ECP report**

#### DNA

on



the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) scrutiny committee, which has reportedly revealed that the PTI allegedly failed to disclose millions of rupees to the ECP. "The more our accounts are scrutinised, the more factual clarity will emerge for the nation to see how PTI is the only political party with a proper donor base premised on proper political fundraising," the prime minister said. However, the prime minister also said he was looking forward to seeing similar ECP scrutiny reports on the funding of two other major political parties - PPP and PML-N.

## Maryam condemns PM's stance

#### STAFF REPORT



sion of Pakistan's (ECP) report, PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz lambasted the ruling party and warned the premier to be ready, as the "time for accountability has come." Replying to the premier's tweet, Maryam questioned why did he not let the case proceedings continue for the last seven years

"Why did you [İmran Khan] keep hiding for so many years and then kept begging that the report should not be released?" she questioned. She claimed that PM Khan thinks "the people of Pakistan are fools who will believe whatever he says.



ISLAMABAD: A group photo of the dignitaries at luncheon hosted by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi in honor of Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Nayef bin Falah Al-Hajraf at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. - DNA

## Pak keen to deepen ties with GCC states FM Qureshi held talks with Dr. Navef Falah M. Al-Hajraf, Secretary General of GCC and his delegation

#### Shujaat Hamza

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi received Dr. Nayef Falah M. Al-Hajraf, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and his delegation at the Foreign Office. Fondly recalling the meeting in Decem-

ber 2021, Foreign Minister Qureshi extended a warm welcome to Dr. Al-Hajraf. He reaffirmed Pakistan's abiding fraternal and historical ties with the GCC member states, rooted firmly in shared faith, values and culture.

During delegation-level talks, the two sides reviewed Pakistan-GCC cooperation in diverse fields, and explored new avenues for an enhanced mutually-beneficial partnership. They also exchanged views on the regional developments, in particular the prevailing humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and the deteriorating human rights situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

In line with the MoU on Strategic Dialogue between Pakistan and the GCC, the two sides finalized the Joint Action Plan for Strategic Dialogue (2022-2026), which provides an institutional approach to deepen cooperation in various fields, including Political; Security; Trade and Investment; Agricultural and food security, Transportation; Energy;

Environment; Health; Culture; and Education.

Welcoming the finalization of the Joint Action Plan for Strategic Dialogue, Foreign Minister Qureshi and Secretary General Al-Hajraf underscored that the Action Plan would impart a strong impetus towards optimally realizing the tremendous potential for increased cooperation between Pakistan and the GCC states. Noting the progress on the ongoing efforts to conclude the Free Trade Agreement between Pakistan and the GCC, Foreign Minister Qureshi and Secretary General Al-Hajraf expressed determination to conclude the negotiations on priority.

Foreign Minister Qureshi expressed gratitude to the GCC and its member states for strong expression of support for the people of Afghanistan in the 17thExtraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Islamabad on 19 December 2021. The Foreign Minister urged the world community to upscale its efforts to reach out to the Afghan people on an urgent basis to help address the humanitarian crisis and stabilize the economic situation. This is the second visit of the GCC Secretary General to Pakistan in the last three weeks.

He earlier visited Islamabad in December 2021 to attend the 17thExtraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (OIC-CFM).

**Bilawal** slams PTI govt over **ECP** report

Says that Khan was imposed on the nation by projecting him as an honest person

LAHORE: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari

sources had laid bare what he called the 'ugly face of corrupt' Prime Minister Imran Khan.

In a statement issued in Lahore, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the 'selected' prime minister had concealed the bank accounts of his party from the ECP despite taking oath he had concealed none.

The PPP chairman said it was unfortunate that the very man who lectured people on corruption and taunted his political opponents for being corrupt had himself devoured billions of rupees he received from foreign sources. "Truth of the matter is that he has looted the country by disguising himself as a crusader against corruption, the proof of which is poor economy of the country," he alleged.

academies and coaching, especially in the sports of football. "The Hungarian Prime Minister is also a sportsman like Pakistani Prime Minister. A high level Hungarian visit is expected in the month of February", added the Ambassador.

SAPM welcomed the offer for cooperation regarding sports by the Hungarian Ambassador. It was agreed to hold follow ups meetings of technical and working teams from both sides so that areas for bilateral cooperation are identified before the scheduled visit. The meeting was also attended by senior government officials.

## EU, US re-open to Pakistani airlines The USA had also downgraded Pakistan to category 2

#### NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistani airlines are likely to soon start operating flights to the US, UK and Europe after the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) cleared a safety audit conducted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), it emerged Wednesday.

The ICAO, a United Nations aviation body, had advised Pakistan in September 2020 to carry out prompt corrective action and stop issuing any new pilot licences after it learnt that bogus licenses may have been issued to unscrupulous elements. The revelation had come following the crash of a Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) aircraft in May last year, which resulted in the deaths of 97 passengers and crew. Pakistani pilots had faced sanc-

tions after the aviation minister said in the National Assembly that a third of them had dubious or fake licences. In the wake of the scandal, the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) had taken serious notice and discontinued TCO (Third Country Operator) Authorisation for Pakistani carriers. The USA had also downgraded Pakistan to category 2, which means no Pakistan origin aircraft was allowed to enter US territory.In its January 4 letter to DG CAA Khaqan Murtaza, ICAO's Deputy Director Denis Guindon wrote that the committee conducted the audit in December 2021 and "determined that the actions taken by Pakistan had successfully resolved SSC (Significant Safety Concern).'

"I wish to refer to the Significant

**Continued on Page 06** 

Vaccination only way to fight Omicron Asad Umar encourages people to

complete vaccination course

#### ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar has urged the people to fully vaccinate themselves against COV-ID-19 to reduce the risk of the spread of new variant Omicron. Briefing the media at National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) in Islamabad on Wednesday, he warned that the cases of Omicron has witnessed an increase in the country. He said the Covid cases increased to 1.8 percent yesterday after remaining 0.7 percent for several weeks. The Minister said the people

should continue to observe SOPs and avoid visiting crowded places. In his remarks, Special Assistant

on National Health Services Dr. Faisal Sultan clarified that the current anti-Covid vaccines provide protection to the people against severe disease

from the new variant. He stressed the vaccination is important to save our healthcare system from pressure. Dr Faisal Sultan warned people not take Omicron "lightly" as hospitalisation will increase in the next one to two weeks. The country's top health official advised the public to follow the COVID-19 SOPs and get vaccinated at the earliest. "It's still a bit early to draw conclusions since

**Continued on Page 06** 

**BUREAU REPORT** 

said on Wednesday that the report of Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) scrutiny committee on the funds received by ruling Pakistan Tehreeki-Insaf (PTI) from foreign

## 02

## NATIONAL

Islamabad **POST** Thursday, January 06, 2022



FAISALABAD: State Minister of Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib talking to media persons in a local hotel. - APP

## **Committee formed to** address problems of FSIE

The eight members committee would visit the FSIE to review the on-ground situation and decide future line of action to facilitate the industrial units established in this estate

### **BUREAU REPORT**

FAISALABAD: Two separate committees have been constituted to redress the problems confronted by the Faisalabad Small Industrial Estate (FSIE) NalkaKohala Faisalabad regarding WASA and other administrative and facilitative issues, said Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI).

Chairing a joint meeting of the stakeholders and concerned Government departments, he said that time framework has been given to each committee to take measures and resolve the same within the stipulated time period. Vice Chairman WASA Sheikh Shahid Javed and Amin-ul-Din Owaisi Regional Director Punjab Small Industrial Estates Corporation (PSIEC) also attended it. The meeting decided that WASA will submit details of physical work completed in addition to the financial statement within a period of one week. The eight members committee would visit the FSIE to review the on-ground situation and decide future line of action to facilitate the industrial units established in this estate. Vice Chairman WASA said that he is also representative of the business community and would try his optimum best to resolve their WASA related issues as soon as possible. The meeting was told that the Punjab Government had released funds of Rs.279 million a few years back for the WASA related project in FSIE. Out of it, Rs. 230 million has been expended while Rs. 49 million is still pending unutilized with WASA authority. This amount could be utilized to complete the missing links in addition to removing the discrepancies so that the project could be formally handed over to the Punjab Small Industrial Corporation. The other committee also discussed the issue relating to the encroachments, viola-

tion of laws, transfer of plots, issuance of NOCs and security related issues. President FCCI said that he will request WASA to launch an exclusive drive for the desilting of drains in Faisalabad Small Industrial Estate. The silt, garbage and other waste dumped along the roads would also be removed to improve the cleanliness and hygienic conditions in this industrial estate. In this connection the services of the Solid Waste Management Department could also be solicited.

He said that industrialists of this estate are ready to bear the expenditure incurred on the security of the industrial area. He suggested that funds could be raised on a self help basis to hire private security guards in addition to purchasing motorcycles for their regular patrolling in this area. He said that he will also talk to the City Police Officer (CPO) to arrange regular police patrolling by the concerned police station



## Kashmiris' deserve their right to self-determination

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhary, DG ISSI said that today is the special day in the annals of the Kashmir. There are number of dimensions of the Kashmir dispute that include legal, humanitarian and political-dimension

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: To express Pakistan's firm support for the Kashmiri people, the India Study Centre (ISC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a Round Table titled "Commemorating Kashmiris' Right to Self-Determination Day" on January 05, 2022.

In his introductory remarks, Dr. Saifur Rehman Malik, Director ISC, said that ISC focuses on all events and commemorate the special days on Kashmir. On January 05, 1949, a promise of right to self-determination through a free and fair plebiscite was made to the Kashmiri people. That promise so far remains unfulfilled. The ISC at ISSI is commemorating the Right to Self-Determination Day with the aim of highlighting the Kashmir cause, he added.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhary, DG ISSI said that today is the special day in the annals of the Kashmir. There are number of dimensions of the Kashmir dispute that include legal, humanitarian and political- dimension. He said that Kashmiris do not want to live with India and the day is reminder for us that Kashmiris must be granted their right to self-determination.

Mr. Nasir Qadri, Advocate, a Human Rights Lawyer from IIOJK who also heads the Legal Forum for Kashmir (LFK) opined that Kashmir deserves the right to self-determination. He said that Kashmir is being seen through a small prism when it should be looked through the lens of armed conflict. We are losing the ground and losing the case and Pakistan has to recognize the Kashmir liberation movement, he added.

Dr. Waleed Rasool Sheikh, Director General at Institute of Multi-Track Dialogue, Development and Diplomatic Studies maintained that the primary responsibility of presenting a solution for Kashmir issue rests on the shoulders of academicians and scholars

who are not consulted enough. He highlighted the fragility of the international system and criticized the fact that it is manipulated by countries for their own benefit. In this case, he mentioned the instance of India breaching the sovereignty of Pakistan in 1971 in Bengal, breaching Simla agreement and breaching international protocols again in 1984 by invading Siachen yet no legal action was taken against it by the international community.

Dr. Sameera Imran, Assistant Professor (IR) Department at NDU analyzed the Kashmir issue in the philosophical context and said that the idea of freedom is only based on consent. Men are born free and the Kashmiris' right to self-determination is linked with idea of freedom. Pakistan has both historical and philosophical reasons to support the Kashmiris. Continuation of resistance of the Kashmiris shows that they have rejected the Indian occupation of the Kashmir. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has threatened the Indian democracy, she concluded.

Barrister Needa Salam, a practicing lawyer in the Islamabad High Court condemned the grave human rights violations carried out by Indian Armed Forces in Kashmir calling them the

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Saifur Rehman Malik, Director ISC, said that ISC focuses on all events and commemorate the special days on Kashmir. - DNA

frame. He observed that investment in ed-

ucation has a positive and far-reaching im-

pact on societies and changes the destiny

of nations. The land of Sindh is the land

of great mystics who have always taught

The KU VC Professor Dr Khalid Iraqi men-

tioned that language has been made a com-

pulsory subject but it has not created such

a culture that would enable them to learn

Meanwhile, the Dean Arts and Social

Sciences Professor DrNusratIdress said

that nations have always sought solutions

to their problems through education. Paki-

stan needs to work in the fields of educa-

Secretary Culture and Antiquities Rahim A.

Soomro said that Sindhi literature is very

important and there is a need to spread

awareness in this regard. The words of

teachers are useful at every stage of life.

Director Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai Chair,

University of Karachi, Professor Saleem

Memon gave a detailed overview of the

Department of Sindhi since its inception.

The Chairman Department of Sindhi Pro-

fessor Dr Naheed Parveen gave a detailed

tion, business, tourism, and sports.



worst crimes against humanity in the modern time. She pointed to the violation of Article 1 of the United Nations Charter which provides every individual with the right to self determination. She further highlighted how India was responsible for breaching both the United Nations resolutions on Kashmir as well as the sanctity of the bilateral agreements with Pakistan. Paying tribute to the sacrifices of the Kashmiris, she called for the world to take immediate action against the fascist policies of the Modi government with regards to

Kashmir and treatment of minorities. Ambassador Riffat Masood, a seasoned former diplomat, stated that India falsely tries to present Kashmir case as a bilateral affair when it is a global issue, very much in accordance with the United Nations charter and identical to the cases of previous national liberation movements. She emphasized on the need to viewing Kashmir from a humanitarian lens first and stated that Pakistan needs to build a strong economic foundation to be able to present Kashmir issue more effectively in the global arena. She emphasized that Pakistan must mobilize the Kashmiri youth and diaspora to expose the flaws of the so-called largest "democracy" of the world.



lfiqar Ali Bhutto. Dr. Kausar Anwar PPP Jhelum leader organized a function in this regard in which prominent persons participated.

JHELUM: Pakistan People's Party trade

wing celebrated birthday of Shaheed Zu-

Ishitaq Pal District Secretary Informaiton PPP, and Rao Younis Presidnet PPP trade wing attended the event and paid tributes to Zulfigar Ali Bhutto. They said ZAB made Pakistan an invincible place. It was him who introduced and strengthened the nuclear program of Pakistan.

They said PPP would continue to serve masses even in the coming days. The called upon the people to support PPP in the coming elections so that their problems could be solved.

million (5,855,103) people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the district.

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Over 5.8

District Health Officer Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Wednesday 3,670,368 citizens were injected first dose while 2,115,527 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He further said that 38,480 health workers were also given first dose while 30,728 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As many as 183,475 first doses and 122,317 second doses were in the stock in Faisalabad.

## Ombudsman Punjab orders to provide monetary relief

#### **News Desk**

LAHORE: Ombudsman Punjab Maj (r) Azam Suleman Khan on Wednesday ordered to provide monetary relief of Rs 33.61 million to the plaintiffs of different districts in their cases of public importance. According to spokesperson for the Ombudsman Punjab, the ombudsman office helped a complainantShaheenaKhannum of Faisalabad to take out Rs 10.61 million, out of total dues of her late husband who was employed with the health department.

Earlier, she was given Rs 1,286,760 as leave encashment and salary arrears of Rs 904,692 on the orders by the ombudsman office.

The spokesperson further said that 7.7 Kanal portion of public passage had also been restored by the administration on ombudsman's orders in Shakargarh tehsil after retrieval from illegal occupants.

He said that on a separate application, the ombudsman office moderated to reimburse total dues worth Rs 4,289,944 to the widow of Dr Zafar Iqbal health department Jhang, adding that the primary and secondary healthcare department had settled pension dues after eight years of the death of its employee.

Alongside, the ombudsman office negotiated with Sunder IndustrialEstate to return Rs 1.836 million to four complainants who approached the ombudsman office for the payment of pending dues of their services.

The spokesperson said that the office of ombudsman Punjab also facilitated Shamim Akhtar of Bhakar district to get family pension of her late husband who was employed with the school education department there. The secretary school education department was directed in the case to ensure payment of family pension and pending emoluments according to departmental rules to her by giving six months and four days relaxation in the service period of her SED employee husband.

As a result, Shamim Akhtar succeeded in getting pension and arrears after a long period of 33 years as the matter was lying pending since 1988. After the involvement of the ombudsman office, the school education department paid Rs 909,732 to the complainant.

In compliance with the instructions of ombudsman office given in a different issue, the labour department paid educational stipends valuing Rs 180,000 of 2015-17 to the daughter of applicant Muhammad Iqbal of Darya Khan area of Bhakkar district.

He said that 37 vaccination centers and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad where registered people were being vaccinated. In order to facilitate the people these centers had been established in various areas of the city including Allied Hospital, District Head Quarters Hospital, Government General Hospital, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital Children Samanabad. Hospital, sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Head Quarters Hospital Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandlianwala, Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Chak Jhumrah, Sports Complex Jaranwala, Government General Hospital Chak 224/R-B, New Building RHC Khurrianwala, he added.

peace and love.

the Sindhi language.

#### **News Desk**

KARACHI: To strengthen Pakistan, it is necessary to make Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa more independent according to the Constitution of Pakistan and give rights to all the provinces.

These views were expressed by the provincial minister for universities and boards Muhammad Ismail Rahoo while addressing the inaugural session of the two-day golden jubilee celebration of the Department of Sindhi of the University of Karachi here on Wednesday.

The Department of Sindhi has organized the two-day literacy conference event at Arts Auditorium to mark the 50th year of the establishment of the Sindhi department.

The chief guest Ismail Rahoo observed that if the clauses of the 18th Amendment were part of the Constitution of Pakistan back in the '70s the then East Pakistan would never have become Bangladesh. On this occasion, the KU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi said that without support and investment from the governments in teaching and research

## 8 dead in road accidents

#### **News Desk**

LAHORE :At least eight people were killed and 838 injured in 802 road accidents in all 37 districts of Punjabduring the last 24 hours. Of whom, 439 people were seriously injured who were shifted to different hospitals, whereas,399 people with minor injuries were treated on the spot by rescue medical teams. Analysis showed that 353 drivers, 48 underage drivers, 116 pedestrians, and 377 passengerswere among the victims of road crashes. Statistics show that 253 road accidents were reported in Lahore in which 262 people affectedplacing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by 69 Multan with 70 victims and at thirdFaisalabad with 61 road accidents and 65 victims.

#### the mystery of a blind murder case by arresting three accused including a woman.

:Madina

Ex-wife

turned out to

be killer of

husband

Town police claimed on

Wednesday to have resolved

FAISALABAD

Addressing a news conference, SP Madina Town Naeem Aziz Sindhu said the police found bullet riddled body of a man wrapped in a quilt on December 26. The victim was identified as Qasim Ali s/o Muhammad Aslam resident of Street No. 2 Raza Abad. The police registered a murder case and started investigation on scientific lines. On suspicion, the police took Parveen Bibi, the ex-wife of victim Qasim Ali, into custodvfor interrogation who confessed her crime.

She told the police that her two accomplices namely Muhammad Waqar, resident of Chak No.224-RB Fateh Din Wali and Owais, resident of Rex CityFateh Abad Sharqi abetted her in the murder. - News Desk



Qamar News Agency 03105460372

**RAWALPINDI** Asim News Agency 03435802610

> **KARACHI** Nazir Siyal 03337554016

**PESHAWAR** Zarbagh News Agency 03005412069

> FAISALABAD **Ishfaq Mughal** 03007689850

**JEHLUM** Iqrash News Agency 03005412069

**KHARIAN** Ijaz News Agency 03068863870

SARA-I-ALMAGIR 0300 5428178

## **Police personnel awarded merit certificates** Faisalabad SSP said that rewards are being bestowed to boost the morale of PHP force to display that good work has rewarded

#### ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: In pursuance of directions of Addl IG PHP Shahid Hanif, reward distribution ceremony was held at PHP Regional office. SSP PHP Mirza Anjum Kamal distributed commendation certificate and cash reward among star performers of PHP.

While talking to media, SSP said that rewards are being bestowed to boost the morale of PHP force to display that good work has rewarded. However talking about the performance of PHP, He said that PHP Post Ali PurBanglow apprehended 5 member Dacoit Gang and heavy weaponry form criminals in two different activities.



The Incharge post of Makoana and PHP Post 419 JB seized weapons and contraband narcotics. The apprehension of dacoit gang and seizer of heavy weaponry reflect the commitment and struggle of PHP to eradicate road crime. SSP also appreciated the effort of DSP PHP Faisalabad Malik Amin to put his efforts to bolster the performance of Patrolling posts. He appreciated the efforts of PRO Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti for effective coverage and efficient coordination with media personnel.

At the conclusion of ceremony, he applauded the efforts of whole patrolling teams and emphasized upon courteous behaviour during patrolling duties. Moreover, he elaborated about the helpline 1124 in the event of emergency and distress.

#### account of the teaching and research activactivities we should not expect that scholities taking place in the Department of Sinars would be able to do good work as it is dhi and spoke about the number of M.Phil not possible without investment and time and Ph.D. produced by the department.



## SERVICES



### Namaz Timings

Fajr	. 05:44 am
Zohr	12:13 pm
Asr	03:35 pm
Maghrib	05:13 pm
Isha	06:42 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

## **Chairman Senate launches Chinese enterprises report**

Speakers welcome Prime Minister's February visit to China, CPEC investments top \$ 25 billion says Nong Rong

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-Chi-Institute (PCI) and na All-Pakistan Chinese Enterprises Association (APCEA) launched the annual 'APCEA Sustainable Development Report 2021' during an event organized at the Chinese Embassy here. The event was attended by over 100 participants and featured five speeches, including the Chief Guest, Sadiq Sanjrani, Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Yang Jiandou, Chairman APCEA. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman Senate Defence Committee & Pakistan-China Institute, Khalid Mansoor, Special Assistant to PM on CPEC Economic Minister Xie Guoxiang and Nong Rong, Ambassador of China to Pakistan. APCEA represents 200 Chinese Companies working in Pakistan. Speakers also welcomed the upcoming visit of the Prime

Minister to China early February, as it would strengthen the bilateral bond. Hailing the launch of the re-

port as a good step towards enhancing the understanding of work being done by Chinese enterprises in Pakistan, the speakers appreciated the role of APCEA and PCI for documenting the report which will serve to promote facts and information regarding the role of Chinese enterprises in Pakistan.

In his keynote speech, Sadiq Sanjrani, Chairman Senate of Pakistan said that through this report, the people will learn more about CPEC and the opportunities being created by Chinese enterprises in Pakistan. Terming CPEC as a game changer, he said the



project will create trade linkages and economic opportunities in the whole region. Moreover, he said that after overhauling the infrastructure and alleviating the energy crisis in the first phase, CPEC Phase two will initiate an era of industrialization in the country. To harness the opportunities brought by the second phase, he advocated for enhancing communication with Chinese enterprises. He urged APCEA to closely coordinate with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Pakistan. Senator Mushahid Hussain

Sayed, Chairman Senate Defence Committee & Pakistan-China Institute said that APCEA report will serve the purpose of presenting facts and nullifying the fiction being propagated by the adversaries of China

about CPEC. He pointed tostan-China ties have always wards the recently passed "Strategic Competition Act" by the US Senate through which the US has allocated \$300 million for a "Countering China Influence Fund". Against this backdrop, he advised the companies to brace themselves for any disinformation campaigns. He also lauded the upcoming development related to slashing of the long bureaucratic red tape of 37 rules and regulations and said that it would facilitate and ease the work of Chinese enterprises. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed criticized the boycott of Beijing Olympics by certain Western Countries as biased and based on double standards. He said 2022 is the year of Pakistan's Platinum Jubilee, in which Paki-

been Center-stage. Ambassador Nong Rong, said that last year, China and Pakistan held series of celebrations to reinvigorate their time tested friendship as it marked the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations. Both sides have supported each other in their fight against the global pandemic and pushed forward high quality development of CPEC. He said China had invested over \$25 billion in Pakistan on CPEC projects generating 75,000 jobs, producing 5500 kw of electricity and building over 500 kilometers of roads and highways. Khalid Mansoor, Special Assistant to PM on CPEC, said that he has seen at first hand the difference being created by the work of Chinese enterprises in Pa-

kistan. Through CPEC, the dream of Thar Coal energy became a reality. CPEC Authority, he said, is working tirelessly to remove any bottlenecks which may emerge during the execution of CPEC projects. He said the Prime Minister had ordered the removal of 37 regulations for a one window operation for foreign investors and the Prime Minister personally would be taking briefings on CPEC projects

progress every 15 days. . Xie Guoxiang, Minister Counselor of Economic Affairs of Chinese Embassy said the trade and economic cooperation between two countries has been further cemented since the start of CPEC. Chinese enterprises, he maintained, have done marvelous work which can be clearly seen in the report **ITP resolves** 82.5pc complaints

DNA

Islamabad ISLAMABAD: Traffic Police (ITP) resolved more than 82.5 per cent complaints by taking prompt action on them which were received on Prime Minister Portal during last one month. According to details, IGP Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Yunus directed to immediately resolve the traffic related complaints received on PM portal and SSP (Traffic) Rai Mazhar Iqbal took initiative to promptly resolve them.

SSP (Traffic) Rai Mazhar Iqbal said that a total of 128 complaints related to traffic police were received on PM portal during last one month of which 92 were immediately resolved while feedback has been received on remaining complaints and these would be addressed soon. However, 82.5 per cent citizens lodging these complaints got satisfied after redressal of the issues highlighted by them while people have appreciated the prompt action of the traffic police. Moreover, Islamabad Traf-

fic Police also resolved the complaints received to it through social media tools including twitter, facebook and Instagram.

## Two held for aerial firing

### DNA

RAWALPINDI :Local police have arrested two persons on charges of aerial firing, displaying weapons and uploading its videos on social media, a police spokesman said here on Wednesday. After receiving the information a special team under the supervision of SP Potohar, conducted raid in the jurisdiction of Taxila Police Station and arrested the accused Hamza Sadiq and Hamza Hassan for resorting

aerial firing, displaying weapons openly and uploading its video on social media. Police also recovered arms used in the crime and a case

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIAFlightInfo	114
PIACargo	.9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange9	270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.	.5555489
CAA	.9281092



### Hospitals

СМН	5611111
MH	561116
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DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
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PIMS	.9261170-79
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Shifa International.4603666	



### Departments

-	
CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
ТМА	5770886
Cantonment Boa	ard 9270151-3



### Complaints

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

### Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation......9209224 Potohar Town......9209224 RawalTown.....5773343

Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....0331-5022125

## President ICCI's father dies



ISLAMABAD: Haji Muhammad Munir, father of Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry passed away last night due to heart attack. His funeral was held in H-11 Graveyard, which was attended by a large number of the business community of the twin cities as well as political and social personalities.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Mian Akram Farid Chairman Founder Group, former Presidents ICCI including Khalid Javed, Abdul Rauf Alam, Tariq Sadiq, Zubair Ahmed Malik, Mian Shaukat Masud, Khalid Iqbal Malik, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Zafar Bakhtawari, Ahmed Hassan Moughal, Sheikh Amir Waheed as well as Nasir Qureshi, Ch. Abdul Waheed, Executive Members and members of ICCI expressed heartfelt condolences with Muhammad Shakeel Munir,

President ICCI over the sad demise of his father. They prayed that may the Allah Almighty keep the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family members to bear this loss with fortitude. - DNA

## Sufi festival to be held on Friday

ISLAMABAD: A Sufi festival would be held here at F-9 Park on Friday, with the aim of celebrating rich culture and wonderful teaching of Sufism with talks, featuring practices and Sufi performances. According to organizer Murtaza Khan this is an opportunity to experience Sohbat Zikr and Sama for the Sufi aspirants novices or simply those who want to learn about Sufism. At speakers circle par-

ism

ticipant would meet with scholars and discuss and hear their personal stories of self discovery and growth on the path of spirituality and healing. A poetess, artist and a writer of a book "The Burning Champa by Zuka" Dewan e Zahra will be sharing her story about how her favourite sufi poets and saint like Rabia Basri and Rumi, literature, art, music and intentional creativity helped her in her 25 year struggle with Bipolar 2. The in-charge of the Center of Excellence in Gender Studies at Quaid-i-Azam

University Fatimah Ihsan will shed light on some core teaching of Shaykh Ebra-

him. - APP

## China cultural center to celebrate winter Olympics 2022

being launched today.

Yang Jiandou, Chairman AP-

CEA said that Chinese enter-

prises have pursued sustain-

able development strategies

in Pakistan and their role is

not limited to building motor-

ways and constructing power

projects. The Chinese enter-

prises have improved peo-

ple's livelihood, implemented

joined hands with Pakistani

counterparts to fight pandem-

ic, and helped in developing

local education. Moreover,

he said that the leadership of

APCEA has been committed

to enhance the connectivity

between Chinese enterprises

and the local business bodies.

The report launching was

attended by a packed au-

dience representing CEO

of Chinese enterprises,

including Senator Kauda

Baber from Baluchistan.

development,

eco-friendly

Join Hands with China Cultural Center in Pakistan to Launch the 2022 "China Ice and Snow Tourism **Overseas Promotion Season**"

February 4, 2022, Beijing ISLAMABAD: On 🖌 will host the XXIV Winter Olympics. To celebrate this grand event, in the beginning of the new year, the 2022 "China Ice and Snow Tour-Overseas Promotion Season" has been launched globally under the guidance of tional Exchange and Cothe Bureau of Internaoperation of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, together **BEIJING 2022** with the Department **BEIJING 2022** of Interna-

tional Cooperation of the National Radio and Television Administration, and the Publicity Department of the General Sport of China. The Administration of event is co-sponsored by The Network of International Culturalink Entities and the Culture and Tourism Departments(Bureaus) of Beijing, Hebei, Inner Mongolia, Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang and Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The event aims to comprehensively introduce ice and snow culture, ice and snow sports and ice and snow tourism in northern China to overseas people, and show the warm passions of the Chinese people to welcome the

2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. Starting from January 4, the China Cultural Center in Pakistan will successively launch snow and ice themed documentaries, exhibitions, online tourism promotion weeks of various regions, live broadcasts of well-known scenic spots, etc. on the center's public platforms as Facebook(https://www.facebook.com/cccenterinpak) and WeChat Official Account. - DNA

has been registered against the accused. SP Potohar said that no one would be allowed to violate rule of law, adding that those involved in spreading fear and panic among the citizens would dealt strictly.

## **IRSA** releases 22585 cusecs water

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Wednesday released 22585 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 36650 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1432.80 feet, which was 40.08 feet higher than its dead level 1392 feet.

Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 17500 and 17500 cusecs respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1121.45 feet, which was 71.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded 7565 and 4000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 10427. 12636 and 10125 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River a total of 5300 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 6285 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.

## Leather exports increase

ISLAMABAD:Leather Manufacturers exports during the first five months of fiscal year of 2021-22 grew up by 11.81 per cent as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year.

During the period from July-Nov 2021, Leather Gloves worth US\$119,516 exported as compared to exports worth US\$ 106,890 during same period of last year. According to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the exports of Leather Manufactures increased by 11.03 percent, worth of US\$ 266,595 were exported as compared to the exports of US\$ 240,100 of same period of last year. - APP

## **APHC leaders urge UN to resolve Kashmir issues** APHC Vice Chairman said that the unabated genocide of the oppressed Kashmiris at the hands of Indian occupation forces and the brazen violations of international laws and commitments made by India before the various international for a have brought the whole world at the brink of yet another world war

Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leadoccupation forces and the brazen ers have called upon the United violations of international laws and Nations to resolve the Kashmir commitments made by India before dispute by implementing its resothe various international fora have lutions that granted the Kashmiris brought the whole world at the their right to self-determination,In brink of vet another world war. Indian illegally occupied Jammu The APHC Vice Chairman said that the United Nations Security and Kashmir. The leaders in their statements Council in its resolution passed on issued in connection with the 5th January 1949 endorsed a bind-Kashmiris' Right to Self-Determiing to settle the Kashmir dispute through a free and fair plebiscite. nation Day, being observed today, deplored that the failure of the UN He said this resolution established to hold India accountable for its self-determination, which has been brutalities in IIOJK had resulted recognised as the most peaceful and democratic formula in the

ISLAMABAD: The all Parties

in the continued sufferings of the people of the occupied territory. The APHC Vice Chairman, Ghumodern world, as the governing principle for the settlement of the lam Ahmad Gulzar, in a statement dispute. Ghulam Ahmad Gulzar maintained that that since 17th of issued in Srinagar, expressed deep concern over the deteriorating situ-January 1948 till 21st December 1971, the UN had adopted a total ation in IIOJK. He said that the unabated genocide of the oppressed of 27 Kashmir related resolutions.

Kashmiris at the hands of Indian which nullified the Indian claim on Kashmir and proved beyond any doubt that Kashmir is an internationally recognised dispute. He denounced the Indian stubbornness, illegal, illogical and inhuman approach vis-vis the Kashmir dispute. The APHC Vice Chairman maintained that it is the sole responsibility of the UN to address the burning world issues including the Kashmir dispute and save the contemporary human race from the inevitable threat of their world war. He strongly condemned the incessant killing spree in IIOJK by Indian occupation forces to suppress their freedom movement. He also paid rich tributes to the youth martyred by Indian troops in Srinagar, Kulgam and other parts of the occupied territory. APHC leader, Abdul Ahad Parra, in

a statement in Srinagar deplored

that the people of IIOJK were facing the worst Indian state terrorism due to the criminal silence adopted by the United Nations on the grim situation in the territory. He said the people of Jammu and Kashmir will continue their just struggle till they were given their inalienable right. He appealed to the international community and the UN Secretary General to take steps for resolving the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiris people for ensuring permanent peace in South Asia. APHC leaders, Syed Bashir Andrabi and Khawaja Firdous, in a joint statement in Srinagar said that it was time to implement the resolution adopted by the United Nations on Kashmir on January 5,

1949 to establish lasting peace in

South Asia. They said the Kashmir

dispute could not be resolved for last seven decades due to stubbornness of India while Pakistan has been advocating its peaceful

settlement from the day one. Syed Bashir Andrabi and Khawaja Firdous said that the Kashmiri people were fighting peacefully for their birthright and India was trying to suppress their struggle by military power. They appealed to the United Nations and the international community to impress upon New Delhi to settle the lingering dispute by giving the Kashmiris their right to self-determination. APHC women leaders, Farida Bahenji and Yasmeen Raja, in their joint statement issued in Srinagar called upon the UN Security Council to fulfill its promise made to Kashmiris 74 years ago of settling the Kashmir dispute by holding a plebiscite in

Jammu and Kashmir. - APP

## 04

## **TWIN CITIES**



## Briefs

## **PSX continues** with bullish trend

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: The KSE 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend Wednesday, gaining on 17.05 points, with a positive change of 0.04 percent. closing at 45,407.89 points against 45,390.84 points on the last working day. A total of 432,060,661 shares were traded during the day compared to the trade of 375,985,013 shares the previous day whereas the price of shares stood at Rs10.285 billion against Rs12.781 billion the previous day.

As many as 363 companies? transacted shares in the stock market, 174 of them recorded gain and 167 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 22 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with a volume of 75,590,000 shares and price per share of Rs2.36, Unity Foods Ltd with a volume of 66,808,639 and price per share of Rs2.27 and Telecard Limited with volume of 23,802,500 and price per share of Rs17.96.

Sapphire Fiber witnessed a maximum increase of Rs72.45 per share, closing at Rs1070 whereas the runner up was Bata (Pak) XD, the share prices of which climbed up by Rs51 to Rs2090. Nestle Pakistan witnessed maximum decrease of Rs213.44 closing Rs5512.05 followed by Blessed Tex, the share price of which declined by Rs36.98 to close at Rs463.01.

## DHO to ensure antidengue spray

### DNA

RAWALPINDI: District Health Officer (DHO), Health Authority Dr Ehsan Ghani, on Wednesday, directed all the Deputy District Health Officers(D DHO) of the district to ensure dengue spray in all public and private schools before the end of winter vacations. Addressing a training session of dengue field staff here at Rawalpindi Arts Council, he said dengue breeding could be controlled by adopting timely preventive measures as dengue mosquito upbringing started in March. The DHO asked the DDHO to instruct the school administrations to clean all the furniture six hours before the students enter the classrooms and ensure proper ventilation to end the harmful effects of the spray. Dr. Ehsan said that the spray work should be completed two days before the reopening of all educational institutions and remove breeding grounds of dengue larvae Later, the DHO distributed certificates among the participants of the workshop.

## Passing out parade of aero apprentices held at PAF

A total of 1824 Aero Apprentices including trainees from allied countries and Pakistan Navy successfully completed their training



through social media.

DNA ISLAMABAD: Passing out Parade of Aero Apprentices was held at PAF Airmen

Academy, Korangi Creek, Karachi. Air Marshal Zulfiqar Ahmed Qureshi, Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (Training), was the Chief Guest at the occasion. Earlier on arrival. Air Vice Marshal Zubair Hassan Khan, Air Officer Commanding. PAAK received the Chief Guest. A total of 1824 Aero Apprentices including trainees from allied countries and Pakistan Navy successfully completed their training. While addressing the cere-

mony, the Chief Guest said, "Emerging high-tech envi-

ronment demands modern training to attain mastery in various disciplines". He further emphasized the trainees to establish credentials for efficient handling of equipment and resources in line with upcoming challenges. He added that it would be their prime responsibility to maintain new technologies in the highest state of operational preparedness for aerial defence of the motherland. Felicitating the trainees for this singular honour, the Chief Guest wished them a bright future and success in their professional assignments. He also commended the Academy instructional staff for their sincere endeavours and commitment to Muhammad Ishtiaq.

revised its examination

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### the cause of training. The Chief Guest also award-

ed trophies to high achievers. Asghar Khan Trophy for the Best in Aeronautics was awarded to AFT-II Sheraz Hussain. Nur Khan Trophy for the Best in Avionics Technology was awarded to Aero Electromech Technician-II Mubashar Ul Hasan. Air Officer Commanding Trophy for the Best in General Service Training was awarded to Academy Sergeant Aircraftman Abdul Raouf Khan, whereas Trophy for best foreign trainee was awarded to LAC Bandhara of Sri Lanka Air Force. Chief of the Air Staff Trophy for the Overall Best Performance was awarded to AC

organizes activity to observe Jan 05 ISLAMABAD: The Youth Forum for Kashmir (YKF) on Wednesday organized a day long activity at Centaurus Mall. Islamabad, to mark Right to Self-Determination Day. Kashmiris around the

YKF

world are observing this Right to Self-Determination Day to make the international community realize that their promise to the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) remains unfulfilled. In these last seven decades, three generations of Kashmiris have suffered at the hands of Indian occupation forces, waiting for the actualization of UN's promise to them.The daylong campaign titled "Remembering United Nations Plebiscite Resolution on Kashmir" aimed to promote and raise awareness of the ultimate resolution of the long pending issue of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK). The event was held at the main lobby of Centaurus Mall, Islamabad, Young men and women from YFK joined visitors gathered at an attractive Selfie Wall.

The resolution adopted by the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan, on 5 Jan. 1949, is marked as Kashmir Self-Determination Day. YFK-International Kashmir Lobby Group is an independent NGO working in the region and internationally for the peaceful resolution of Kashmir Conflict in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions. - APP

## Gold prices increase by Rs100 per tola

ISLAMABAD :The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs100 and was sold at Rs126,250 in the local market on Wednesday against its sale at Rs126,150 the previous day. The price of 10 gram 24 karat gold also increased by Rs86 to Rs108,239 from Rs108,153 whereas that of and 10 gram 22 karat went up from Rs99,140 to Rs99.219. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs1460 and Rs1251.71 respectively. The price of gold in international market witnessed increase of \$17 and was traded at \$1820 against its sale at \$1803, the Jewellers Group reported. - APP

## IIOJK termed a story of tyranny, oppression

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: "The Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) has always been a story of tyranny, oppression, and siege," said Shehryar Khan Afridi, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir. He was speaking at an event organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) here Wednesday to commemorate the Kashmir Self-Deter-

mination Day. The day is observed to commemorate the adop-tion of the United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan (UNCIP) Resolution on the accession of the Kashmir to either Pakistan or India through a free and impartial plebiscite.

The Chairman of the Kashto play their role as leaders for the Kashmir cause and mir Committee called for greater involvement of the get themselves heard on the youth through interactive right forums in their counsessions in universities to tries of residence. counter the influence of

Pakistan's former High the hybrid warfare waged Commissioner to India against Pakistan by India Ambassador Abdul Basit said that India was trying Responding to a question, to convert the narrative Mr Afridi shared that Kashabout the freedom struggle miris were part of all imporin Kashmir into one about tant meetings and decisions a secessionist movement. of the Kashmir Committee. He added that Kashmiris He termed the Indian govwere fighting against an ernment's actions following occupation akin to a colothe unilateral revocation nialism and had the right of Articles 370 and 35-A to use all means necessary of its Constitution related for winning freedom. Ambassador Abdul Basit atto Kashmir as war crimes and urged the internationtributed the international al community to take note silence about Kashmir to its Indian projection as its of the Indian brutalities in IIOJK since August 5, 2019. internal matter. He added, Mr Afridi also urged the however, that IIOJK was Pakistani diasporas abroad never an internal matter

of India and that India had itself acknowledged its status as an international dispute by taking the mat-

ter to the United Nations Security Council. Senior Vice President of Kashmir Youth Alliance Mr-TahaMuneeb that Kashmiris had never accepted Indian occupation and no amount of development expenditure of the Indian government in Kashmir could change that. He added that the freedom struggle in Kashmir was indigenous and had produced several well-known Kashmiri freedom fighters. MrMuneeb shared that 171 Kashmiris had been martyred by the Indian security forces in the year 2021 out of which 37 were martyred in the month of December alone.



tutions of the country, AIOU in a statement on Wednesday said. According to the revised policy, a student must apply for fresh admission in case he fails a certain course. Previously such cases were given two chances to reappear in the examination without being admitted in the course again. This decision has been taken to ensure quality of education imparted and to bring reforms in admission and examination policies and practices of the university. The revised policy will be implemented from fresh examinations of autumn 2021 semester. - DNA



## AIOU revises its examination policy

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has

policy and abolished the

again reappear facility to its

in various academic

fered by the uni-

policy has been

accordance

standard

practices of

Allama Intal Open university other higher education insti-

## ECC allows Urea import

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on Wednesday approved import of 50,000 metric tons of Urea from China on immediate basis subject to clearance from Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA). The committee, the meeting of which was presided over by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Shaukat Tarin, allowed the import on Government-to-Government (GoG) basis with People's Republic of China, said a press statement issued by the Finance Ministry.

The ECC tasked the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) to negotiate price with Chinese supplier authorized by government of China for further import of Urea. Meanwhile, the committee approved a summary, with some modifications, presented by Ministry of Finance for rationalization of tariff on import of vehicles and other items requested by Ministry of Industries and Production (MOIP) and other sectors. The forum also decided to review some recommendations relating to automotive sector after six months. The ECC also approved requests of Technical Supplementary Grants (TSG) presented by Petroleum Division and Finance Division.

## **IPHRC** seminar being held today

Two day OIC

ISLAMABAD: A two-day International Seminar on the theme of "Combating Corruption - A Prerequisite for the full enjoyment of all Human Rights and Sustainable Development", will open here on Thursday. The two-day (January 6-7) seminar is being organised by the Government of Pakistan and the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have also partnered in this important initiative. The International Seminar shall focus on the multi-dimensional negative effects sustainable devel-

of corruption on opment and of all human ing civil, poic. social and as well as develop-Office said issued here More than 200 stakenational

full enjoyment rights, includlitical, economcultural rights the right to ment, Foreign in a statement on Wednesday. international and holders

including Government officials, OIC Member and Observer States, IPHRC Commissioners, and representatives of the OIC Secretariat, United Nations, practitioners, academia, and civil society would participate in the International Seminar. Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi will address the opening segment of the International Seminar as the Keynote Speaker. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (through a recorded message), Assistant Secretary-General of OIC, and the IPHRC Chairperson would also deliver remarks during the opening segment. The IPHRC Commissioners will engage with the participants in comprehensive discussions, sharing best practices, and highlighting important aspects regarding the theme of the International Seminar. At the closing segment, Federal Minister for Human Rights Dr Shireen M. Mazari will participate as the Keynote Speaker. A Declaration shall be adopted at the conclusion of the Seminar. - DNA

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner, Christian Turner exchanging views with Advisor to the PM on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood. - DNA

## Taxes on milk increased but no tax increase on cigarettes

#### DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) organized virtual post Mini-Budget session with journalists on Wednesday. Malik Imran Ahmed, Country Head, Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids Pakistan said, the Government of Pakistan, increased taxes on milk for children in the Mini-Budget 2021-22 but no taxes were increase on cigarettes, which could have generat-

ed 10 to 20 billion. He further added 4 out of 10 children are stunted in the country. Compared to international giants, 17% GST imposition on local milk production will worsen malnutrition rates among children.

It is reiterated that same amounts be generated from tobacco industry through taxation instead of putting children at stake through cutting off their milk supplies.

Khalil Ahmed Dogar, Program Manager Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child told, Evidence based research reveals that Tobacco is the largest silent killer in Pakistan as 438 people die every day due to tobacco use. He further added that children of Pakistan are biggest victims because the tobacco industry targets them as "replacement smokers. Around 1200 Pakistani children between ages of 6-15 years start smoking every day. Mr. Shariq Mahmood Khan, CEO Chromatic Trust added the cigarette taxation in Pakistan is among the weakest in South Asia, and this makes

vides assistance to three Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women Crisis Centers (SB-BWC) and shelter homes across the country including the districts of Balochistan province in which it works under the Women Development Department.

According to MoHR, these centers were established with the objective to protect women against all forms of violence and to eliminate every type of discrimination against women.

The Crisis Centers were providing number of facilities including temporary shelter to victims of violence in emergencies, medical/first aid to women in distress, free legal assistance/aid to women in distress, free social, psychological and legal counseling to the women and liaison with agencies competent to redress the grievances of women at individual and collective levels, especially those concerned with combating violence against women. The Ministry is mandated to promote social, economic, political and legal rights of women as provided in the Constitution of Pakistan and in accordance with its international commitments, it added.- APP

## **HEC holds training session for business skills** HEC has already conducted a series of ISF pre-launch outreach events focusing on all the thematic areas in line with the national growth policy

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) under its Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project ecentlv held a one-day training session for all the managers of Business Incubation Centres (BIC). It was attended by more than 30 Managers of BICs from across Pakistan. During the training, importance of the role of BICs in the knowledge economy was highlighted. These Centres will support the startups in entrepreneurial training, legal support, financial education, business development service provision, and investment readiness training.

In the age of knowledge economy, universities play a key role in the triple helix which brings together all key stakeholders of a knowl-

edge ecosystem. HEC is implementing key projects to support universities in their important role as knowledge creators. Innovator Seed Fund is one such programme started by HEC under its flagship project Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP). ISF is a

uniquely collaborative national programme in which HEC along with its recognized BICs aims to support aspiring entrepreneurs who require "capacity + capital" support to build sustainable fast-growing enterprises based on innovative ideas. The ISF programme

is based on the idea of "Digital Knowledge Park" which aims to digitally connect all stakeholders of the knowledge and innovation ecosystem. This initiative stems out of the Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision making Pakistan a leader in Knowledge Economy. The dig-



ital knowledge park will facilitate collaboration across the entire research, development and commercialization value chain and hence will be a major contributor to the knowledge economy of Pakistan. DG (R&D) HEC Dr. Amjad Hussain and Director (R&D) Ms. NoshabaAwais welcomed the participants. In their opening remarks they offered their full support to BIC teams. Ms. Mariam RiazWattoo, who leads the HEDP project at HEC, briefed the participants about the overall scope of HEDP project and gathered feedback from partic-

ipants on how to improve HEDP Incubation programmes. HEDP Consultant Mr. Omer Jawed Ghani, who was the lead instructor for the training, guided theparticipants on the ISF implementation steps and HEC's expectations from BICs under the ISF program.

## IHC adjourns Noor case hearing

ISLAMABAD :The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday adjourned hearing till January 17, in a plea filed by Therapy Works' employee seeking legal action against accused Zahir Jaffar and investigation officer Abdul Sattar in Noor Mukadam case. Earlier, the trial court had dismissed the same plea of Amiad who was also an accused in Noor Mukadam murder case. IHC's Justice Aamer Farooq adjourned the case without further proceeding due to the absence of petitioner's lawyer. - APP

## MoHR to develop SBBWC center



## Digital banking

NHE transition from traditional to digital banking is finally on the cards for the country as the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) introduced a framework for granting licenses to set up fully-functioning digital banks. If this initiative is successful, not only will our commercial setup experience positive growth but convenience will also improve for the average customer. However, there are some hurdles that the government must overcome. When it comes to cyber protection, Pakistan lags behind other countries that have iron-clad barriers installed to protect sensitive finan-

cial information about a bank's customers. Just recently, the National Bank of Pakistan was subjected to a cyberattack which not only disrupted the services offered but was also responsible for customers losing their confidence in the ability and resources of the bank.

Such threats are very real for digital banks and if they are going to inspire any confidence in the public, the government must ensure that each bank has barriers that prevent hacking or phishing. Security is essential and the people must be reassured that the bank can keep their information safe.

Another aspect to consider is the lack of awareness and trust in the digital system. More often than not, people refrain from making any kind of online transactions or utilising online banking services because they doubt the reliability of the digital platform. This is not even an illegitimate fear, considering the regular crashes that online systems of existing commercial banks face almost monthly. The mobile applications of several banks including HBL and Meezan Bank were down just yesterday without explanation. This would not be acceptable anywhere else.

Before issuing digital banking licenses, the authorities must ensure that both banks and citizens increase digital capacities and must be reassured of the fact that each action is safe. In return, the banks must also ensure that it has an effective and diligent management team that can ensure smooth and consistent operations and enough technical knowhow to resolve problems before they materialise fully. The advantages of digitising the banking sector are numerous; convenience, accessibility, business activity and commerce will go up as most processes will become fairly simple. Only if we go about this development the right way will we be able to avail such benefits, however.

### Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

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## SAARC Summit

HE 19th summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is to be held next week in Islamabad. The summit was not initially scheduled for January-it was supposed to be held in November of 2021, but was postponed due to India's refusal to attend in Islamabad.

This is now the second attempt of the member countries to hold SAARC-this time, with Pakistan reiterating its invitation and saying that New Delhi can join the moot virtually if it does not want to be present in person. This is a mature decision on part of the Pakistani government.

Considering that SAARC only consists of 8 member countries, the Summit would essentially be fruitless if any of its major and most populated members were not present. Moreover, this invitation has been extended to all countries. Moreover, the presence of all members is of particular significance this year due to the important agenda items of relevance.

This year, a number of geopolitical developments have occurred in the region that impact all surrounding countries. It would be in the interest of all countries in the region to engage in these issues and even if they disagree-negotiate and indulge in dialogue. There are existential threats facing the region-ISIS, for example, has reared its ugly head.

The brunt of climate change is estimated to be quite harsh on the South Asian region due to its coastal vulnerability. Perhaps, most notable of all, Afghanistan once again after twenty years sees the rule of the Taliban, and this enormous political development has serious consequences on the monetary, financial, political and security conditions of all member countries.

Pakistan has played an integral part before in SAARC-we view it as an important organisation for enhancing regional cooperation that should not be set aside for selfish deviant motives by countries. It is hoped that India will also pay heed to the greater good and security of the region and attend the conference.

## **Biden's foreign policy** challenges mounting up

### Maria Maalouf



All these foreign policy gambits will lead to important questions. First, what kind of

foreign policy goals. He is still adopting a wait-and-see approach to assess how other nations will shape their foreign policies in a post-COVID-19 world.

On the Middle East, it is obvious that Biden has given a big role to National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan. Sullivan is seen as the point man for the administration in reference to Iran. He provides the institutional memory for the ongoing negotiations in Vienna. This suggests that any possible new nuclear deal between the US and Iran will be in the mold of the 2015 agreement, but with more stringent conditions on Tehran's ability to enrich uranium. It is arguable that Biden has so far refused to accept Iran's demands to remove all the US sanctions on Tehran. This will likely continue under the mandate of a new nuclear agreement. Meanwhile, the United States Institute of Peace last year published a study on the relations between the Biden administration and both the Israelis and the Palestinians. It said: "The Biden administration has not prioritized the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on its foreign policy agenda." However, there is no doubt that the conflict in Gaza in May 2021 changed that attitude. Right after a ceasefire was declared, there was talk of plans for the reconstruction of Gaza. And, while Biden is a supporter of the Abraham Accords, he has killed off the so-called deal of the century. Biden has also taken a different approach toward Jerusalem and the US now intends to reopen its consulate in East Jerusalem. This could be an important friendly gesture to the Palestinians. It would be a recognition of the rights of Muslims and Christians in the Holy City. Further, it seems that the Biden administration was the catalyst for the delay in the convening of the Libyan elections. Its rationale rested on the need to avoid a stalemate following the results, which could have preempted a political deadlock. All these foreign policy gambits will lead to important questions. First, what kind of pressure will the Biden administration exert

on Israel in case it opposes any political deal over Iran's nuclear program? Second, what tools will it use to stop a future war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas? On Egypt, the Biden administration seems to be almost silent. It has to endorse Cairo's mediation between the Israelis and the Palestinians. It has to engage more with the Egyptian leadership and must be more encouraging regarding a settlement of the dispute involving Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan over the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. The longer it waits on this issue, the more unresolvable the conflict will be. Quoting the Institute of Peace again, it said that the Biden administration finds that both the Israelis and the Palestinians are deserving of "equal measures of security, freedom, opportunity and dignity." In terms of US

## Covid unmasks the West's racism towards Africans

### Ayo Olatunji



Vaccines, vaccine certificates and Covid test results from African countries such as Ghana have had their validity

sociations with Black Africans and Covid-19, in a move to facilitate and establish the Africanisation of Covid. It must be stated that these harmful and damaging stereotypes are rooted in eugenics. A term coined in 1883 by Francis Galton, eugenics was the pseudoscientific discipline of racism, classism and ableism. The pseudoscience drew upon different disciplines to advocate for the breeding of desirable characteristics in humans; white, able-bodied and upper class. And the phasing out of undesirable humans; Black, disabled and lower class. This was to be done by influencing the media, government, medicine and public health - and they were successful.

During the pandemic, the disciplines of genetics and public health have been crucial in paving the way forward. However, a missing historical link in that duo is the fact that eugenics and the foundations of modern genetics and public health are inextricably linked to this racist project. Vaccines, vaccine certificates and Covid test results from African countries such as Ghana have had their validity scrutinised as not being legitimate or forgery prone, despite using digital QR codes as the primary method of verifying vaccine status. Meanwhile, countries like the USA use pen and paper to print vaccine certificates, which could easily be forged. This invokes the stereotypes of the incompetence and feeble-mindedness of Black people and Africans, who are mistakenly deemed unable to organise themselves to carry out simple policy measures. Such stereotypes have a colonial and eugenic nostalgia about them. Earlier on in the year, Bill Gates refused to share patents for the vaccine, meaning that vaccine production for the African continent has been hindered. The international Covid vaccine supply programme COVAX has seen African countries at the bottom of the priority list. As a result, only 8.6 percent of the continent is fully vaccinated, with that number dropping to 0.09 percent of the population in DR Congo. Black and African lives are seen as expendable and of a lower priority perhaps because disease is seen as ubiquitous there. The USA, Germany, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa and Turkiye all offered up citizens to have the Pfizer and Astra-Zeneca vaccines tested. All of those countries and their corresponding continents have vaccinated populations that exceed the world average of 57 percent (with at least one dose) by quite a gap apart from African countries, which fall substantially below that average. That is despite the fact that South Africa came forward to help with Covid vaccine testing as was done in European and South American countries. This echoes the historical reality of widespread medical experimentation on Black people at their expense for everyone else's benefit. It sends a message that South Africa and other Africans will be used to participate in clinical trials that benefit everyone apart from themselves. Knowing our history is important as it allows us to visualise how history repeats itself, as it is currently doing. In order to stop this repetition, journalists, politicians, doctors and public health actors must all become aware of this history and individually and structurally commit to putting it to an end and righting these wrongs through their individual fields. If not, we will continue to be stuck in this vicious cycle with Black and African people.

pressure will the Biden administration exert on Israel in case it opposes any political deal over Iran's nuclear program? Second, what tools will it use to stop a future war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas?

S US President Joe Biden approaches the end of his first year in the White House, foreign policy challenges are mounting up. How will he act regarding the situation in Ukraine? Then there is the debate over the possible signing of a new nuclear deal with Iran. These foreign policy stakes should not hide the fact that, despite Biden's focus on China and Russia, his track record still sticks to US norms. He is very cautious when dealing with old and new foes alike. He is trying to restore the world's confidence in America. He is not yet relying on military force to achieve his

domestic politics, this means that improving relations with the Palestinians would also reflect positively in the attitudes of the Arabs and Muslims inside America, a majority of whom voted for Biden in the 2020 election. He has to invest in this political stock. Otherwise, he will lose a crucial support base not only for himself, but for the Democratic Party generally.

This also means it is critical for Biden to explain to the American public why he wants to renew the US' rivalry with Russia. Moscow has, over the last two decades, enjoyed much success in the Middle East. If Biden is more hostile, Russia could be more of a handicap to a positive American role in Syria. It is time for Biden to consult more with the Kremlin over Syria. This can be done professionally and without any personal closeness with President Vladimir Putin. My crystal ball sees that the Biden administration will encourage more summits similar to the one between Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas that took place last week. It has to back up such diplomatic steps with a greater effort to collaborate with Russia and end the region's conflicts. - Courtesy: Arab News

## Plastic shopping bags are a problem in our environment

lution is traffic noise coming from buses,

cars, trucks, rickshaws and water tankers.

#### Dr. M Akram Zaheer



The non-biodegradable substance and plastic pollution are also a threat to humans. Environmental health is closely related to human health. The proliferation of micro plastics on our planet poses serious concerns for human safety



But plastic bags and non-biodegradable substance (bottles, glass, packaging material, electronic waste, metal waste, etc) are extremely harmful to all types of life on Earth. Every year thousands of animals lose their lives due to plastic pollution. Consumption of plastic or entanglement in plastic products is harming and damaging the life on the earth. Most of the plastic waste produced in the world ends up in the oceans, where it causes great damage to the marine ecosystem.

The non-biodegradable substance and plastic pollution are also a threat to humans. Environmental health is closely related to human health. The proliferation of micro plastics on our planet poses serious concerns for human safety. New research shows that people inhale micro plastics through the air, eat them through food and water, and even absorb them through the skin. Micro plastics have also been found in our lungs, liver, spleen and kidneys, and a recent study has discovered micro plastics in the umbilical cord of infants.

The effects of plastic pollution are not felt worldwide and particular in Pakistan. Wealthy countries produce more plastic waste, which flows to less developed countries where waste management is the least complicated. It can be observed in the urban area of Pakistan. Recycling can help to reduce the production of plastic and plastic

waste. A major problem, however, is the low plastic recycling rate in Pakistan which is currently less than 10%.

The most stressful thing is the rapid rise of plastic production that threatens the earth's natural systems, on which life depends. Till 2040, plastic waste is expected to pose an annual financial risk of 100 billion for businesses that would need to bear the expected volume of waste management costs. However, the damages by the plastic papers are not well reported, and the real costs of plastic pollution for human, environmental and social health are still being investigated.

I think there is no single solution of this crisis. It requires thinking, innovation and system which do not seem in Pakistan at any scale. People should understand and feel the threat that is growing rapidly. They must reduce the use of troublesome plastics and non-biodegradable substance, and stop their flow into our lakes, rivers, wetlands, beaches and oceans. The government should improve waste management systems and ensure a high proportion of reused or recycled. The government should engage consumers and address plastic pollution and inspire behavioral change by phasing out unnecessary use of plastic bags or avoiding problematic plastic items and replacing these with alternative materials, products and services. The government should improve and strengthen governance at all levels.

### scrutinised as not being legitimate or forgery prone, despite using digital QR codes as the primary method of verifying vaccine status

**3** RACKDOWN on Mother Teresa charity: Is the Modi government afraid of NGOs?

Recent travel bans against South Africa are evidence that the West still attaches archaic stereotypes of incompetence and feeble-mindedness against Black people and Africans.

During the Covid-19 pandemic mainstream media outlets resorted to sensationalism, using racist language while reporting on the health situation the world over. This was demonstrated by the racist cartoon published by the Spanish newspaper La Tribuna, which depicted Black South Africans as the Omicron Covid variant. Their bodies were drawn in the shape of the virus, and they were shown on a boat labelled Omicron, flying the South African flag. This cartoon depicted Black people and Africans as both vectors and inherent harbourers of disease.

We have seen racist and reactionary government interventions from predominantly white Western countries like the UK in response to the discovery of the Omicron variant. They introduced rushed spontaneous travel restrictions with red lists almost exclusively made up of African countries, so much so that it had been labelled a 'Black list'. The US and Canada were among other Western countries to have a Black red list. However, if one looks at Nigeria, an African country on the list, it had recorded just three cases at the beginning of December.

By contrast, countries like the Netherlands and Portugal both had 19 cases recorded but had not featured on these red lists. How peculiar, one wonders. In addition, there has been an obsession since the pandemic began of how and why the epicentres of the virus have been Europe and North America and not continents like Africa. There has been constant probing into the validity of death rates produced by African countries, which has prompted heated discussions, debates and headlines about why death rates across the continent are so low. This suggests that there was an expectation for the continent to be ravaged by the virus, feeding into the narrative that Black people, particularly Africans, are harbourers of disease. Many of us living in the diaspora and on the continent can identify the forced as-

- Courtesy: TRT World

## 06

## WORLD / SPORTS



## Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul **Train arrives in Ankara**

## ITI Cargo train started its journey from Islamabad on 21st December 2021 and took 13 days to reach Ankara

MUNICH: As Bundesliga players, coaches and staff have started to return to training after more than two weeks' winter break, so reports of coronavirus cases have started to mount up among the clubs.

WEB DESK

League leaders and champions Bayern Munich are set to re-raise the curtain on Germany's top division against Borussia Mönchengladbach on Friday, but have reported that at least nine players have tested positive for COVID-19 this week alone, including Leroy Sane, Manuel Neuer, Dayot Upamecano, Alphonso Davies and Kingsley Coman. Accordingly, there are rumors that the game may not go ahead. Indeed, Gladbach sporting director Max Eberl said on Wednesday that "Bayern want to cancel the game, but ultimately the DFL (German Football

League) will decide." Stuttgart, Hertha Berlin, RB Leipzig, Gladbach and Borussia Dortmund are among a number of teams who also be missing key figures for the coming weekend as the increased case numbers (30,000 new COV-ID-19 cases, 1,091 new hospitalizations and 356 new associated deaths on January 4) and traveling start to bite. But while spectators, even those vaccinated and with negative tests, remain shut out, the show looks to be going on in the league that returned to action first in the initial wave of the pandemic. So far, only one game in German's top two divisions, both run by the DFL has been called off due to the coronavirus this season, St. Pauli vs. Sandhausen in the 2. Bundesliga in November. "The match is being postponed because SV Sandhausen does not have the minimum number of available players required by the DFL regulations," said the organization at the time.

## Vaccination



## Djokovic: AO vaccine exemption ignites backlash

#### SPORTS DESK

FOREIGN DESK

of its operations.

SYDNEY: Australians have reacted angrily to news that tennis player Novak Djokovic will play in the Australian Open, after being exempted from vaccination rules.

All players and staff at the tournament must be vaccinated or have an exemption granted by an expert independent panel. Djokovic has not spoken about his vaccination status, but last year said he was "opposed to vaccination". Prime Minister Scott Morrison said if the player's evidence was insufficient he would be on the "next plane home".

Organisers say the defending champion has not been given special treatment, but the decision has infuriated many Australians. The country is seeing tens of thousands of Covid-19 cases for the first time after enduring some of the world's

strictest restrictions. Over 90% of Australia's

#### dence is insufficient, then he won't be treated any different to anyone else," the prime minister told reporters. "There should be no special rules for Novak Djokovic at all. None whatsoever." The comments seemed to represent a change in his position, after he said on Tuesday that the Victoria state government had provided the player with an exemption to enter the country and that officials would act "in accordance with that decision" Many Australians had previously

accused the government of allowing the rich and famous to do as they please while ordinary people remained separated from sick and dving loved ones.

"I think it's a disgrace," Melbourne resident Christine Wharton told ABC. "We've all done the right thing, we've all gone out and got our jabs and our boosters and we have someone that has come from overseas and all of a sudden he's been exempt and can play." A&E doctor

## North Korea fires suspected ballistic missile into the sea

PYONGYANG: North Korea has fired a suspected ballistic missile into the sea off its east coast, in its first such launch since October. The missile landed in water between the Korean peninsula and Japan, bringing condemnation from Seoul and Tokyo. The UN prohibits North Korea from ballistic and nuclear weapons tests. Leader Kim Jong-un has vowed to bolster the North's defences. It tested a variety of missiles last year amid stalled talks with the South and US. The latest launch - the first since a New Year speech in which Mr Kim set out policy priorities for 2022 - was first reported by the Japanese coast guard early on Wednesday, before being confirmed by defence authorities in Seoul. "South Korean and US intelligence are closely analysing

for further detail," South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) said in a statement. Japan's Defence Minister Nobuo Kishi said the suspected ballistic missile had flown about 500 km, Reuters reported. According to one expert however, there was no way to confirm the full striking range of the missile. "There's no way to assess whether this might have been a longer-range missile flown on a shortened trajectory," Ankit Panda of the Nuclear Policy Programme at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace told BBC News. In 2017, North Korea tested the Hwasong-15, a missile that peaked at an estimated altitude of 4,500km, putting US military bases on the Pacific island of Guam well within striking distance. The launch comes days after Mr Kim said that Pyongyang would continue to strengthen its de

## How China's 'zero COVID' pursuit is stoking anger

Islamabad **POST** 

Thursday, January 06, 2022

### FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: Over the past two weeks, Chinese authorities have reimposed strict pandemic control measures to curb a new wave of domestic coronavirus outbreaks. However, some of the extreme measures have triggered a public backlash, as Chinese people question the validity of these restrictions.

For the last 13 days, residents of Xi'an - an ancient capital with 13 million people – have been banned from leaving their homes, causing many of them to run short on food and other essential supplies like medicine.

So far, more than 1,600 confirmed COVID cases have been reported in the city since December 9.

On the Chinese social media platform Weibo, phrases such as "having difficulty to buy food" and "unstable supply of necessities" became hot topics.

One Xi'an resident said that since December 27, all people in the city have been banned from leaving their homes.

## TTP to be nipped...

#### FROM PAGE 01

terrorist networks. He said on the basis of 890 threat alerts issued by the intelligence agencies during this period, about seventy percent possible terror threats were averted.

The DG ISPR said Pakistan Army is providing security to CPEC and other development projects. Expressing satisfaction over the progress on the CPEC project, he said those trying to sabotage it will fail in their nefarious designs.

The DG ISPR said that no armed person or group can be allowed to take law into their own hands. Major General Babar Iftikhar regretted that an organized campaign had been started against different institutions of the country over a period of time. He said the aim of this campaign is to create a gulf between the government, the masses, the

institutions and the armed

forces. He said the armed

forces draw strength from

the people and all efforts

to create wedge in this relationship will meet failure.

Answering a question, Ma-

jor General Babar Iftikhar

said there is no problem in the civil-military relations.

He said armed forces are a subservient institution of

the Government of Pakistan

and it takes orders from the

government. As regards

the eastern border, the DG

ISPR rejected the baseless

Indian propaganda of in-

filtration against Pakistan

saying it is aimed at divert-

## only way...

FROM PAGE 01 it takes 1-2 weeks for hos pitalisations to go up. Also, let us see how the virus behaves regarding virulence" Dr Sultan said when asked as to why hospitalisations were not going up in Karachi despite an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases due to the spread of the Omicron variant. Hospitalisations remained negligible and there were hardly any patients under treatment at major public and private health facilities in Karachi despite the fact the COVID-19 positivity touched 8.91% in the city, where 339 more people were tested positive with over 50% people infected with the Omicron variant.

## EU, US re-open...

FROM PAGE 01 Safety Concern (SSC/PEL 01/09-2020/PAK refers) that was issued to Pakistan on 18 September 2020 as well as the Universal Safety **Oversight Audit Programme** (USOAP) Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) audit that was conducted by an ICAO team in Pakistan from 29 November to 10 December 2021."

During the audit, the committee reviewed the corrective actions taken and related evidence presented by Pakistan to address the SSC regarding the licensing system of the State, specifically in relation to the exam inations conducted by the CAA and by delegated or designated training organizations prior to the issuance of licences and ratings.

"In accordance with the USOAP SSC process, [...] the ICAO SSC Validation Committee reviewed the actions and relevant evidence validated in Pakistan. The Committee determined that the actions taken by Pakistan had successfully resolved SSC," the letter stated.

The ICAO official also thanked the aviation author ity for assistance during the audit mission and reiterated appreciation for the active commitment of Pakistan towards achieving its safety objectives.

population is fully vaccinated, but some people still cannot travel interstate or globally because of current measures.

arrival that he has a genuine medical exemption from vaccination. The Australian Open begins on 17 January in Melbourne. "If that evi-

Amid the controversy, Mr Morrison

said the Serbian player would be

required to present evidence upon

Stephen Parnis tweeted: "I don't care how good a tennis player he is. If he's refusing to get vaccinated, he shouldn't be allowed in.

fence capabilities due to an increasingly unstable military environment on the Korean peninsula - a stance Mr Panda warned could see 2022 "littered with similar North Korean missiles". - Web Desk

Bangladesh beat

## **Book Launch** LAL HAVELI TO UNITED NATIONS New Zealand for first AL HAVE SON OF PAKISTAN SHEIKH RASHID AHMED 50 YEARS OF POLITICS Test in Tauranga.

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed presenting his book "Lal Haveli to United States" to the Chinese Ambassador His Excellency Nong Rong at the book launch ceremony. - APP



The Kiwis started day five on 147-5 but lost five wickets for just 22 runs, with opener Will Young making 69 and pace bowler Ebadat Hossain taking 6-56. That left Bangladesh needing just 40 to win, which they patiently knocked off inside 17 overs.

**SPORTS DESK** 

The second and final Test in the series starts on Saturday in Christchurch.

The victory is Bangladesh's first - other than against Zimbabwe, who they have beaten twice - since 2018, when they beat West Indies in Dhaka and Chattogram. The Tigers had lost 12 and drawn three of their previous 15 Tests against New Zealand, and it is just their sixth win in 61 overseas Tests - with their previous wins against West Indies (two), Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe (two). "I can't describe it, it's unbelievable," said Bangladesh captain

Mominul Haque. "I couldn't sleep yester-



day because of the pressure.

"It was very important to win this Test match. I said previously that we need to win these Test matches for our legacy.' It is the first Test that New Zealand - who were crowned World Test champions when they beat India in Southampton last June - have lost at home since March 2017, when they lost to South Africa in Wellington. It is the first time they have to lost to a team from Asia since Pakistan beat them by nine wickets in Hamilton in January 2011.



The DG ISPR expressed concern over the defense procurements by India saying this will only trigger an arms race in the region and will have a negative impact on regional peace. Replying to a question, he said that armed forces have the capacity to deal with all external and internal threats, despite economic constraints. He said we are ready to render any kind of sacrifices to eliminate the menace of terrorism from Pakistan.

Regarding a question about Pakistan Day parade on 23rd March this year amid growing cases of Omicron, the DG ISPR said the parade will be held as per schedule but guidelines of National Command and Operation Center will be followed to avert any spread of the virus.

To a question he said Pakistan Army was fully aware of its defence needs and will do everything to acquire modern technology. While confirming that talks to get Chinese J 10 fighter planes were under way, the DG ISPR said negotiations with Turkey for purchase of helicopters were also in

process. Talking about Karachi Maj Gen Babar Iftikhar said in 2014 Karachi ranked 6th in the World Crime Index while in 2021 it ranked 12th, which was a clear manifestation of armed forces commitment to purge the country of miscreants.

## Former CEO Wasim Khan had highest salary in PCB

The Standing Committee expressed grave concerns over nonattendance of the Chairman, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and directed that the Chairman PCB should attend the next meeting to brief the Committee on the matters of PCB

#### **AFZAL JAVED**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) former chief Executive Officer (CEO) Wasim Khan was the highest person to get the highest salary amounting 2.6 million per month from cricket body officially disclosed by Pakistan cricket Board in the National Assembly standing committee on Inter-Provincial Coordination here on Wednesday.

The meeting was chaired by Nawab Sher Waseer, Chairman of the Standing Committee at Parliament House could not discussed the affairs of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). Athletics Federation of Pakistan (AFP) and Pakistan Hockey federation (PHF) due the absence of chairman and presidents of the respective federations.

The Standing Committee expressed grave concerns over nonattendance of the Chairman, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and directed that the Chairman PCB should attend the next meeting to brief the Committee on the matters of PCB.

The Chief Financial Officer, PCB informed the Committee that Ramiz Raja is in Karachi due to meeting with Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah and the meeting regarding PSL preparations was important. Committee Chairman Nawab Sher Waseer said that Sindh Chief Minister is respected but Chairman PCB should have been present in the committee meeting.

During the meeting details of salaries of top officials of Pakistan Cricket Board also presented by the PCB officials showing that Former CEO of Pakistan Cricket Board Wasim Khan was receiving a heights monthly salary of Rs 2.6 million from PCB.

Foreign physiotherapist Andrew Deacon's salary was Rs 2.1 million. Director High Performance Muhammad\* Nadeem Khan Rs 1.315 million, Director International Players Development Saqlain Mushtaq,



Chief Executive Officer Salman Naseer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Medical Officer getting 1.2 million each, Chairman Selection Committee Muhammad Waseem 1 million rupees, Director International Cricket Operations Zakir Khan 0.84 million , Director Security Asif Mehmood getting

0.65 million per month respectively. Committee member Iqbal Muhammad Ali said that the issues regarding the audit of Pakistan Cricket Board could not be resolved. If the audit issues of PCB are not resolved then the case will be sent to FIA. Iqbal Mohammad Ali said that the most expensive former CEO in the PCB was the one destroy the cricket structure in the country, why Wasim Khan resigned while Waqar Younis and Misbah-ul-Haq also left without fulfilling the contract?, he said. While briefing on "The Prevention of Offences in Sports Bill, 2020", moved by MNA Iqbal Muhammad Ali Khan, the Secretary IPC informed the Committee that initially the matter was taken up with the ministry of Law and Justice for legal opinion. The Law Division opined that post the 18th amendment, the Parliament is no longer

competent to legislate on the subject of

sports and also advised to take up the mat-

ter with the ministry of Interior.

## Π7

## **BUSINESS / WORLD**

## **Briefs**

## **Blair's aide** says burned crucial document

#### DNA

LONDON: Tony Blair's defense secretary during the invasion of Iraq has bolstered a campaign to strip the former British prime minister of his knighthood by revealing that he was ordered to burn a secret document that detailed how the war could be illegal.

In his new memoir "See How They Run," Geoff Hoon said Blair's chief of staff, Jonathon Powell, told his private secretary "in no uncertain terms" to destroy the document.

Blair rubbished the claim when it first emerged in 2015, but Hoon has now stood by the accusations in a detailed account. In his book, Hoon outlines how the Ministry of Defense civil servant was shocked by Powell's demand, and that they opted to ignore Downing Street's "burn it" orders by locking the memo in a safe instead.

He describes his shock at being told to destroy secret advice on the legality of the conflict, which came from the Attorney General Lord Goldsmith. Days before fighting began, Goldsmith changed his mind and gave the British invasion a legal green light. Hoon, who has since retired from frontline politics, goes on to claim that Blair signed a "deal in blood" with former US President George Bush to support the war a year before it kicked off.

## Borrell vows EU's 'full support' for Ukraine

KYIV: EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell vowed the bloc's full support for Ukraine Wednesday as he visited amid fears Moscow plans to invade and ahead of US-Russia talks on the crisis The visit comes as the West tries to deter Moscow from launching an attack on its ex-Soviet neighbour, which has battled pro-Kremlin separatists in two eastern re-

## **Kazakhstan declares** emergencies in cities

President Kassym Jomart Tokayev imposed states of emergency in largest city Almaty, the financial capital, and the western province of Mangystau Wednesday after protests saw thousands take to streets and demand government's resignation

ALMATY (KAZAKHSTAN): president Kazakhstan's sacked the country's cabinet Wednesday in a bid to head off unprecedented unrest across the nation that followed an energy price hike. President Kassym Jomart Tokayev imposed states of emergency in the largest city Almaty, the financial capital, and the western province of Mangystau Wednesday after protests saw thousands take to the streets and demand the government's resignation. A separate order published

on the presidential website Wednesday morning said Tokayev had accepted the resignation of the cabinet headed by Prime Minister Askar Mamin. Deputy prime minister Alikhan Smailov will perform the PM's role on an acting basis until a new cabinet was formed, the order stated. The southeastern city of Almaty, Kazakhstan's financial capital, was in chaos from late Tuesday as police fired tear gas and stun grenades to quell unrest that began in the west of the country over

a spike in local prices for Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG). States of emergency in Almaty and Mangystau are effective from January 5 until January 19, the presidential website reported. A curfew will be in place

in both territories from 23:00 to 7:00 local, with restrictions on movement in and out of the cities falling under the orders. Tokayev had hours earlier called for a return to calm in a vid-

eo posted on Facebook by his press secretary Berik Uali. "The government will not be felled, but we don't need conflict," Tokayev said in the address.

An AFP journalist in Almaty saw police firing stun grenades and tear gas into a disorganised crowd of over five thousand people that grew in size as protesters marched through central streets shouting anti-government slogans and sometimes attacking vehicles. In another move that appeared significant, Tokayev

on Wednesday appointed a new deputy head of the national security committee to replace Samat Abish, a nephew of Nazarbayev.

Messenger apps Telegram, Signal and WhatsApp were all unavailable in the Central Asian country Wednesday, while two independent media websites that reported on the protests appeared to be blocked. Smaller rallies had been staged in cities across the republic of 19 million people from Sunday, beginning with the town of Zhanaozen in Mangystau.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador to United States of America, Mr. Asad Majeed Khan, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA

## WHO urges more nations to push for 70% vaccine coverage

UNITED NATIONS: As the Omicron variant of COVID-19 continues to surge across the world. the UN health agency has at more is done to help

transmitting so "intensely", just as the Delta variant has done. "In the context of intense social mixing, in the context of limited said that it was crucial use of proven public health Omicron, the WHO said, during a scheduled press briefing in Geneva. not enough data

to the people of Jammu and Kashmir 73 years ago," he said

in the message marking Kashmiris' Right to Self-determina-

"On this day in 1949, the United Nations Commission for

India and Pakistan (UNCIP) adopted the historic resolu-

tion calling for a free and impartial plebiscite in Jammu

and Kashmir under the auspices of the United Nations to

enable its people to determine their political destiny," the

Pakistani envoy said. "The resolution is an emblem of UN's

commitment to the longstanding struggle of the Kashmiri

India's extremist Hindutva regime and the 900,000

troops it has deployed in occupied Kashmir, Ambassador

Akram said, are responsible for unleashing a brutal reign

of terror in Kashmir. In doing so, he said India has used

curfews and communications blackouts incarceration of

Kashmiri political leaders; illegal detention of thousands

of Kashmiri youth; extra-judicial killings; violent suppres-

sion of peaceful Kashmiri protests, including by using

pellet guns that have blinded even young children; and

the demolition of entire neighbourhoods and villages as

a form of "collective punishment". - DNA

people to realize their right to self-determination."

tion Day being observed on Wednesday

able. "So the main message is, if you are vaccinated, you are protected, but if you are WHO epidemiologist Dr vulnerable or if you have Abdi Mahamud, told jour- not been vaccinated, this nalists that there was still Omicron - however light or mild it may be for others could hit you very hard," he said. "So, vaccination (is) very critical.' The WHO epidemiologist noted that an increasing number of studies seemed to show that the Omicron variant appeared to affect mostly the upper respiratory tract, causing milder symptoms. - APP

said they had raided two dozen homes Wednesday, seizing equipment and placing 22 people under investigation on suspicion of forging vaccine certificates, weeks before Covid vaccines become mandatory. Investigators suspect the 22 people were forging documents not just for themselves but for friends and acquaintances, the interior ministry said in a statement. "Organised trade and use of forged vaccine certificates is no trivial matter, but a criminal offence," said Interior Minister Gerhard Karner. A unit specialising in tracking forged Covid-19 documents was tipped off by the suspects discussing their business on social media, said the statement. Some 100 police officers involved in the operation confiscated "numerous vaccine certificates, mobile phones and computers". They were now being helped in their investigation by the EU police agency Europol. Austria is currently in a lockdown for the unvaccinated, which make up about 30 percent of the population - among the highest in western Europe. Police say they are checking about 30,000 vaccine passes per day. In November, Austria became the first and thus far only country in Europe to announce that Covid-19 vaccines would become mandatory for all eligible residents. - APP

## Gwadar will get 3200 solar power generation units DNA

Islamabad **POST** 

Thursday, January 06, 2022

ISLAMABAD: Gwadar will get about 3200 solar power generation units with Chinese help, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday.

An agreement to this effect was approved between China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority and Chinese Ministry of Environment by the Federal Cabinet on Tuesday.

This will help to resolve electricity issue in Gwadar. Recently, Planning Minister Asad Umar said solar panels would be provided in Gwadar with Chinese help and the project would be started in March. To support the Pakistani government, China will install 3,200 solar panel units in various houses in Gwadar. "The project is being carried out with direct help of China," Asad Umar announced.

He elaborated that the 3,200 solar units will be arriving in Pakistan from China at the end of January, 2022 and the installation of the panels would be completed by the end of March. Umar pledged that he will personally monitor and keep the data of the process of installing the solar panels to ensure that everyone in Gwadar benefit from the solar electricity. On Tuesday, Fawad Chaudhry told journalists that the agreement had been approved by the federal cabinet and will be implemented to benefit the Gwadar people.

## Austrian police raid vaccine pass forgers VIENNA: Austrian police

gions bordering Russia since 2014. "We are here first to reaffirm European Union's full support to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Borrell told a press conference with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba.

"Any military aggression against Ukraine will have messy consequences and severe costs," he said in the village of Stanytsya Luganska in the Lugansk region. "And we are coordinating with the US, with NATO and other like-minded partners in order to work for de-escalation." Kuleba said Ukraine and the European Union had a common goal, "to de-escalate the situation through diplomatic means so Moscow reduces tensions and abandons its aggressive intentions".

Borrell's visit was the first by an EU foreign policy chief to eastern Ukraine since war broke out nearly eight years ago. - APP

## Czechs to test all employees as Omicron looms

PRAGUE: All Czech employees will have to undergo antigen tests twice a week as the Omicron strain of Covid-19 is expected to spread, the health minister said Wednesday. The measure taking effect on January 17 affects all employees going to regular workplaces, and includes vaccinated employees as well as those who have recently recovered from Covid-19.

"We expect the measure will be in force for up to three weeks," Minister Vlastimil Valek told reporters, vowing to monitor "very carefully'

the spread of Omicron. The government will also trim the quarantine and isolation periods to five days each as of January 11, as it fears a rapid Omicron spread might reduce available workforce. Czechs have until now been required to quarantine for one week. and isolate for two weeks. "Omicron is a fast infection with a fast onset, this is why we have adopted the two measures," Valek added.

The Czech Republic led a global AFP tally of per capita Covid deaths and infections in early 2021 and then last autumn. – APP

households so that their wastes from farming stock raising, and cooking can be recycled instead of being burned, thus mitigating pollution", said Li Xiangkai.

Chinese Jiangxi University signs

agreement with UOS

BEIJING: Jiangxi University of Science and Technology

(JXUST) and Sahiwal (UOS) signed an agreement to pro-

mote academic cooperation. The agreement will not only

provides a bridge and window for teachers and students

to carry out international exchanges, but also an impor-

tant platform for the two universities to enhance friend-

The two higher education institutions will make every rea-

sonable effort to encourage direct communication, education

and research cooperation among their members, including

students, teachers, faculties and research institutions, and

will strive to cooperate in areas of concern to both sides. With

the agreement of both parties, the two sides agreed on the fol-

lowing aspects of cooperation: student and teacher exchange programs; student internships; adoption of new courses; joint

education and research projects; exchange of academic publi-

cations and materials; training programs for students, teachers

And the main areas of concern of this framework are related

to learning Chinese and cultural exchanges between China

and Pakistan. At the signing ceremony, Liao Chunfa, Vice

President of JXUST, presented the basic situation of JXUST

in terms of disciplines, school management, and interna-

Pak, China work together

to reduce pollution

BEIJING: Pak and China work together to reduce pollu-

tion from burning wastes, said Li Xiangkai, Professor of

Lanzhou University, Gansu, China, according to a report

published by China Economic Net (CEN). "In a small town

southeast of Islamabad, we have provided biogas digesters

and staff; development of joint academic programs, etc.

tional exchanges and cooperation. - DNA

ship and seek common development.

Pollution has become a prominent issue in Pakistan. In the past month, Lahore repeatedly topped the daily ranking of most polluted city in the world. The adverse impact of chronic or heavy exposure to hazardous air is self-evident. The small town, or the "green town", aims to provide a demonstration of circular agriculture and eco-friendly lifestyle. "The 50 digesters will not only provide electricity to the households, but also reduce stubble burning and protect the environment", said Professor Li Xiangkai. - APP

KELUAR 3

all countries receive lifesaving coronavirus jabs as

quickly as possible. The development comes as a senior World Health Organization (WHO) epidemiologist repeated the agency's message that countries could not "boost" their way out of the pandemic, while the Omicron variant was

measures. in the context of limited vaccination coverage globally...those are conditions that will allow any variant, any virus, to thrive,' Dr Maria Van Kerkhove told BBC radio on Tuesday. "Omicron is taking advantage of that, and so is Delta." Before the holiday period, 128 countries reported that they had identified

to say whether the Omicron variant is less severe than other coronavirus strains. He noted that in London. which has been "hit very hard" by spiking numbers of COVID-19 infections, hospitalisation rates were around 20 per cent lower now than they had been in 2020, before vaccinations were avail-

## Dutch report record number of virus infections

THE HAGUE: The Netherlands on Wednesday recorded its highest number of coronavirus cases ever registered in a single day, with 24,590 positive tests, country's national the health authority said. The new record overtakes a previous figure of 23,713, registered on November 24, the National Institute for Public Health said, adding that the highly-infectious Omicron variant now made up most cases. Yet, despite the rapid rise in infections

due to the Omicron strain, hospital admission numbers continued to decline said health authorities.

Around 13 patients were admitted to intensive care units over the past 24 hours, the lowest number since October. There were now 449 coronavirus patients in intensive care, 15 fewer than on Tuesday, the National Coordination Centre for Patient Distribution (LCPS) added. But the LCPS warned that the rapid rise in infections were bound to have an impact on the number of hospital admissions later in the month. - APP

## Lebanese leaders denounce Hezbollah chief's speech

Aoun said on Tuesday that "the Lebanese people are keen on preserving Lebanon's Arab and international relations, especially the ones with the Gulf states, with Saudi Arabia at the forefront"

### DNA

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Michel Aoun, Prime Minister Najib Mikati and several politicians have condemned threats made by Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah against Saudi Arabia.

Nasrallah crossed the red line that Lebanon has drawn to preserve its relations with the Kingdom, and targeted hundreds of thousands of Lebanese working in the Gulf with his attack on the Kingdom. He accused "everyone who befriends Americans in Lebanon and the region of being a co-conspirator." Aoun said on Tuesday that "the Lebanese people are keen on preserving Lebanon's Arab and international relations, especially the ones with the Gulf states, with Saudi Arabia at the forefront,"

Mikati was quick to react to Nasrallah's attack on the Kingdom, saying: "His statements do not represent the position of the Lebanese government and the vast majority of the Lebanese people. It is not in Lebanon's interest to offend any Arab country, especially the Gulf states.'

He added: "While we call for Hezbollah to be part of the diverse Lebanese nation and to demonstrate its affiliation to Lebanon, its leadership contradicts this direction with positions that harm the Lebanese and Lebanon's relations with its fraternal countries." Mikati asked everyone to "have mercy on this country, shield it from useless polemics and stop the hateful political and sectarian rhetoric." During a meeting with the Lebanese Armed Forces Cmdr. Gen. Joseph Aoun on Tuesday, Mikati

said: "The army will be the first defender of Lebanon and the first institution that represents the real fusion between all the Lebanese, since the army is the country's protector." Also in response to Nasrallah's comments, former president Michel Sleiman said: "Did he take this position on behalf of Iran? The majority of the Lebanese people reject this stance and believe it would cause great damage to Lebanon and ruin the relationship with Saudi Arabia, which selflessly loves Lebanon." Former premier Fouad Siniora said: "Nasrallah's statements represent a crime against Lebanon and its national interests that are being endangered.'

He said that Nasrallah's speech against the Kingdom was "unjust, predatory and further suffocates Lebanon." Siniora added: "It is an

Iranian speech that reflects Iran's impatience toward the ongoing conflict and the clash with the US

in the nuclear talks in Vienna." Former premier Saad Hariri addressed Nasrallah in a tweet: "Your insistence on attacking Saudi Arabia and its leaders is a continuing attack on Lebanon, its role and its people's interests. Saudi Arabia has never threatened the Lebanese state with the Lebanese who have been working and residing in the Kingdom for decades.

"Saudi Arabia, as well as all the Arab Gulf States, have welcomed the Lebanese and provided them with job opportunities and a decent life. It's those who threaten the Lebanese with their livelihood, stability, and progress that want the Lebanese state to be held hostage to Iran and its proxies in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon."

He added: "Everyone knows that history will not be kind toward a party that sells its Arabism, its homeland and the interests of its people in exchange for a handful of partnerships in the region's wars." In a statement issued by Dar Al-Fatwa, Lebanon's highest Sunni authority, Grand Mufti of Lebanon Sheikh Abdul Latif Derian described Nasrallah's speech as "impertinence and offenses di-

rected toward the Kingdom." Dar Al-Fatwa reiterated its "support to Mikati's stance in this regard." Future Bloc MP Mohammed Al-Hajjar said: "Hezbollah not only pawns Lebanon, but insists on slaughtering the country." Lebanese Democratic Party MP Bilal Abdallah expressed his concern over "using Lebanon on the negotiation table of the powerful forces.<sup>3</sup>

# carrier Allegiant Air, with to a press release.

KUALUMPUR: Pakistan HC to Malaysia Amna Baloch visited Institute of Strategic Studies (ISIS), a KL based think tank and met Mr. Herizal Hazri, Chief Executive. It was agreed to hold joint activities and establish intuitional linkages between ISIS and think tanks. - DNA

**Boeing 737** MAX jets NEW YORK: Boeing reached an agreement to sell 50 737 termination in accordance with the UN resolutions, Ambassador Munir Akram said in a message released in New York. "The United Nations, especially the Security Council, has MAX planes to low-cost US an abiding responsibility to deliver on the promise it made

an option for another 50, the companies announced Wednesday. Las Vegas-based Allegiant, which has built its fleet mainly around used aircraft, said the upheaval of the "pandemic recovery cycle" presented "unique opportunities to acquire new equipment," according For Boeing, the sale marks a welcome victory after Air France-KLM and Qantas announced major deals

with European rival Airbus in December. The order with Allegiant - currently an all-Airbus company - is Boeing's first "US ultra-low cost carrier (ULCC) deal," Boeing said. - APP

Allegiant Air Munir assures full orders 50 support to Kashmiris UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan will continue to extend moral, diplomatic and political support to the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir until they realize their right to self-de-







## **Briefs Arab coalition** threatens Yemen's rebel held ports

RIYADH: A Saudi-led military coalition threatened Tuesday to target Yemen's rebel-held ports after Huthi fighters seized a UAE-flagged ship - unless the vessel is freed. On Monday, the Huthi rebels based in the key Red Sea port of Hodeida seized the Emirati-flagged Rwabee ship claiming it contained military materials. Saudi Arabia condemned what it called piracy against a civilian vessel. "The terrorist, Huthi militia must promptly release the commercial cargo ship (RWABEE) with all its humanitarian, non-combatant cargo intact," coalition spokesman Turki Al-Malki said. "Should the militia fail to comply, all ports that launch and harbour these acts of piracy, hijacking and armed robbery, and those pirates who perpetrate them will render said ports legitimate military targets," he added, in a statement quoted by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA).

Hodeida has been a lifeline entry point for aid supplies to Yemen's largely rebel-held north, including the capital Sanaa. The seized ship is being held in the Huthi-held port of Salif, north of Hodeida, and some 60 kilometres (37 miles) from the border with Saudi. The coalition said the vessel was in international waters when it was seized, and was carrying "medical field equipment" meant for the construction of a hospital on the Yemeni archipelago of Socotra. The Huthis meanwhile claim that the boat was in Yemeni waters "without authorisation" and carrying military materials. - APP

## US, EU warn Sudan mily against naming own PM

WASHINGTON: The United States and European Union warned Sudan's military on Tuesday against naming its own prime minister after civilian leader Abdalla Hamdok quit amid protests against the junta

The so-called troika on Sudan - the United States, Britain and Norway and the EU "will not support a prime minister or government appointed without the involvement of a broad

## **PM Imran inaugurates** Hakla-DI Khan motorway

The prime minister recollected that during 60s, Pakistan had long-term planning as the country's biggest projects were conceived during that period

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday inaugurated 293kms lengthy Hakla-DI Khan motorway, which is an important part of the Western route of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Hakla-DIKhan motorway has 11 interchanges, 36 bridges, 33 flyovers and 119 underpasses. It would help in transforming DI Khan as one of the main business hubs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, linking South Punjab and Balochistan. It would also enable supply of agricultural produce to different parts of the country. Speaking on the occasion the prime minister said previously the development of the country was confined only to GT road, Lahore and onwards to Karachi which were also called as Eastern route of the CPEC.

"But a country achieves progress if there is uniform development across its length and breadth. It is made possible due to long-term planning like China which has planned 30 years



ahead," he added.

The prime minister said the future planning would envisage a roadmap towards progress, embracing all parts of the country. If few areas were developed the people living there would become rich, leaving behind other population of the backward areas in

poverty. It was the biggest problem of the developing world, he added.

The ceremony was attended by Minister for Communication Murad Saeed, ministers, parliamentarians and officials of National Highway Authority (NHA). The prime minister recollected that during 60s, Pakistan had long-



Tarin highlighted long cordial re-

term planning as the country's biggest projects were conceived during that period. He said that during the last 25 years, he had been consistently maintaining that corruption had been the

biggest issue of Pakistan. He said in the past, roads were constructed at expensive costs as the money was going into someone's pockets. "Roads were constructed for making money. How it comes that roads during 2013 were constructed costly and now being completed at the lowest costs," he expressed his wonder. The prime minister said construction of dual roads in the past cost double.

"About 1000 billion rupees had gone to the pockets of corrupt, and it happened with a poor nation," he regretted. Commending efforts of the minister for communication, the prime minister said his ministry had been among the top three performing ministries. He said revenues of the National Highway Authority had been doubled after steps taken against corruption including E-tendering, besides, recovery of NHA encroached land worth Rs 5 billion.

that our relations are firmly rooted in

shared faith, values and culture. The

Finance Minister appreciated the

GCC member countries for providing

hospitability to a large number of Pa-

Dr Nayef bin Falah Al-Hajraf also

highlighted deep rooted relationship

between GCC member countries and

Pakistan and discussed various ave-

nues of cooperation and collabora

tion especially for the enhancement

of trade, economic and investment

opportunities between Pakistan and

als of Dr Nayef bin Falah Al-Hajraf for

broadening the trade, economic rela-

tween Pakistan and the GCC member

port of the present government.

kistanis working there.

GCC member States.

## **Harsh winter** fuels ongoing crisis in **Afghanistan: UN**

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations has warned that a harsh winter in Afghanistan is aggravating already severe conditions faced by millions across the country. In the past 24 hours, heavy snowfall and rain have impacted a number of areas, disrupting flights to and from Kabul Airport, according to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). "Further snow and low temperatures are forecast in the coming days", UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told reporters at the daily noon briefing in New York on Tuesday.

An already dire humanitarian situation in Afghanistan worsened following the takeover by Taliban forces last August, and the subsequent suspension of aid, coupled with freezing of assets by many countries and international organizations. Late last month, the Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution clearing the way for aid to reach Afghans in desperate need of basic support, while preventing funds from falling into the hands of the Taliban, a move welcomed by the head of OCHA as a "milestone" decision that will save lives. Meanwhile, UN's humanitarian partners are racing against time to deliver aid and supplies - in line with commitments to scale up operations. "During December, our humanitarian partners have reached seven million people with relief food supplies across the country", Spokesman Dujarric said. "Provision of winterization support, including cash and non-food items, is also under way in various parts of the country".

In 2021, donors provided \$1.5 billion for two humanitarian appeals, including \$776 million of the \$606 million required for the Flash Appeal launched in September by the Secretary-General, and \$730 million of the \$869 million sought in the Humanitarian Response Plan. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has expressed its continuing concern for the millions of internally-displaced in Afghanistan while the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, is scaling up its response to disseminate timely winterization assistance particularly to the most vulnerable of displaced families. UNHCR said that it is providing ongoing multipurpose cash assistance to meet the their immediate needs for warmth, and security. - APP

## One in 20 people in UK have Covid

LONDON: More than one in 20 people in Britain had Covid-19 in the last week of 2021, the highest infection rate recorded during the pandemic, official data showed Wednesday. An estimated 3.7 million people in the UK had the virus, up from 2.3 million the previous week, as the Omicron variant surged nationwide, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said. The unprecedented case levels were highest in London where as many as one in 10 people had it, according to the ONS, which is seen as one of the most reliable counts as it randomly samples the population. Across England, an estimated one in 15 people in the community were infected with coronavirus, it reported. "#COVID19 infection rates continued to increase across all age groups in England in the week ending 31 Dec 2021, with the highest rates still seen in school age children and young adults,' the ONS said. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, where devolved governments have reimposed some restrictions in recent weeks, rates were slightly lower at between one in 20 and one in 25 people. The statistics came as Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government announced testing rules for people in England without symptoms would be eased to help mitigate the fallout from the record infection levels. Asymptomatic people in England who test positive will no longer require a confirmatory PCR test from January 11, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) said. Instead, those who receive a positive result on a lateral flow device will be required to self-isolate immediately, without getting the PCR confirmation. - Agencies

PAF pays tribute to Air Marshal Asghar Khan



ISLAMABAD: PAF pays tribute to the legendary Air Marshal Muhammad Asghar Khan (Late), the first Pakistani Commander-in-Chief of Pakistan Air Force on his 4th death anniversary. Air Marshal Muhammad Asghar Khan was born on 17 January, 1921 and joined Royal Indian Air Force in December, 1940. After the independence, he was transferred to the Royal Pakistan Air Force and was appointed as the first Commandant of the Pakistan Air Force Academy (then known as RPAF College) in Risalpur from 1947 to 1949. Later in 1957, he was promoted to the rank of Air Marshal and at the age of 36 he became the youngest ever Pakistani Commander-in-Chief of PAF. In recognition of his selfless services to the nation, PAF Academy, Risalpur was named as PAF Acade-Khan in 2017. – **DNA** 

SAIFULLAH ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Shaukat Tarin on Wednesday said that government was committed to introduce reform in various sectors, in the face of various challenges, to address the long outstanding structural issues and to attain sustainable and inclusive growth. Talking to a delegation of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) headed by Secretary General Dr Nayef bin

Falah Al-Hajraf that called on the Finance Minister, he said that the present government has introduced Shaukat Tarin supported the proposreforms in agriculture, industry, IT , housing, investment and other sectors and promotion of tourism as vitions and investment opportunities betal for economic growth.

countries and assured them of full suplations between Pakistan and the

range of civilian stakeholders," joint statement said. - APP

## 20 more cases of Omicron reported in Lahore

LAHORE: As many as 20 more cases of Omicron virus were reported in the provincial capital on Wednesday which brought the number of Omicron patients to 170.

According to the Health department sources, 241 new cases of Coronavirus were reported during the last 24 hours in the city, however no death was reported from the deadly virus.

The authorities recorded 4% ratio of coronavirus patients in the city. According to the spokesperson of the Health department, 27

cases of Omicron were reported in Punjab while 310 new cases of coronavirus were reported from all over the province. The total number of coronavirus patients reached 446,041.

One death was reported due to Corona in the province, the total number of deaths reached 13,073. As many as 18,992 tests of corona were performed during 24 hours in the province. As many as 9,010,231 diagnostic tests have been performed so far in Punjab. - DNA

## Thirteen dead in Philadelphia house fire

NEW YORK: Thirteen people died when a fire tore through public housing apartments in the eastern US city of Philadelphia on Wednesday, US media reported. The city's fire department said its officers arrived at the scene at 6:40 am (11:40 GMT) "and found heavy fire coming from the second floor of a three-story rowhouse." "PFD responded to a fatal fire this morning on the 800 block of N. 23rd St," it said in a tweet.

"It took 50 minutes to place the fire under control." US networks including NBC and CBS reported that the blaze in the Fairmount area of the city had killed 13 people.

The Philadelphia Inquirer said that the rowhouse was owned by the Philadelphia Housing Authority.

The newspaper cited police as saying that the three-storey home had been converted into two apartments. Neighbors spoken to by local media said they had been shaken by the fire. Bill Richards, who lives nearby, told the Inquirer that shortly before 7:00 am he had heard a woman scream "Oh my god, oh my god." "It's totally devastating and upsetting," he said. - APP

### DNA

RAYADH: Amid fears of Omicron spread, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj restricted the issuance of Umrah permits to one permit every 10 days, ruling out the facility of performing multiple Umrahs immediately one after another.

A 10 days waiting period is from now on mandatory between two Umrahs, a statement of the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah said.

The curbs have been tightened keeping in view the coronavirus cases surge driven by Omicron variant, the ministry said. The restriction has been imposed under the measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus in the Grand Mosque of Makkah, according to a statement.

Earlier, the kingdom had announced to reimpose social distancing in the Two Holy Mosques from December 30, 2021 to curb the virus spread. The General Presidency for the Affairs of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque had decided that worshippers and Umrah performers would have to maintain social distance once again.

## Macron says wants to stand for re-election but hasn't decided

The latest opinion poll published on Tuesday by the Cluster17 institute for the Marianne weekly again showed Macron well ahead in a first round but the other candidates clustering behind him

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron wants to stand for a second term in April presidential elections but will only declare his intentions once he is sure, he said in an interview with the Le Parisien newspaper published Tuesday. "There is no false suspense. I want to," Macron, the last of the major hopefuls in the election yet to declare their candidacy, told the paper when asked if he planned to stand.

Once the health situation allows it and I have made everything clear - inside myself and with respect to the political equation - I will say what it (the decision) is."



He added: "This decision is solidifying deep inside me. I need to be sure that I am able to go as far as I want."

The comments to Le Parisien represented by far Macron's clearest indication yet he plans to stand - while not ending the suspense over his intentions. Macron, who swept to power in 2017 on a pledge to reform France and restore its status as a global power, is the overwhelming favourite to win the election but analysts caution his victory is far from certain.

He faces a challenge from his old far-right rival Marine Le Pen - who he trounced in the 2017 run-off vote - but also from the far-right pundit Eric Zemmour who enjoyed a major surge in early support.

Most analysts however think the most credible challenge will be from the candidate of the right-wing Republicans Valerie Pecresse, should she manage to make the run-off vote. The left has so far failed to unite be-

hind a single candidate.

It would be a sensation if Macron were to decide not to stand, but he seems intent on keeping the suspense going for the next weeks, insisting his duty is as head of state and not a candidate The latest opinion poll published on Tuesday by the Cluster17 institute for

the Marianne weekly again showed Macron well ahead in a first round but the other candidates clustering behind him. The poll gave Macron 23 percent, Pecresse and Zemmour 15 percent and Marine Le Pen 14.5 percent. Farleft candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon is projected to win 13 percent, it added. Political tensions have surged over the New Year as campaigning gets underway, with rows between Macron's allies and Pecresse's faction erupting over a decision to fly the European flag from the Arc de Triomphe, as well as the holding up of Covid-19 legislation in parliament. – APP

## India on path to self-destruction: President Alvi President Dr. Arif Alvi addressed a book launching ceremony of Dr Muhammad Qasim Faktoo, a political prisoner in India, organized by Kashmir Youth Alliance (KYA)

#### SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Wednesday said that India was on path to self-destruction with its Hindutva policy targeting all minorities, while it was vainly planning to suppress Kashmiri struggle for their right to self-determination with barbaric steps. He said the unending oppression coupled with atrocities and human rights violations committed against the innocent Kashmiris in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and other minorities in India, were resulting into a fire that would eventually engulf India and dawn into freedom of the Kashmiri people. The president was speaking at a book launching ceremony of Dr Muhammad Qasim Faktoo, a political Kashmir prisoner who had been languishing in an Indian jail for the last twenty-nine years. The author's book "Baang' provides insight into his sufferings and lifelong struggle against the Indian illegal oc-

cupation of the IIOJK. The event was organized by Kashmir Youth Alliance (KYA) in collaboration with the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir in connection with the observance of Kashmiris' right to self-determination day. The president said Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah had regarded Kashmir as the jugular vein of Pakistan which meant that the Pakistani nation and Kashmiris were tied together in permanent bonds of affections and brotherhood. Quaid had realized the Hindu machinations long ago and therefore, he



parted ways during 1928, he added. The president observed that injustice was done during the Indo-Pak partition principles whereas promises made with the Kashmiri people by the world community had not been fulfilled.

The president opined that the Hindutva policy pursued by the recent rulers had been a reincarnation of the Hindu's supremacist ideology centuries ago. He referred to a book of Khushwant Singh, an Indian writer, who had predicted doom for India due to its self-destruction course.

The president said the Muslims could not be suppressed with injustices and oppression. He said India was trying to change its history and there was a continuous onslaught against minorities including Muslims and Christians. "No minority is safe in India," he said, adding the Christian charity organizations like Mother Tressa Charity was banned from collecting foreign donations while churches were attacked by the Hindu zealots.

The president cited the success of Prime Minister Imran Khan's stance

in highlighting the issue of Islamophobia which also echoed in the recent comments of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Similarly, the president also credited the government and foreign minister Qureshi for effectively raising the humanitarian issue of Afghanistan and holding a successful OIC meeting.

Chairman Parliamentary Special Committee on Kashmir Shehryar Afridi said that on the Kashmir issue all the political parties in Pakistan were on the same page. He reiterated nation's full support to Kashmiri's right to self-determination struggle.

He also called upon the world community to realize its commitment made with the Kashmiri people and ensure a plebiscite over IIOJK in accordance with the UNSC resolutions. He also reminded the world to learn from the lessons in history. On the occasion, Ahmad bin Qasim, son of Dr Faktoo, narrated the ordeals of his father after his arrest in 1993. He said the people in IIOJK did not accept Indian illegal occupation.