



Islamabad POST

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

Modi's extremist agenda a threat to regional peace: PM

Detailed News On Page-01

Myanmar's Suu Kyi hit with new jail term

Detailed News On Page-07

Waseem eyes world title after WBA win

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Sania Nishtar briefs diplomats

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to PM on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection Dr. Sania Nishtar on Monday briefed the Heads of Diplomatic Missions in Islamabad here at Foreign Office on the "Declaration on Establishing a Global Social Protection Knowledge Platform." The Declaration is being steered by Pakistan in New York, in collaboration with a "Group of Friends on Social Protection" including Costa Rica, Nigeria and Turkey, supported by the World Bank. — APP

Inquiry to fix responsibility

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Farukh Habib on Monday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), government has ordered an inquiry to fix responsibility in Murree tragedy. Inquiry committee would submit report after collecting facts regarding Murree incident, he said while talking to a private television channel. The whole nation has saddened over precious loss of human life, he said. Fifty thousand more vehicles wanted to enter Murree to enjoy snow falling last weekend but the administration timely stopped all the vehicles to protect public from inconvenience, he stated.

Mazari tests positive for Covid-19

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen Mazari has tested positive for novel coronavirus. Shireen Mazari had quarantined herself at home after testing positive for Covid-19. President Dr. Arif Alvi had also tested positive for the COVID-19 for the second time on January 6. "I have tested positive for Covid-19 again. Had a sore throat since four to five days and was getting better."

TTP's top man killed in Afghanistan

Khalid Balti alias Muhammad Khurasani was killed in an undisclosed location of Afghanistan's Nangarhar province

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The most wanted terrorist in Pakistan and outlawed TTP spokesperson, Khalid Balti alias Muhammad Khurasani, has been killed in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province. Khalid Balti alias Muhammad Khurasani was killed in an undisclosed location of Afghanistan's Nangarhar province. Khurasani had been appointed as banned Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) spokesperson in 2014 after Shahidullah Shahid and renowned for his anti-Pakistan stance.

It was learnt that Balti alias Muhammad Khurasani had been operating a training camp for TTP terrorists in Miranshah to disturb the peace situation in Pakistan. After the success of Operation Zarb-e-Azab by Pakistani armed forces, Khurasani fled to Afghanistan and later he was appointed as TTP spokesperson. The outlawed commander had reportedly been busy merging the factions of TTP. Khurasani was involved in many terrorist attacks on innocent citizens and personnel of the security forces. It emerged that the TTP leader was planning for carrying out another series of attacks after hinting at initiating terror activities in Pakistan.



Six terrorists killed in Quetta: CTD

A "huge terrorism plan" of IS had been averted in Quetta, the spokesman says

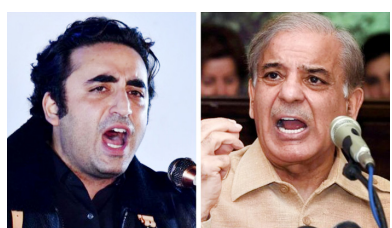
BUREAU REPORT/DNA

QUETTA: At least six suspected terrorists belonging to the militant Islamic State (IS) group were killed during an operation conducted by the counterterrorism department (CTD) in the Eastern Bypass area here on Saturday night. In a statement, a CTD spokesman said there was a heavy exchange of fire during the intelligence-based operation conducted on information about the presence in the area of the militants. The CTD also seized arms, ammunition and explosive material from a house being used by the members of the banned outfit as their hideout. A "huge

Continued on Page 06

Opp. wants Murree tragedy probed

Shahbaz, Bilawal condemn the "mismanagement" on part of the government



SHUJAAT HAMZA

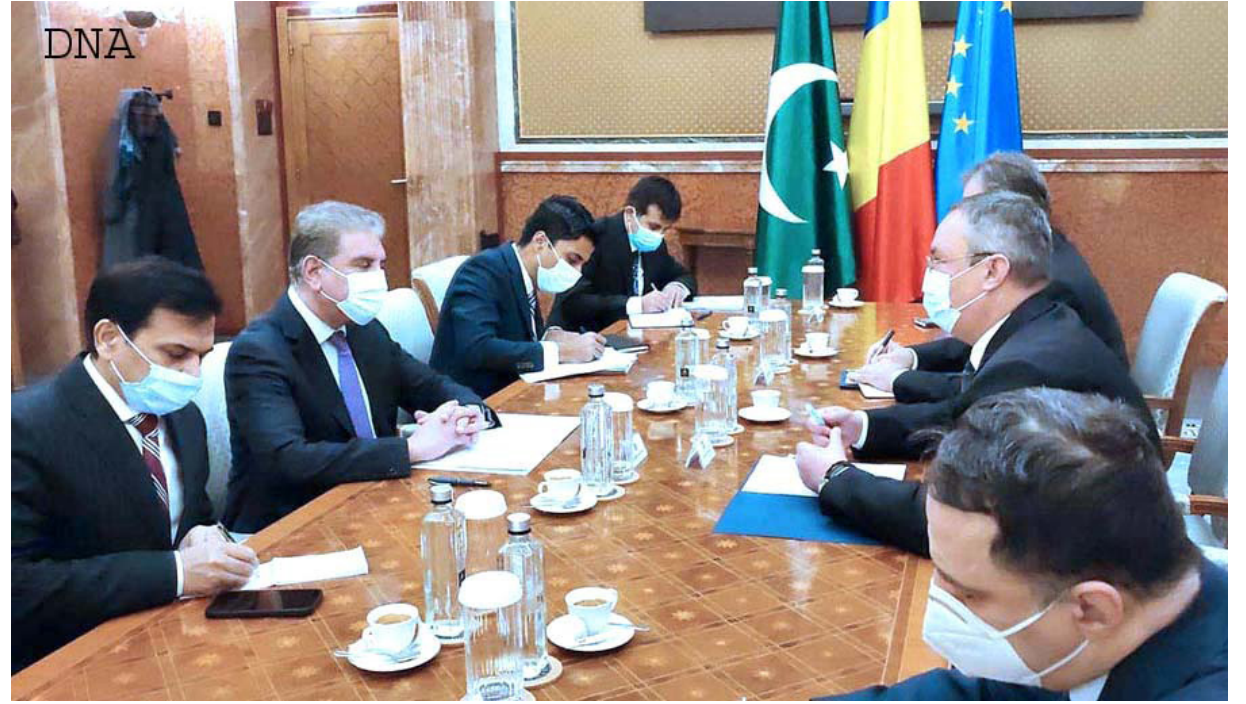
ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly and PML-N President Shahbaz Sharif on Monday demanded the formation of a judicial commission to probe the Murree tragedy in which more than 20 people lost their lives after being stranded in heavy snow, media reported. Speaking during a session of the National Assembly, Shahbaz condemned the "mismanagement" on part of the government that, according to him, led to the tragic deaths. It should be recalled that on Saturday night, more than 20 tourists died of carbon monoxide poisoning in Murree

Continued on Page 06

Shahbaz just a trickster: Fawad

RANA FARRUKH

ISLAMABAD: The information minister spoke after Shehbaz wrapped up his tirade against the government and lashed out at the opposition leader for not speaking like a leader. "He [Shehbaz] is here after taking an exemption from court. I thought he would speak like a leader but he has once again proven that he is just a trickster who has nothing to say," Chaudhry said. The minister said that the entire nation was in sorrow over the incident in Murree. "It was thought that this incident would be discussed in a manner that leads to unity, but leaders are born and not made through false means." He claimed that the Sharif family had created "palaces" using government resources instead of spending it on development and infrastructure in Punjab and Murree.



BUCHAREST: Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi in a meeting with Romanian Prime Minister Nicolae Ciuca at Prime Minister's office. — DNA

Modi's agenda a threat to regional peace: PM

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday slammed the Narendra Modi-led Indian government for its continued silence on the "hate speech" conclave, which called for the genocide of Muslims in India. "The continuing silence of Modi govt on the call at an extremist Hindutva summit in December for genocide of minorities in India, especially the 200 million Muslim community," the prime minister said in a series of posts on Twitter. The violent hate speeches were made during the "Dharma Sansad" held at Haridwar, Uttarakhand, from

Continued on Page 06

COAS stresses mechanism to help Afghans

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Major General Talal Abdullah Al-Otaibi, Military Advisor to His Royal Highness Minister of Defence, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security, current situation in Afghanistan and bilateral defence relations between the two countries were discussed. COAS said that Pakistan values its historical and brotherly relations with the Kingdom and acknowledges its unique place in the Islamic world. COAS stressed upon the urgency for swiftly devising an institutional mechanism for channeling humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan in order to avert a looming humanitarian catastrophe. He underscored the importance of peace and reconciliation initiatives in Afghanistan.

Romanian PM, Qureshi discuss bilateral ties

Prime Minister Nicolae Ciuca appreciated the role of Pakistan in the context of Afghanistan

NEWS DESK/DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi Monday met Prime Minister of Romania Nicolae Ciuca wherein they discussed the bilateral matters, the situation in Afghanistan, and the human rights abuses in the IIOJK. On his arrival at the PM Office, Foreign Minister Qureshi was received by the Romanian Chief of Protocol. The foreign minister conveyed good wishes from Prime Minister Imran Khan and highlighted the historic and cordial ties between the two countries. He told the Romanian PM that Pakistan desired to establish broad-based and result-oriented ties with his country and the current improvement of the bilateral relations manifested the vision of the two leaderships. The foreign minister lauded the anti-COVID measures by Romania and thanked the Romanian PM for a donation of 500,000 doses of anti-COVID

Continued on Page 06

FM stresses Pak-Romania joint economic commission

NEWS DESK

BUCHAREST: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has stressed on reviving joint economic commission between Pakistan and Romania to further strengthen bilateral relations. Addressing a joint press talk along with his Romanian counterpart Bogdan Lucian Aureescu in Romania on Monday, he said both countries have immense potential in economic cooperation that can be tapped through bilateral economic activities. The Foreign Minister expressed hope that his tour will help

Continued on Page 06



RAWALPINDI: Major General Talal Abdullah Al-Otaibi, Military Advisor to His Royal Highness Minister of Defence, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) calls on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ. — DNA

Inside...

Afridi denounces criminal cases against Kashmiri activists — Page 02

Asad Umar advises people to remain cautious — Page 03

LB polls in Islamabad to be conducted through EVM — Page 04

Is now the time for a third political party in US? — Page 05

Muhammad Waseem eyes world title after WBA win — Page 06

Kazakhstan's largest city back online after clashes — Page 07

US, Russia hold high-stakes talks on Ukraine — Page 08

Unrest was 'attempted coup d'etat': President

The President told leaders of a military alliance of ex-Soviet states the action had been co-ordinated by a "single centre", but did not name those responsible

NEWS DESK

ALMATY: Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has described deadly violence last week as an attempted coup d'etat. He told leaders of a military alliance of ex-Soviet states the action had been co-ordinated by a "single centre", but did not name those responsible. Russia's President Vladimir Putin said Kazakhstan had been targeted by international terrorism, but provided no evidence for this claim. He added that Russia would never allow revolutions in the region. Troops from Russia and other countries are currently in Kazakhstan to restore order. The demonstrations, triggered by a rise in fuel prices, turned into the worst unrest the country has seen in its 30 years of independence. Dozens of people are reported to have died, includ-

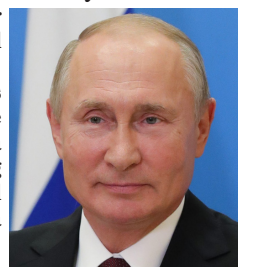


ing 16 members of the security forces. The protests started on 2 January and grew to reflect discontent at the government and former President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who led Kazakhstan for three decades and is still thought to retain significant influence. Correspondents say the recent vio-

lence may be linked to a power struggle within the ruling elite. A week after violence erupted, the authorities say the situation has now stabilised, with troops continuing "clean-up" operations and guarding strategic facilities. A state of emergency and a nationwide curfew remain in place. Almost 8,000 people have been detained throughout the country, the Interior Ministry said on Monday. The security talks between leaders of the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) military alliance came as Kazakhstan began an official day of mourning to commemorate those killed in the unrest. "Armed militants who were waiting in the wings joined the protests. The main goal was obvious: the undermining of the constitutional order, the destruction of government institutions and the seizure of power. It was an attempted coup d'etat," Mr Tokayev said.

Forces in Kazakhstan for 'limited' time: Putin

ALMATY: Russian President Vladimir Putin said Monday that a Moscow-led military detachment deployed to counter unrest in Kazakhstan would remain in the Central Asian country for only a "limited" period. "A contingent of CSTO peacekeeping forces has been sent to Kazakhstan — and I want to emphasize this — for a limited time period," Putin said during a meeting of leaders from ex-Soviet countries, during which he added that Kazakhstan had been targeted by "international terrorism" and vowed that Russia would not allow "revolutions" in the region. Last week, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken questioned Kazakhstan's decision to seek Russian military help, as the first of about 2,030 Russian-led troops arrived in the country. Officials in Moscow gave assurances their presence was temporary. Mr Blinken urged the Kazakh authorities to respect the rights of protesters while maintaining law and order. — Agencies





SKARDU: Children enjoying skating after snowfall in the northern area of Pakistan. — APP

PHP police arrest 141 criminals

FAISALABAD: The Punjab Highway Patrol (PHP) police claimed to have arrested 141 criminals, including a dacoit gang, during the last ten days. A spokesman for the PHP police on Monday said officials also seized three Kalashnikovs, three pistols, one gun, one pump action, 127 rounds, 8.8-kg hashish and 17 liters of liquor besides eight mobile phones. He said the patrolling police also reunited a missing boy with his family while action was taken against 72 drivers for using fake number plates. The PHP police also removed five encroachments from various roads in addition to impounding 37 vehicles for using unapproved gas cylinders. — APP

2 plots sealed over illegal construction

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) has sealed 2 plots in Gulistan Colony and Sir Syed Town over their illegal construction. A spokesman for the FDA said on Monday that plot holders were bound to seek prior approval from the authority for construction of any type on their plots but during checking the FDA teams found that owners of Plot No.35-G in Gulistan Colony No.1 and Plot no.554-E in Sir Syed Town were carrying out constructions on their plots illegally. — APP



JHELUM: Newly appointed CEO Cantonment Board Jhelum Abdul Latif Mari welcomed by Ahmed Sheikh, Ashraf Dar, Nadeem Talib, Sheikh Jamal and Sarfraz Malik. — DNA

AH Group, Pak World Trade & Expo Centre sign MoU

DNA

PESHAWAR: MOU has been signed between AH Group Chairman Yasir Ali Mahsud and the Founder Chairman Khurshid Barlas of Pak World Trade & Expo Centre - Pvt Ltd, where AH Group will hold the honor to

sponsor the event of Peshawar International Property Expo happening on 11th, 12th, and 13th of February 2022.

AH Group is also pleased to announce another sponsorship for International Chambers Summit 2022 that will be held at Serena Hotels Islamabad on 11th & 12th January 2022.



Cantonment Board Jhelum gets new CEO

KAMRAN GUJJAR

JHELUM: Officials of Cantonment Board Jhelum warmly welcome new CEO Abdul Latif Mari. Vice President Cantonment Board Jhelum Muhammad Ahmed Sheikh and newly appointed CEO Cantonment Board Jhelum Abdul Latif Mari during the meeting reiterated the immediate resolution and further welfare of cantonment board issues. The new CEO Abdul Latif Mari urges all officials to address Cantonment Board issues on priority basis. Sheikh Ahmed along with the delegation comprises of Ashraf Dar member revenue assessment committee, Nadeem Talib CO Gold Line, Sheikh Jamal CO Land Master and MDSLS Sarfraz Malik presented a bouquet to CEO Abdul Latif Mari.

Rescue operation smoothly underway at Galiyat

PESHAWAR: Director-General Rescue 1122 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dr. Khair Ahmad Monday said that the search and rescue operation was smoothly underway at Galiyat for the fourth consecutive day. In a statement, Dr. Khair Ahmad said that more rescue teams had arrived from Abbottabad and were engaged in rescue and search operation, adding two ambulances and rescue 1122 personnel had been sent from Donga Gali to Kuza Gali to augment relief activities. He said that currently Rescue 1122 workers were engaged in relief and rescue activities at the site near Toheedabad. He said that Rescue 1122 personnel were also providing first aid to stranded tourists at hotels besides removing snow from roads. Moreover, he added that rescue teams were patrolling roads and distributing dried fruit and other necessary items among affected people. The DG said Rescue 1122 would continue to provide all possible assistance to tourists and the operation to clean the streets in Galiyat. — APP

FESCO issues shutdown notice

Electricity supply from Ghausia Colony, Mamonkanjan City, al-Awwal, Bungalow and Khawaja Habib Ullah feeders originating from 132-KV Mamonkanjan grid station will remain suspended from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) has issued power shutdown programme for Tuesday due to necessary repair, maintenance and expansion of electricity lines.

According to the schedule, power supply from Minara and Ahmad Nagar feeders linked with 132-KV Bhowana grid station, Model Town feeder originating from 132-KV University grid station, Katchery Road and Sir Syed feeders emanating from 132-KV Factory Area grid station, PMC and Mansooran feeders originating from 132-KV Industrial Estate grid station, Tariq Abad feeder emanating from 132-KV Old Thermal grid station, Rehmat Abad feeder originating from 132-KV Nishatabad grid station, Sandal and Sargodha Road feeders linked with 132-KV Chiniot grid station, S-II and Lal Kothi feeders originating from 132-KV Scarp Colony grid station, Katchery Road, Buchiana, new Dana Abad, Arkana and new Awagat feeders linked with 132-KV Jaranwala grid station, Phalahi Wala feeder originating from 132-KV Chak No.103-RB grid station, Jassoana Bungalow feeder emanating from 132-KV Sitiana grid station, Noor Mehal feeder originating from 132-KV Mureedwala grid station, Ashraf Colony, Mureedwala and Maqbool Pur feeders emanating from 132-KV Gojra



grid station, Nia Lahore-II feeder originating from 132-KV Nia Lahore grid station, GIC feeder emanating from 132-KV Sammumdi Road grid station, Nazim Abad, Liaqat Abad and Islam Pura feeders originating from 132-KV Jhang Road grid station, al-Khaliq feeder linked with 132-KV Thikriwala grid station, Fareed feeder originating from 132-KV Sammumdi grid station, Garh feeder emanating from 132-KV Garh Fateh Shah grid station and Khuda Yar feeder originating from 132-KV Mamonkanjan grid station will remain suspended from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. While Lyallpur Chemical, al-Habib, Islam Pura, Canal Road, ATM, Barala, Rodala, Lahore Road, Dana Abad, Crescent Cotton, Jute Mill, 240 Mor, Faisalabad Road, College Road, Katchery Road, Theraj Shaheed, Gogera, Bucheki Road, Buchiana Road, new Awagat, Ali Pur Bungalow, Arkana and Waseer feeders emanating from 132-KV Jaranwala grid station will observe shutdown from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tuesday (January 11).

Similarly, electricity supply from Ghausia Colony, Mamonkanjan City, al-Awwal, Bungalow and Khawaja Habib Ullah feeders originating from 132-KV Mamonkanjan grid station, Sheeraza, Ravi, Pir Salahud Din, TSML, Zafar Chowk, Sugar Mill, Khiddarwala, Kanjwani and Kallar Wala feeders linked with 132-KV Manjhala Bagh grid station will remain suspended from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. whereas Hussain Pur Bungalow, Thikriwala (Mamonkanjan), Darya Bal, Kotla and Mureedwala feeders originating from 132-KV Mureedwala grid station, new Awagat and Canal Road feeders linked with 132-KV Jaranwala grid station, Elyas Garden, GIC, Mujahid Abad, Muzaffar Colony and Nawabwala feeders originating from 132-KV Sammumdi Road grid station and Risala Road feeder linked with 132-KV Jhang Road grid station will observe load shedding from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on January 11. Meanwhile, power supply from Babar Chowk, Sitiana Road, Awawala, Kareem Garden, Zamzam, Fateh Textile, Raheem Valley, Garden Colony, Gulbehar Colony, Khayaban Green, Harianwala, Makkah City, T&N, Sitara Park City, new Khannuana and PGSHFA-4 feeders originating from 132-KV Khannuana grid station, Edan Valley, Gulab, S-II, Jaranwala Road, Sultani Alasto, Borstal Jail and Lal Kothi feeders emanating from 132-KV Scarp Colony grid station will also remain suspended 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday (Jan 11, 2022).

Julien Harneis calls on Governor Sindh Imran

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The eight-member delegation led by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Julien Harneis called on Governor Sindh Imran Ismail here at Governor's House on Monday to discuss matters relating to health, pollution, climate change, environment, availability of potable water and other pertinent issues. The meeting also included a detailed discussion on the current issues being faced in the country, keeping in view the depleting natural resources and the importance of conserving them. An interesting exchange of views took place on the successes achieved and the prospects for further building up the long-term constructive dialogue. The two sides discussed issues on further consolidation of efforts in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the context of upcoming UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Pakistan (2023-27). It was also discussed that the Indus River Basin which is under threat from climate change, environmental degradation, population pressure and pollution hence putting a question mark on its resilience to sustain life for future generations. Pakistan, therefore, needs a Perspective Plan to conserve the resource base, use it wisely and restore the ecosystem. The UN System in Pakistan during its for-

mulation exercise of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) came up with the idea of ecological restoration of Indus River basin. The UN is developing a Plan in consultation with all stakeholders to contribute and build upon provincial, national and international initiatives in Pakistan. "In four months' time from January 2022 to April 2022, the Master Plan is to be prepared to unite existing initiatives, cover gaps, identify framework for climate financing and develop a national communication strategy", it was told. The Governor Sindh said that the government was especially focusing on addressing health-related issues. The government is according top priority to these areas," he added. Highlighting the successes made in the flagship Billion Tree Tsunami project, the Governor further observed that this will go a long way towards mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change in the country. Julien Harneis spelled out the objectives of the UN in Pakistan and said that the purpose of the visit was to focus on critical areas such as good governance, health, education, youth development, population control and addressing the issue of climate change. The Governor Sindh assured the delegation of maximum possible assistance on behalf of the federal government; and thanked the UN Resident Coordinator for the UN's significant contribution to development in Pakistan.



AC Maria reviews 'Wall Sense' program

KAMRAN GUJJAR

JHELUM: A meeting was held under the leadership of Assistant Commissioner Jhelum Maria Javed regarding the establishment of the "Wall Sense" program. In which deputy director social welfare Chaudhry Wajid, social worker Farhat Kamal Zia, members of Darul Aman, members of Al-Qasim Society and members of various welfare foundations participated. The purpose of the wall sense program is to meet the needs of deserving people and provide warm coats, sweaters, clothes, shoes bags and other items of household use for winter. Along with the government and district administration, all NGOs will increase their support for the success of this program and will form a committee.



What is cryptocurrency?

GULRUKH KHAN

A cryptocurrency (or "crypto") is a form of payment that can circulate without the need for a central monetary authority such as a government or bank. Instead, cryptocurrencies are created using cryptographic techniques that enable people to buy, sell or trade them securely. Cryptocurrencies can be exchanged for goods and services, though they often are used as investment vehicles. Cryptocurrency is also a key part of the operation of some decentralized financial networks, where digital tokens are an important tool for carrying out transactions. The most popular cryptocurrency, Bitcoin, has had a historically volatile price. In 2021, it hit an all-time high above \$69,020 before falling back (Source Binance Exchange). Cryptocurrency is decentralized digital money that's based on blockchain technology. You may be familiar with the most popular versions, Bitcoin and Ethereum, but there are more than 10,000 different cryptocurrencies in circulation. Let's have a look at the price of 1 BTC over the years. 2010 0.5\$, 2011 10\$, 2012 10\$, 2013 745\$, 2014 310\$, 2015 360\$, 2016 1000\$, 2017 19000\$, 2018 3809\$, 2019 12069\$, 2020 28000\$, 2021 69020\$. Its Start from nothing. In 2009 You 1000 BTC was equal to 0.03 USD.

How Does Cryptocurrency Work?
A cryptocurrency is a medium of exchange that is digital, encrypted, and decentralized. Unlike the U.S. Dollar or the Euro, there is no central authority that manages and maintains the value of a cryptocurrency. Instead, these tasks are broadly distributed among a cryptocurrency's users via the internet. You can use crypto to buy regular

goods and services, although most people invest in cryptocurrencies as they would in other assets, like stocks or precious metals. While cryptocurrency is a novel and exciting asset class, purchasing it can be risky as you must take on a fair amount of research to fully understand how each system works. Bitcoin was the first cryptocurrency, first outlined in principle by Satoshi Nakamoto in a 2008 paper titled "Bitcoin: A Peer-to-Peer Electronic Cash System." Nakamoto described the project as "an electronic payment system based on cryptographic proof instead of trust." That cryptographic proof comes in the form of transactions that are verified and recorded on a blockchain. **What Is a Blockchain?** A blockchain is an open, distributed ledger that records transactions in code. In practice, it's a little like a checkbook that's distributed across countless computers around the world. Transactions are recorded in "blocks" that are then linked together on a "chain" of previous cryptocurrency transactions. "Imagine a book where you write down everything you spend money on each day," says Buchi Okoro, CEO, and co-founder of the African cryptocurrency exchange Quidax. "Each page is similar to a block, and the entire book, a group of pages, is a blockchain." With a blockchain, everyone who uses a cryptocurrency has their own copy of this book to create a unified transaction record. The software logs each new transaction as it happens, and every copy of the blockchain is updated simultaneously with the new information, keeping all records identical and accurate. To prevent fraud, each transaction is checked using one of two main validation techniques: proof of work or proof of stake. **How Can You Use Cryptocurrency?**

You can use cryptocurrency to make purchases, but it's not a form of payment with mainstream acceptance quite yet. A handful of online retailers like Overstock.com accept Bitcoin, but it's far from the norm. Until crypto is more widely accepted, you can work around current limitations by exchanging cryptocurrency for gift cards. At eGifter, for instance, you can use Bitcoin to buy gift cards for Dunkin' Donuts, Target, Apple, and select other retailers and restaurants. You may also be able to load cryptocurrency to a debit card to make purchases. In the U.S., you can sign up for the BitPay card, a debit card that converts crypto assets into dollars for purchase, but there are fees involved to order the card and use it for ATM withdrawals. **Can I purchase crypto in Pakistan?** Unfortunately, the residents of Pakistan cannot buy Bitcoin on Binance (or any other crypto exchange) using their debit or credit cards as the local banks have restricted transactions to or from crypto exchanges with a reason that virtual currencies do not qualify as a legal tender in the country. **Is Cryptocurrency ban in Pakistan?** Despite the growing crypto culture in Pakistan, the country does not have a solid law-work to regulate these virtual coins. Pakistan's Sindh High Court has directed Prime Minister Imran Khan's government to speed up the regulation of cryptocurrencies. How to Buy Bitcoin in Pakistan (Step-by-step guide). Download the Binance app or go to the website to create an account. Create an account and verify it. ... Once verified, you can start purchasing by selecting the Buy Crypto -> P2P Trading option. Enter the amount in PKR and select a trader for buying the USDT.

—The writer is a student

NOTICE

It is for the information of general public that as per Capital Development Authority (CDA) ordinance 1960, Building Control Regulations 2020, construction without approval from CDA and subsequent occupancy in building in ICT limits is illegal.

2. It has come to the notice of CDA that some elements in ICT limits/Islamabad are raising construction/occupancy without approval from CDA and advertising their projects/schemes for investment purpose without any lawful authority.

3. CDA has not only started campaign against those elements but also taking punitive actions not only limited to Sealing of their premises but also initiating action against individuals.

4. All developers/builders are warned through this notice not to raise any type of construction/development/occupancy without approval of CDA, also it is not allowed to invite/advertise any type of project for marketing/Selling purpose till approval from CDA.

5. All marketing companies are also warned not to advertise any scheme/project through any mode of advertisement without verification of its approval status from CDA, otherwise action will be taken against Chief Executive Officer/Directors of the said company.

6. Public in general is informed through this notice not to invest in any type of project in ICT limits without seeking its verification from CDA.

For seeking project/scheme status, CDA can be reached/contacted through any of the following modes of communication.

WhatsApp: +92-3334441807

Email address: bc_south@cda.gov.pk

Website: www.cda.gov.pk

Shafi Muhammad Marwat

Director Building Control (South)

Capital Development Authority

PID (I) No. 4667/21

Milestone for ehsaas

AFTER several years of delay, the countrywide National Socio-Economic Registry Survey has been completed and has identified more than 34 million poor families to be eligible for financial assistance. The survey has been completed by the Ehsaas Programme, a flagship social safety and poverty alleviation programme launched by this government in March 2019.

This registry was an utter necessity. An important criticism of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), which was the largest social welfare programme in the country before Ehsaas, was of corruption, based on the fact that the process of identification of families to receive financial assistance was not transparent. One of the promises of the PTI government before coming into power was that it would retain and improve BISP. A transparent, accurate and fair process of identification of beneficiaries was necessary in order to make Ehsaas a credible programme, and it is regrettable that this was not concluded sooner. Moreover, this was also imperative considering the government spent more than Rs 200 billion on its social safety initiatives through the Ehsaas Programme.

If the government expected to continue approving a large number of funds for the programme, it was requisite to have a more efficient process. This kind of data collection, collected digitally, in a country where technology is not always up-to-date, and surveys and census often lead to controversy, is a milestone, which has also been praised by the World Bank.

Apart from identification, having a basis of assessment for specific data on poverty in Pakistan, based on households and livelihood, is mandatory for policy planning for any country. The survey includes households' information in terms of geographic data, demographics, socioeconomic status, education, health, disability, employment, energy consumption, assets, communications, agri-landholdings, water-sanitation-and-hygiene (WASH) and livestock. This is crucial data collection that the government and non-government organisations can utilise for a number of policies, including targeted subsidies, specific loans and cash transfers.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 209

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



Repressive measures

THERE was more concerning news from Afghanistan this week as it was reported that the Taliban's religious police have put up around Kabul ordering Afghan women to cover up. Apparently, the poster, which includes an image of the face-covering burqa, was slapped on cafes and shops this week by the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. Since taking over power in August, the Taliban have increasingly curtailed freedoms of women and girls, and this is only the latest example.

Defending the measure, some officials have pointed out the no one will be punished for not covering, as it is just meant to be an "encouragement" for Muslim women to follow Sharia law. However, given the Taliban's history of meting out punishments publicly, few people will find comfort in the above explanation. Many are right to point out that they are trying to spread fear among the people. One must also question the logic of this governance approach. It appears obvious that the Taliban have not learned from their previous stint and also from the examples of other militant groups that came into the governments. Such repressive policing measures will alienate the population from the government, and that is perhaps something the Taliban should avoid given the dire economic situation in the country.

The government's priorities also need to be reconsidered. Over the past couple of weeks, there have been reports of women bathhouses being closed in the north of the country, restrictions being placed on the distance women can travel, and of shopkeepers being asked to remove the heads of all mannequins. Surely, these are not the most pressing issues facing the new Afghan government at this point in time.

Such measures will also not help the Taliban's already fragile relations with the international community. There has already been a lot of hesitance when it comes to engaging with the Taliban and offering humanitarian assistance, and these suffocating measures will further solidify their concerns. International recognition will be extremely hard to attain if things continue in this manner and the Taliban do not fulfill their promises regarding human rights.

Is now the time for a third political party in US?

Dalia Al-Aqidi



History has shown that the party that lost the presidential election has an advantage in the midterms, as its supporters are more motivated to hit the polls

WITH the beginning of the new year, members of the Republican and Democratic political parties have begun sharpening their swords in preparation for the US' 2022 midterm elections. The November vote is considered the most crucial step for both parties as they aim to prove that the outcome of the 2020 presidential election was either the right or the wrong choice for democracy.

History has shown that the party that lost the presidential election has an advantage in the midterms, as its supporters are more motivated to hit the polls, while this year's elections will also reflect how Americans are responding to President Joe Biden's leadership and the progressive agenda that has

been failing on the ground for the past year. American and international media outlets view the US as a deeply divided country and believe that its democracy is at a crossroads, especially with the remarkable rise in crime rates mainly in states governed by Democrats, such as New York, California, Oregon, Minnesota and Illinois. Crimes like targeting the police, thefts, assaults on public and private property, and murders have become a daily occurrence.

Last September, it was reported that 41 percent of Biden voters and 52 percent of Donald Trump voters support the idea of dividing the country in two, based on a study published by the Center for Politics at the University of Virginia, emphasizing that, since 1945, the number of nations in the world has nearly tripled.

Canadian novelist Stephen Marche, author of the "Next Civil War," last week told CNN that it is time for the left to think about secession. The US is a textbook case of a country headed for civil war. A recent poll showed that only 20 percent of Americans have faith in their electoral system and another showed that about 34 percent think violence against the government can be justified. So, in such conditions, where the threat of violence is real and growing and the threats against members of Congress increased 107 percent last year, separation becomes a real option, according to Marche.

However, it is extremely dangerous to promote the idea of dividing America based on political affiliations, since the very core of this country is based on diversity and inclusivity. Instead of putting options on the table that will empower global totalitarian states and dictatorships such as China, one should examine the problem and promote real solutions. When President Biden took office a year ago, he made promises to

American people that he has failed to fulfill, which weakened his political party, as shown in recent approval rating polls. He has realized that uniting the country is not as easy as he thought, given the fact that the Democratic Party has never been divided the way it is today. This could be applied to the Republican Party too.

The divisions within the two leading political parties caused by the respective narratives of the far left and far right play a vital role in shaping the future of the country. This highlights the urgent need for more moderate voices on both sides that will put the country's interests ahead of the political interests of the parties.

In 2021, for a brief period, the progressives with their socialist attitude became a heavy burden on the Democratic Party. They were offset by the dominance in the Republican Party of the extreme right-wing groups that insist on rejecting the results of the 2020 presidential election and promoting conspiracy theories. The storming of the US Congress on Jan. 6, 2020, and the riots that led to the burning of cities and properties should be a real wake-up call for the politicians to step back and look at the big picture. The two parties must unite their ranks and get rid of all kinds of extremism before even thinking of leading the people of a country that is on the brink of a civil war, as several experts are projecting.

If this step seems far-fetched, then maybe it is time for a third political party to emerge that could combine the moderate voices of both sides and fight the new radical movements that threaten the destruction of the biggest superpower of the 21st century. That being said, the outcome of the November midterms will likely shape the future of America for many years to come.

— Courtesy: Arab News

A continuing disaster

Muhammad Akhter



The Palestinian people, under the oppression of the Zionist powers, lost their territories due to American backing in late 1940s

ON December 10, 2021, the International Human Rights Day was observed across the world. On that occasion, gross human rights violations perpetrated in different parts of the world were strongly condemned by international organisations championing the cause of human rights. Yet again, the resolutions were passed, but nothing more than that. However, when it comes to the human rights of Kashmiris and Palestinians, who have been deprived of their lands for the last seven decades and have been oppressed by the Indian and Israeli forces, no voice was raised on the international forum, thus giving us a good idea of the world's double standards regarding human rights.

The Palestinian people, under the oppression of the Zionist powers, lost their territories due to American backing in late 1940s. The rise of Zionists pitted against the Arab states in the Middle East, while the United Nations, the representative body, also played a hypocritical role in favour of Israel. The U.S. fully helped the state of Israel to pursue its expansionist ambitions more aggressively. On this basis, the Israeli forces have tried almost every oppressive means to oppress the Palestinians and have not spared even the first holy place of the Muslims in Jerusalem. The Israeli atrocities being carried out against the helpless and unarmed Palestinians continue today and they are bombarded with bullets every day, (e.g. Gaza Strip that was brutally bombarded in May 2021).

In December 2017, the former President of the US, Donald Trump announced plans to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem. That move took place on May 14, 2018, which reflects its anti-Muslim prejudice, for which the UN General Assembly passed a resolution calling on the United States to reverse its decision. Up to now, the Palestinian people are suffering from Israeli atrocities in their quest for freedom, but the leaders and organizations chanting slogans for the protection of human rights have never been concerned about the protection of Palestinian rights. The atrocities being committed by the Indian security forces in Indian-held Kashmir, has been a talk of the town. The people of the Indian-occupied Kashmir, who have been fighting for independence from Indian rule for the last 74 years and have made immense sacrifices, have been left in the lurch, reeling at the mercy of their fate. Moreover, at the behest of the Hindutva ideology, Kashmiris' human rights and freedoms were first taken away by illegal occupation of the Kashmir Valley at the time of creation of Pakistan in 1947 and then in August 2019 when

Kashmir was left without their special status, which was granted to the valley under Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution. Two years ago, on August 5, 2019, the fascist Modi regime revoked those provisions of the India Constitution.

It is worthy to note that the UN Security Council, through its resolution, recognized the right of Kashmiris to self-determination and directed India to hold a plebiscite in the Occupied territories of Kashmir. The UN reiterated its stance to India through various resolutions, but, India has habitually put a blind eye on these resolutions thus far. Nonetheless, the world leaders concerned with the protection of human rights, including the United States and international organisations, e.g. the UN, have not been able to play their effective role in stopping Indian atrocities in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K). In India-occupied Kashmir, people are sacrificing their lives in the face of atrocities by Indian security and paramilitary forces. On the one hand, the security forces have turned the Indian-occupied Kashmir valley into an open prison and the world's most militarized zone. Facing the wrath of state-sponsored terrorism on the other side, Indian minorities have also deprived of their fundamental rights and religious freedoms.

In this regard, a report by the Human Rights Organisation of Occupied Kashmir has revealed to the United Nations that the occupying forces in Indian-occupied Kashmir have martyred over hundred thousand Kashmiri people in 32 years, out of which some eight thousand five hundred thirty two Kashmiris had been subjected to extrajudicial killings. A few years ago, a delegation from Amnesty International, an international human rights organisation, visited the Indian-occupied Kashmir and discovered the mass graves of Kashmiris who were martyred by the Indian occupation forces.

Most importantly, the so-called champions of human rights, international organisations and world leaders must be aware of the fact that since August 5, 2019, there has been a continuous military siege in the Indian-occupied valley, during which about 484 Kashmiris, including women, have been martyred. The brutal use of force, including bullets, pellet guns and tear gas, on peaceful protesters has injured more than 2,000 people and disgraced 118 women over the past two years.

In the recent past, the Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Shah Gilani's demise during his detention at the same span of subjugation and oppression, is a serious question mark on the credibility of the so-called champions of human rights. It is also a matter of fact that Gilani's dead body was also taken away from his family by the Indian occupation forces.

It should be noted that Pakistan has been supporting the struggle of Kashmiris for the last 74 years, raising its voice on every relevant forum and in the United Nations for the people of Kashmir. On Because of this, India has been at loggerheads with Pakistan from the day one up till now.

Briefly put, Pakistan has never closed the door of dialogue with India, this is India, which has been running away. For the sake of regional and global peace and security, the United Nations must stand in the way of India's expansionist ambitions to implement its resolutions to resolve the Kashmir's long-festering issue.

—The writer is a freelance contributor and The Divisional President Kashmir youth Alliance, His Twitter handle is @MAkhter_

The devaluation trends of rupee in 2021

Anum Gul

The currency has dropped so much value in the previous four months, plunging from 169.55 to a dollar to the latest 176.74

PAKISTAN'S official currency is struggling. The rupee continues to collapse against the dollar, and its drops are now sending shockwaves across the economy. The currency has dropped so much value in the previous four months, plunging from 169.55 to a dollar to the latest 176.74. Specialists are considering it the greatest drop in a single period in recorded history since the currency was associated with the dollar in the early 1980s.

Rupee downfall has been significantly more prominent in the previous three years. It was about 104.70 to the dollar on 1st Jan, 2017, but the country's monetary management was criticized for deliberately propping it up using tactics that were more administrative than financially wise.

Through a slew of policy initiatives, it was permitted to establish its natural equilibrium, and it appeared to settle down to a little more than a hundred for a few months. However, despite interventions by the State Bank of Pakistan, it has been declining.

Downhill Ride of Rupee

Now, international forecasts indicate that

the rupee's downhill journey will not reach a steady point in the following months and further shedding is on the cards. Fitch has raised its rating on the rupee and now expects it to trade at about 190 to the dollar over the next year. According to one point of view, these changes are nothing out of the norm. Experts analyze the splitting of the rupee along political lines and point out how the situation has stayed approximately the same across numerous regimes. In a recent column in a local newspaper, Dr. Farrukh Saleem, an economic and financial expert who was briefly linked with the current government, provided the following figures.

Highest Gaps in Import and Export
For years, beginning in July 1949, almost one year after the death of the Quaid, our officials opted to maintain the rupee overvalued by not depreciating it, despite the UK weakening the pound by 30%. Except for the United Kingdom, every other Commonwealth country did so. Pound sterling became cheaper in Pakistan, and import reliance began under the pretense of the popular 'import substitution approach' of the time. Since then, our country has seen greater import growth, slower or stagnant export growth, growing foreign debt to pay the difference between imports and exports, and, as a result, boom-and-bust growth cycles.

Most, if not all, of our finance ministers are concerned about currency flexibility. Historically, our exchange rate has benefited imports at the cost of exporters. Nonetheless, we persist to criticize our low export performance. We appear to prefer grieving rather than making the difficult decision to make foreign exchange consistently pricey. Should we

also applaud ourselves for our exceptional import growth performance? Many economists tend to make absurd claims, such as 'depreciation relates to a rise in debt.' They failed to see that by failing to depreciate in a timely manner, we fueled import demand in the first place, which was largely supported by expanding foreign debt.

Vagaries of the Rupee

No matter how many dollars the State Bank floats on the market to help balance the situation, they are all absorbed by individuals who trade in currency illegally. Local market factors triggered by the rupee depreciation and rush for the dollar are also in action. Saving in dollars provides a hedge against inflation and protects against the whims of the rupee. There are expenses associated with the rupee depreciating. Take a loan for example. According to statistics, the currency devaluation itself has increased Rs1.9 trillion to the country's domestic deficit. Because international loans must be paid in dollars, the rupee depreciation is not good news for a government with limited reserves. There are credibility problems as well. The rupee was the highest appreciating currency in Asia seven months ago. It is now the worst of the lot.

Currency depreciation isn't always a negative thing if it boosts exports. So yet, this has not occurred. While exports have increased, imports have far outpaced them, sending the rupee into a tailspin. Securing the national currency and allowing it to approach its true value is a critical economic aim. The status of the currency is a clear indication that Pakistan's route to long-term economic recovery would be lengthy and convoluted.

Briefs

Eurozone
joblessness
shrinks
despite
Covid-19

BRUSSELS: The unemployment rate in the eurozone dropped again in November, official figures showed on Monday, as hiring withstood new coronavirus outbreaks in several member countries. The EU's Eurostat agency said the seasonally-adjusted jobless rate - which measures the number of people out of work as a proportion of the active population as a whole - dipped to 7.2 percent in November from 7.3 percent in October and 7.4 percent in July.

In the 27-member European Union, which includes countries such as Poland not in the single currency bloc, unemployment fell to 6.5 percent in November from 6.7 percent a month earlier. The data were a marked improvement over a year earlier when the jobless rate stood at 8.1 percent in the euro area and 7.4 percent in the wider EU.

The agency estimates that 13.9 million EU residents were out of work in November. Youth unemployment stood at 15.4 percent in the EU and 15.5 percent in the eurozone, also down on the previous month.

The downward trend in unemployment survived fresh outbreaks of the Delta variant in countries such as Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium, suggesting that government decisions to limit restrictions had preserved their economies. Many countries are attempting to take a similar approach in their response to the highly contagious Omicron variant, even as daily infection rates have risen to unprecedented levels across Europe. - APP

Philippines
calls on
Indonesia to
end coal ban

MANILA: The Philippines has urged Indonesia to lift its recent ban on coal exports, with Manila warning Monday the policy will have a "detrimental" impact on the coal-reliant country. Indonesia, the world's biggest exporter of coal used to generate electricity, this month stopped fossil fuel shipments to secure its domestic power supply. The Philippines imports about 70 percent of its coal supply and nearly 97 percent of that comes from Indonesia, official data show. Most of the coal is used for power generation.

Jakarta's ban on January coal exports would be "detrimental" to countries like the Philippines that rely on coal-fired power, Energy Secretary Alfonso Cusi said in a letter to his Indonesian counterpart last Thursday, according to a Department of Energy statement on Monday. "Power generated from coal comprises about 60 percent of the country's power demand," Cusi added. Philippines Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin has been enlisted to appeal against Indonesia's decision via the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the statement said. - APP

Nobel body
slams Suu Kyi
convictions

OSLO: The Norwegian Nobel Committee, which awards the Nobel Peace Prize, denounced three new convictions handed down Monday against ousted Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi. "The Nobel Committee is deeply concerned about her situation," the chairwoman of the Nobel committee Berit Reiss-Andersen told AFP in an email. "The latest ruling against Aung San Suu Kyi is a politically motivated ruling," she added. Under house arrest since a February 1 military coup, the 76-year-old former leader was sentenced to four years in prison in the latest in a slew of charges that risk sending her to prison for decades. She was found guilty of two charges related to illegally importing and owning walkie-talkies and one of breaking coronavirus rules, a source with knowledge of the case told AFP. Suu Kyi was sentenced in December to a four-year sentence for violating Covid restrictions, which the ruling junta later shortened to two years. - APP

Kazakhstan's largest city
back online after clashes

The CSTO, a Moscow-led regional military bloc that has dispatched peacekeeping troops to the country, was set to hold an online summit on the crisis Monday, with the Kremlin confirming Russian President Vladimir Putin's attendance

ALMATY: Kazakhstan's largest city was back online and appeared to be returning to normal on Monday, as the nation observed a day of mourning after clashes that left dozens dead and the financial hub of 1.8 million people reeling. Almaty, the country's former capital, had been nearly completely offline since Wednesday, but local and foreign websites were accessible again Monday morning, following the worst unrest in the ex-Soviet republic's independent history.

The Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), a Moscow-led regional military bloc that has dispatched peacekeeping troops to the country, was set to hold an online summit on the crisis Monday, with the Kremlin confirming Russian President Vladimir Putin's attendance. AFP correspondents saw public transport on the streets of Almaty for the first time since protests descended into violence earlier this week, leaving strategic government buildings

burned and gutted and businesses counting the costs of a looting spree. Lyudmila, a pensioner who was waiting for a bus in the city centre and gave only her first name, said she was alerted to the internet's reappearance by a messenger call from relatives in Ukraine. "I had no idea that we were back online again," she said. She told AFP that during clashes on Wednesday night, injured soldiers had been dragged into the courtyard of the apartment building where she lived for

emergency treatment. Kazakhstan has framed the violence in Almaty as an attack by "terrorist groups" and expressed displeasure at foreign media coverage of the events, which began with protests over a fuel price hike in the west of the country on January 2. On Monday the government said foreign media reports had created "the false impression that the Kazakhstan government has been targeting peaceful protesters". "Our security forces have been engaging

with violent mobs who were committing brazen acts of terror," the foreign ministry said in the statement. But the authoritarian government has also struggled to firm up its own narrative. On Sunday evening the information ministry retracted a statement that had appeared in an officially run Telegram channel earlier that said more than 164 people had died in the unrest. Two private websites that had reported the news said the information ministry had told them the state-

ment was the result of a "technical mistake". Officials previously said 26 "armed criminals" had been killed and that 16 security officers had died. In total, 5,800 people have been detained for questioning, the presidency said in a statement on Sunday. Nur-Sultan, the city that replaced Almaty as capital in 1997 and which was renamed in honour of 81-year-old founding president Nursultan Nazarbayev in 2019, saw comparatively little unrest. - APP

Azerbaijan
detects Covid-19
Omicron variant

WEB DESK

BAKU: Twelve people have tested positive for the COVID-19 Omicron variant in Azerbaijan. This was stated in a joint statement made by the Azerbaijani Health Ministry, the State Agency for Mandatory Health Insurance, and the Management Union of Medical Territorial Units (TABIB). The ministry reported that the SARS-CoV-2 21K Omicron was detected in 12 samples taken from those arriving from abroad. The statement underlined that vaccination is the most effective way to protect against

new and rapidly spreading strains of the virus. "As a result of the active participation of the population in vaccination, the epidemiological situation in Azerbaijan has remained stable," the statement added. The country confirmed its first COVID-19 case on February 28, 2020. The country introduced a special quarantine regime on March 25 and took a number of measures to fight COVID-19 in the country. The nationwide vaccination is free and on a voluntary basis and is in line with the "Strategy of vaccination against COVID-19 in Azerbaijan for 2021-2022".



ISLAMABAD: A 25-member delegation of Armed Forces Command & Staff College, KSA, led by Brig Gen Alqahtani, visited Foreign office. In briefing session, FS Sohail Mahmood and Spokesperson highlighted key aspects of Pakistan's foreign policy, including commitment to forge deeper cooperation with brotherly Saudi Arabia. - DNA

Turkey reduces
foreign energy

ANKARA: Turkey's Energy Efficiency Association (ENER) President Ali Insan Silkim has said that the country is reducing its foreign energy supply dependence, Yeni Saphak newspaper has reported. "Thanks to our national energy and mining policy, we reduce our foreign dependence and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions," Silkim said.

It was noted that while the global supply crisis in the

energy markets and the increasing costs left their mark in 2021, it is predicted that the cost increase will continue in 2022. While many countries around the world are working to ensure supply security, Turkey has started to reap the fruits of its efforts to diversify its energy resources for years. At the same time, Turkey, which strengthened its infrastructure in supply, was among the countries least affected by the crisis. - APP

Myanmar's Suu Kyi hit with
new convictions, jail term

YANGON: A Myanmar junta court on Monday convicted Aung San Suu Kyi of three criminal charges, sentencing her to four years in prison in the latest in a slew of cases against the ousted civilian leader. The Nobel laureate has been detained since February 1 when her government was forced out in an early morning coup, ending Myanmar's short-lived experiment with

democracy. The generals' power grab triggered widespread dissent, which security forces sought to quell with mass detentions and bloody crackdowns in which more than 1,400 civilians have been killed, according to a local monitoring group. A source with knowledge of the case told AFP the 76-year-old was found guilty of two charges related to illegally importing

and owning walkie-talkies and one of breaking coronavirus rules. The walkie-talkie charges stem from when soldiers raided her house on the day of the coup, allegedly discovering the contraband equipment. Monday's sentence adds to the penalties the court handed down in December when she was jailed for four years for incitement and breaching

Covid-19 rules while campaigning. Junta chief Min Aung Hlaing cut the sentence to two years and said she could serve her term under house arrest in the capital Naypyidaw. December's ruling drew international condemnation, and the Myanmar public reverted to old protesting tactics of banging pots and pans in a show of anger. - Agencies



BUCHAREST: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, inaugurating "Pakistan Cultural and Trade Exhibition Center" at embassy of Pakistan in Romania. - DNA

Malaysia's
sales grow
18.8 pct in
Nov 2021

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's manufacturing sales grew 18.8 percent to 142.4 billion ringgit (about 33.9 billion U.S. dollars) in Nov. 2021 from a year ago, official data showed Monday. The growth in sales value for the month was driven by the petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products subsector, which rose 29 percent, the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) said in a statement. The expansion was also attributed to the food, beverages and tobacco subsector, which climbed 20.7 percent, as well as the electrical and electronics products subsector, which expanded 17.8 percent. According to DOSM, sales value for export-oriented industries, which accounted for 71.7 percent of total sales value. - APP

Pak culture should
be highlighted
in trade fairs

DNA

KARACHI: Patron in Chief of United Business Group (UBG) and former President of FPCCI SM Munir said that Pakistan's culture should be highlighted in various events held abroad and in international trade fairs. According to a statement issued by the group's Central spokesperson Gulzar Feroze, in a conversation with UBG President Zubair Tufail. SM Munir said that We will also give suggestions to all associations and chambers of commerce of Pakistan including the government and its institutions that our culture should be spread all over the world and young people world over should get acquainted with Pakistani art and artists. SM Munir said that Pakistan has kept the economy stable by competing with Covid-19 and the demand for Pakistani products is increasing in the world. SM Muneer said Pakistani exporters set up a window in Canada, USA and other countries where Pakistani exporters can advertise their products and give their opinion. He said similar windows can be established in other courtyards of the world to promote Pakistani exports. President UBG Zubair Tufail said that Pakistan's business and industrial community is united under the leadership of SM Munir and we will continue to provide positive suggestions to the government in the best interest of Pakistan's business community.

Azerbaijan, Belarus eye further prospects of co-op

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijani and Belarus officials have discussed further prospects of cooperation at a meeting in Belarus, Azertag has reported. At the meeting held between Azerbaijani ambassador Ulvi Bakshaliev and Speaker of the Council of Belarus Nataya Kochanova, the latter described Azerbaijan not just as a partner for Belarus, but a close friend, the report added. "Azerbaijan is a country that connects us with friendly, economic, political, humanitarian ties. This collaboration is very important to us as we feel Azerbaijan's support in international organizations on all levels. And surely, in many ways, such good relations between our countries have developed thanks to our presidents," Kochanova said. The speaker noted that an intensive political dialogue is underway between Belarus and Azerbaijan. She stressed the importance of a

closer relationship between the sides in such a difficult time.

"Our contacts should be more effective, and I think the resumption of meetings, parliamentary visits to Azerbaijan and Belarus will contribute to this. We have found a complete mutual understanding of the ongoing processes, in support of each other, and we will do our best to intensify cooperation. We have a good trade turnover this year: in 10 months - \$ 442 million," she added. Ulvi Bakshaliev expressed gratitude for the organization of the meeting in the Council of the Republic. "I am very happy to be here as an ambassador. We are very grateful to our presidents for the pace that they set for our relationship. And we must try to realize the set tasks in time with the bilateral agenda," she said. Earlier it was reported that Azerbaijan disassociated itself from paragraph 11 of the Joint Declaration of the Eastern Partnership

Summit of December 15, 2021, as it has a reservation to any operations "in conflict-affected regions" referred to in paragraph 8 of the Annex to this Joint Declaration carried out in the absence of a relevant request and agreement with Azerbaijan. At the summit, EU Council President Charles Michel officially stated that Azerbaijan had not agreed with paragraph 11

of the joint declaration concerning the internal political situation in Belarus and expressed its position on this paragraph. Due to the discrepancy between the views expressed in the Joint Declaration on Belarus and the principles of Azerbaijan's foreign policy, Azerbaijan adopted a Joint Declaration with its reservations. That is, Azerbaijan stated that it does not

share the position on Belarus in paragraph 11. Azerbaijan and Belarus are cooperating in various fields of economy, such as agriculture, transport, remote sensing services, etc. The trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Belarus amounted to \$335.7 million, with the export accounting for \$233.2 million and import for \$102.5 million in the first 10 months of 2021.

S.Korea
records
187,611
Covid
infections

SEOUL: South Korea has registered a total of 187,611 breakthrough COVID-19 infections, which refer to the vaccinated people who were infected with the virus, as of Jan. 1, the health authorities said Monday. It is up from 171,673 a week earlier and accounted for 0.449 percent of the fully vaccinated people that reached 41,835,421 on Jan. 1, according to the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency. It is known that people can be protected from the virus two weeks after full vaccination. Among the total breakthrough cases, the number of critically ill patients was 2,418, while the death toll stood at 1,247. The number of those who were infected with COVID-19 after receiving booster shots was 5,664 on Jan. 1, taking up 0.049 percent of the total 11,462,607 who got the booster jabs. The number of critically ill patients who received booster shots was 25, and the death toll came to 18.

In the latest tally, the country reported 3,007 more cases of COVID-19 for the past 24 hours, lifting the total number of infections to 667,390. The daily caseload hovered below 4,000 for four straight days. - APP

Polish
senator sues
party leader

WARSAW: A Polish opposition senator whose phone was hacked with advanced spyware has filed a civil suit against Poland's ruling party leader, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, for slander over comments suggesting that he was placed under surveillance in connection to wrongdoing. Hours after the news was reported Monday about Sen. Krzysztof Brejza's case against Kaczynski, Polish prosecutors informed Brejza's father, a city mayor, that he was under investigation as a suspect and needed to appear for questioning. Both father and son insist that they have done nothing wrong, and accuse authorities of seeking political revenge. They also believe the ruling Law and Justice party is trying to cast suspicion on them as a way to justify the use of the surveillance software, a tool meant to fight terrorism and other serious crimes, against political opponents. The hacking revelations have rocked Poland, drawing comparisons to the 1970s Watergate scandal in the United States and eliciting calls for an investigative commission in parliament.

Brejza called the decision to summon his father "revenge targeting the family" for the lawsuit and for revealing "crimes related to illegal surveillance of the opposition." He spoke Monday at a news conference in parliament alongside his wife, Dorota Brejza, who is also his lawyer. Ryszard Brejza, the mayor of Inowroclaw, a city in central Poland, said he was delivered a letter informing him that he must appear for questioning as a suspect but was not informed of what the case involves. "I feel a little like the character from the Franz Kafka novel 'The Trial.' I don't know what this concerns. I can only guess," he told the news station TVN24. - APP

Slovakia
eases Covid
measures

BRATISLAVA: Slovakia is easing coronavirus restrictions after a decline in new infections while the fast-spreading omicron variant is yet to fully hit the country. The changes include the cancellation Monday of the overnight curfew between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m. The move allows bars and restaurants, stores and others to stay open without restrictions. Only fully vaccinated people and those who have recovered from COVID-19 are eligible to enter bars, restaurants, hotels, ski resorts, religious services and stores selling nonessential goods. Elementary and high schools fully reopened, but schoolchildren and students have to wear face coverings. The government also decided to partially lift restrictions for various public events, including concerts and sport competitions, allowing the number of spectators to reach up to 50% of capacity. In the case of high-risk events, such as weddings, parties, discotheques and others, up to 20 people can attend. Only the vaccinated or those who have recovered from COVID-19 are eligible. - APP

Briefs

Ningyo Art & Beauty exhibition starts

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: An exhibition titled 'Ningyo Art and Beauty of Japanese Dolls' will be starting from Tuesday (today) at Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). According to statement issued by PNCA, it would be a collaboration with Japan Foundation Embassy, Ningyo which means "human shape" in Japanese language. The doll culture that has been cultivated over the long history of Japan will be introduced through a total of 67 carefully selected dolls, divided into 4 sections. Ningyo to pray for children's growth, Ningyo as fineart, Ningyo as folk art and spread of Ningyo culture. This exhibition presents a comprehensive introduction to Japanese doll culture, from Katashiro and Amagatsu, which are considered to be the archetypes of dolls in Japan, local dolls that reflect the climate and anecdotes from across the country, dress up dolls that are beloved in Japan today as doll toys.

IMF requested to reschedule 6th review

ISLAMABAD: The Finance Division has officially requested the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to reschedule the meeting of its Board of Directors for the approval of 6th review till end January. According to press statement issued by the Finance Ministry here Monday, the government had introduced bills in the National Assembly whereas IMF had moved the 6th tranche recommendation to its board for consideration on the January 12. As soon as the legislative procedures are completed, the IMF board would consider it for approval, the statement added. - APP

Shahrukh Jatoi shifted to jail

KARACHI: Death row inmate Shahrukh Jatoi - the main accused in the 2012 Shahzeb Khan murder case - was once again shifted to the central jail after Geo News reported that the convict was enjoying lavish perks at a private hospital in Karachi for more than two years. According to sources, Jatoi was living on the upper floor of Qamar-ul-Islam Hospital in Karachi, which was reportedly rented by Jatoi's family for the imprisoned convict. Per details, Jatoi was living a normal life despite being convicted in a murder case. After the news was broadcast on media, the jail administration took swift action and Jatoi was put behind bars in no time. According to footage, convict Jatoi appeared to be making full use of television, air conditioner, and a refrigerator among other facilities, in a private hospital room - a clear violation of rules and procedures of the Pakistan Penal Code. Sources said that Jatoi was staying at a private hospital in the Gizri area of Karachi for more than two years instead of Karachi's central jail. He was apparently living a "luxurious life on the upper floor of the private hospital." They further mentioned that Jatoi was also allowed to leave the hospital premises and no police official was seen on duty. Per the report, the upper portion of the private hospital was rented by Jatoi's family. They said that Jatoi was transferred from the jail to a private hospital on the "orders of the Sindh Home Department and an influential person was behind this breach of rules." - APP

Explosion kills 9 children in Afghanistan

NANGARHAR: An explosion in eastern Afghanistan near the border with Pakistan on Monday killed nine children and wounded four, according to the office of a Taliban-appointed governor. A statement from the governor's office said the blast took place when a cart selling food items struck an old, unexploded mortar shell in the district of Lalopar, in eastern Nangarhar province. No other details were immediately available. The province is the headquarters of Taliban rivals, the militant Islamic State group (IS), which has staged several attacks targeting Afghanistan's new rulers since the Taliban took over the country in mid-August. However, the IS has operated in Afghanistan since 2014, carrying out dozens of horrific attacks and most often targeting the country's minority Shia Muslims. Afghanistan is among the countries with the most unexploded land mines and other ordnance from the country's decades of war and conflict. When the ordnance detonates, the victims are often children. - Agencies

US, Russia hold high-stakes talks on Ukraine

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken stressed Sunday that Russia had to choose between dialogue and confrontation, warning on CNN that there would be "massive consequences for Russia if it renews its aggression on Ukraine"

WED DESK

GENEVA: Top US and Russian officials held crucial talks Monday on soaring tensions over Ukraine and security demands from Moscow, with little hope of a diplomatic breakthrough on the table. The high-stakes negotiations come with Russian troops massing on Ukraine's border and fears of an invasion, and Moscow demanding wide-ranging concessions from Washington and its NATO partners. The talks launch a week of high-stakes diplomacy between Russia and the West, after Moscow amassed tens of thousands of troops at the Ukrainian border, drawing the United States and Europe into a Cold War-style stand-off. US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov opened their meeting at the US mission in Geneva

at 8:55 am (0755 GMT), officials said. A convoy of black vehicles with Russian diplomatic plates had arrived shortly before, and was ushered through the large iron gates under a billowing US flag. The two diplomats had already met informally in the Swiss city on Sunday evening, with Ryabkov afterwards telling Russian news agencies the first meeting had been "difficult". Ryabkov was quoted by state news agency RIA Novosti Monday as saying he feared Washington was not taking seriously Moscow's demand of an end to NATO's eastward expansion. Pointing to a 2008 promise by NATO to consider membership for Ukraine and Georgia, Ryabkov said: "Are they ready to give legal guarantees that this country, as well as other countries... will not join NATO?" "I have a rather pessimistic forecast in this regard," Sherman in the talks on Sunday stressed "the freedom of

sovereign nations to choose their own alliances," the State Department said. In the muddy trenches on the frontline in Ukraine, where Kyiv's forces have been battling pro-Russian fighters since 2014, there was little hope for diplomacy. "I doubt that anything will change," 29-year-old soldier Mykhailo said as he walked through trenches in the town of Avdiivka, just north of the separatist stronghold city of Donetsk. "Guarantees of not joining NATO will never stop" Putin, Mykhailo said, adding: "he wants to return the Soviet Union in version 2.0." Both sides have set firm lines, with Washington warning that Moscow would face severe consequences from an invasion of Ukraine and Russia demanding wide-ranging new security arrangements with the West. After Monday's talks, a meeting of the NATO-Russia Council will take place in Brussels on Wednesday, then the permanent council of the Organi-

zation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) will meet in Vienna on Thursday with Ukraine expected to dominate. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken stressed Sunday that Russia had to choose between dialogue and confrontation, warning on CNN that there would be "massive consequences for Russia if it renews its aggression on Ukraine." "There's a path of dialogue and diplomacy to try to resolve some of these differences," he said. The United States says many of Moscow's proposals are non-starters. Blinken warned that any positive outcome from the talks would rely in part on Russia's willingness to stand down from its aggressive posture, which he likened to "an atmosphere of escalation with a gun to Ukraine's head". "If we're actually going to make progress, we're going to have to see de-escalation," US President Joe Biden's top diplomat said.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs meeting regarding PTI organizational setup. - DNA

PIA brings down employees' ratio to 260: CEO

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PIA's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Air Marshal Arshad Malik on Monday said the reforms process in Pakistan International Airlines would continue, as it significantly helped in bringing down the per aircraft employees ratio to 260, which was 550 in 2017. He, in a press statement issued here, said that the world's best airlines maintained their staff strength against per plane at 200-250. He expressed confidence that with the arrival of new aircraft in the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) fleet in 2022; the per plane employees' ratio would further come down to 220. He said the Pakistan International Airlines management introduced a voluntary separation scheme and took disciplinary action against fake-degree holders that reduced the number of its employees. Around 1,900 Pakistan International Airlines employees opted for voluntary separation, 837 faced termination due to fake degrees and 1,000 ghost employees were shown the door, besides it initiated action against 1,100 for violating rules and discipline and committing corruption. "The Pakistan International Airlines will save around Rs8 billion annually with reduction of its staff strength," the CEO said, adding that the key element of the reforms process was ensuring discipline.

Tarin assures SBP to remain under government's control

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance Shaukat Tarin assured on Monday that after the passage of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Amendment Bill 2021, the central bank will still remain under the government's control. The finance minister's comments came during a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance Revenue and Economic Affairs, with Senator Talha Mehmood in the chair. The finance minister said the government will nominate the names for the SBP's board of directors. "The government will also have the authority to appoint the members of the board [...]

State Bank of Pakistan will not be independent." The National Assembly's Monday session will take kick off at 4pm, but the SBP bill is not under consideration as per the 48-point agenda issued by the National Assembly Secretariat. Tarin is set to seek approval of the House for the controversial Finance (Supplementary) Bill, generally known as the "mini-budget", with the Opposition set to meet before the session to block his move. Meanwhile, speaking during the session, Tarin said if Senate is not considered part of Parliament, then why not shut it down. "I am an elected Senator, you insulted me in a light tone," the finance minister said as he spoke to the commit-

tee's chairman, Senator Mahmood. The finance minister told the committee that there would be a slight increase in inflation after the passage of the so-called mini-budget, as he talked about the bills which are a pre-requisite to resume the \$6 billion External Fund Facility (EFF) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). "Why shouldn't I impose taxes on cosmetics and drinks [...] agricultural products should also be taxed," the finance minister, adding that the government expects Rs100 billion in income from income taxes. Tarin said the government has delayed the talks with IMF and has given them a later date of January 28 or 31, which was originally scheduled to take place on Jan 12.

Last 7 years 'warmest on record' globally: European Union

PARIS: The last seven years have been the hottest on record globally "by a clear margin", the European Union's climate monitoring service reported Monday, as it raised the alarm over sharp increases in record concentrations of methane in the atmosphere. Countries around the world have been blasted by a relentless assault of weather disasters linked to global warming in recent years, including record-shattering wildfires across Australia and Siberia, a once-in-

1000-years heatwave in North America and extreme rainfall that caused massive flooding in Asia, Africa, the US and Europe. In its latest annual assessment, the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) confirmed that 2021 had joined the unbroken warm streak since 2015. It found that last year was the fifth warmest on record globally, marginally warmer than 2015 and 2018. Accurate measurements go back to the mid-19th century. The annual average temperature was 1.1 to 1.2 degrees Celsius

above pre-industrial levels, measured between 1850 and 1900, C3S said. That was despite the cooling effect of the natural La Nina weather phenomenon. Overall, the monitoring service found the last seven years "have been the warmest years on record by a clear margin". "2021 was yet another year of extreme temperatures with the hottest summer in Europe, heatwaves in the Mediterranean, not to mention the unprecedented high temperatures in North America," said C3S Director Carlo Buontempo. - Agencies

Australia's Covid tally surpasses 1M

MELBOURNE: Australia's COVID-19 tally surpassed one million on Monday as the prime minister said the country must "push through" a rapidly-growing outbreak of the omicron variant. The country confirmed over 67,000 new cases, pushing the total to 1.04 million cases, with more than half of them recorded in the past week alone. As many as 2,387 people have lost their lives to the disease. "We're dealing with serious volumes of cases but we are not seeing the same impact proportionally from previous variants in terms of the impact on hospitalizations, ICU and ventilated patients," Scott Morrison told reporters in the capital Canberra. He said 5,097 coronavirus patients are hospitalized and 78 on ventilators, "which is well, well, well within the capacity," Morrison said "living with COVID means continuing to ensure we press ahead with the vaccination program, adding that the children's vaccination has commenced. According to Chief Medical Officer Prof. Paul Kelly, who was speaking in the news conference along with the prime minister, said Australia has over 500,000 active cases, which is "a very different situation to even a few weeks ago." But "the vast majority of those 500,000 active cases are mild or indeed asymptomatic," he added. Australia had suppressed previous waves of the pandemic through lockdowns and strict border controls and quarantines. "So those issues about being prepared - having some paracetamol or some ibuprofen in your cupboard. Don't wait to get symptoms before you do that to treat yourself with if you have symptoms of COVID." Australia has so far fully vaccinated 92.1% of people aged 16 and above, while 94.7% have received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, according to the Health Ministry. - APP

19 killed in New York apartment fire

NEW YORK: At least 19 people are dead, including nine children, after a fire tore through a high-rise apartment building in New York on Sunday, officials said. Another 63 people were severely injured in the blaze in the Bronx, New York City Mayor Eric Adams told CNN. New York City Fire Department (FDNY) commissioner Daniel Nigro said at a press conference that a malfunctioning space heater caused the fire in the 19-story building. He said the smoke quickly spread to the upper floors because the door of the apartment was open and more than 60 people were poisoned. According to the New York Mayor's Office, the children who died were aged 16 and under and the majority of the residents in the building were Muslims from Gambia. Earlier in a press conference, Nigro said 32 victims were sent to five different hospitals and most of them were suffering from severe smoke inhalation. "That is unprecedented in our city. We expect there to be numerous fatalities," he added. "Approximately 200 FDNY members are operating on scene of a 5-alarm fire at 333 East 181 Street in the Bronx," the FDNY said on Twitter. A team of 200 firefighters had responded to the fire. - APP

UN delegation meets Sindh CM

DNA

KARACHI: Per-capita water in Pakistan has dropped to 1000 cubic meters from 5000 meters in 1950, Sindh chief minister said while talking to a UN delegation on Monday. UN Resident and Humanitarian delegation led by its Coordinator Julien Harneis called on Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah at the CM House here Monday. UN delegation discussed the Indus River Basin management and the impact of the climate change. "Indus delta being devastated with the scarcity of water in the river. The water won't reach to downstream Kotri due to its unavailability and it is the sole reason we are opposing big dams," the chief minister said. "Indus river is the economic lifeline of Pakistan," he said. Heavy rains are negatively affecting the agriculture while damaging roads and localities," he said. "Moreover, the water used by the industries and agriculture crops have polluted the sub-soil water. We want to save Indus river from this environmental impact," Murad Ali Shah said. "The seawater is moving on the land, eroding the soil, agriculture land and human settlements," he said. "We want the United Nations to sign Framework 2023-27 with Pakistan," CM Shah further said. This program will help development in environment, health sectors. It will also help the River Basin Management," Murad Ali Shah said. "We extend help to the countries in river management and betterment of the environment," UN official Julien Harneis said. "We intend to join hands with the Sindh government to ensure the river management," he added.

Tanzania Navy Commander visits Naval HQ

Chief of the Naval Staff highlighted Pakistan Navy's contributions for ensuring maritime security and peace in the region. Both the dignitaries agreed on further enhancing mutual interactions in diversified military domains

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Tanzania Navy Commander, Rear Admiral Michael Mwanandjenja Mumanga visited Naval Headquarters, Islamabad and called on Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi. Upon arrival at Naval Headquarters, the visiting dignitary was received by Chief of the Naval Staff. A smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Navy presented him Guard of Honour. After wreath laying at shuhada monument, the dignitary was introduced to the Principal Staff Officers at Naval Headquarters. Later, Rear Admiral Michael Mwanandjenja Mumanga called on Chief of the Naval Staff in his office. During the meeting, various matters of maritime security and mutual interest including bilateral collaboration were discussed. Chief of the Naval



Staff highlighted Pakistan Navy's contributions for ensuring maritime security and peace in the region. Both the dignitaries agreed on fur-

ther enhancing mutual interactions in diversified military domains. It is expected that the visit of Tanzania Navy Commander shall

further promote the existing bilateral cooperation between the two countries in general and the navies in particular.