

Samana

Thursday, January 27, 2022

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

Karachi's business community invited to invest in Azeri AFEZ

Detailed News On Page-08

Pak reaffirms support for **Kashmiris**

A sister publication of **CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency**

Detailed News On Page-08



Babar wants to stick to his strengths

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

PTI fighting against mafia

RANA FARRUKH



Wednesday that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government was fighting against the organized mafia. In a tweet, he said that the World Bank had confirmed Pakistan's 5.37 per cent growth rate and the government's policies to deal with coronavirus were being praised globally. He said it was strange that Transparency International's meaningless report hit the headlines, which has only claims and no reason mentioned.

EU envoy calls on KP minister



to Pakistan, Androulla Kaminara Wednesday met with Khyber Pakh-

tunkhwa Minister for Relief Iqbal Wazir and discussed various matters relating to North Waziristan. The min ister informed the visiting dignitary about health, education and infrastructure projects in North Waziristan and said that government has taken result oriented steps to develop merged districts. Androulla Kaminara appreciated the steps of government and assured that cooperation would be extended to bring tribal areas in mainstream of development. - APP

Musaddig replaces Shahzad

DNA



ment appointed

the former director-general of the National Ac-

countability Bureau (NAB) Brigadier (Retd) Musaddiq Abbasi as the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Accountability, media reported Wednesday. According to a notification issued in this regard, Abbasi will replace former adviser Mirza Shahzad Akbar who resigned from the post on January 24. I have tendered my resignation today to PM as Adviser.

> Inside. Dawood extends full

support to FCCI for economic conference

Ehsaas Taleemi

Wazaif App to empower millions

ISSI organizes workshop on cyber

America's simmering

Hindutva extremism

problem

Stage is set for

Pakistan Super League

7 from today

Riyadh and Bangkok

restore ties, decades

after gem theft

Business

community invited to

invest in AFEZ

technologies, AI

- Page 04

- Page 03

Page 05

- Page 06

Page 07

Page 08

Sehat Card launched for Islamabad

The Prime Minister says launch of such facility was a "landmark step"

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday launched the Naya Pakistan Qaumi Sehat Card, a phenomenal health insurance for the residents of Islamabad with facility of medical treatment up to one million rupees in a year. Under the scheme, all households of Islamabad, Punjab, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan and Tharparkar will be provided free medical treatment at government and private hospitals.

The prime minister at an event held in Islamabad distributed the health insurance cards to the beneficiaries, terming the facility an ambitious programme to facilitate across the board population. Addressing on the occasion, he said the universal health coverage was available in a few countries across the world, where the government fully covered the

Continued on Page 06

COAS Bajwa meets PM Khan

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa called on Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday at the PM Office. During the meeting, professional matters pertaining to the Pakistan Army was discussed, the Prime Minister's Office said on its official Twitter account. The meeting at the Prime Minister's House was attended by the Army chief and the director-general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Besides the military leadership, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Asad Umar and Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry also attended them eering.

Islamophobia issue in Britain

The survey found that Muslims were the UK's second least-liked group after gypsy and Irish travelers

News Desk

LONDON: A UK Muslim leader said on Tuesday that the findings of a survey on Islamophobia had highlighted "the pervasive nature of the problem" in Britain. The study, conducted by researchers at the University of Birmingham, revealed that Islamophobia had passed the socalled dinner table test in being considered suitable for polite conversation and socially acceptable.

UK Home Office defeated in court

LONDON: The latest stage of a UK Home Office strategy to strip Britons of their citizenship over terror offenses has been defeated in court. Following a legal challenge by a woman who had allegedly joined

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06



KARACHI: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov presenting a souvenir to Sarmad Ali President All Pakistan Newspapers Society, during his recent visit to Karachi. - DNA

Hungarian PM to visit Pakistan

It will be the first ever visit by a prime minister from either side

CENTRELINE REPORT



it Pakistan next month, on the invitation of Prime Minister Imran Khan, During the visit, the two leaders would discuss various bilateral and regional issues, particularly matters related to enhancing bilateral trade and economic cooperation. "The visit is historic and significant due

Viktor

Continued on Page 06

Forces kill terrorist, recover weapons

DNA

SPINWAM: A terrorist has been killed on Wednesday after security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in North Waziristan's district Spinwam, a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. According to the military's media wing, a terrorist identified as Saddam - was killed during an intense exchange of fire. Weapons and ammunition have also been recovered from the terrorist," said ISPR.

The statement further read that the terrorist "was an expert in planting improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and was involved in terrorist activities, target killings and kidnapping for ransom.'

MoU signing to repatriate prisoners from Saudi Arabia

Interior Minister expressed these views in a meeting with Saudi ambassador



ISLAMABAD: PM Imran Khan distributing Naya Pakistan Health Card among beneficiaries. - DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Malki called on Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed in Islamabad on Wednesday. Matters pertaining to bilateral relations and mutual interest were discussed in the meeting. The Interior Minister said visit

of Saudi Interior Minister will create new

dimension of bilateral relations. He hoped that after signing a mutual agreement with Saudi Arabia, early repatriation of Pakistani prisoners will be possible. In his remarks, the Saudi Ambassador said both the countries enjoy brotherly relations. He called for promoting tourism and trade between the two countries.

'Govt to create no hurdle for PDM's march'

BUREAU REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid here on Wednesday said that the government would not create any hurdle for the Pakistan Democratic Movement's (PDM) long march.

Addressing the participants of a ceremony he said that the long march would result in political humiliation for the opposition alliance.

He said that he had previously asked the PDM to change the date of its march to some other day, as the leaders from different Muslim countries would be in the capital to attend an Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit on March 23 and also the Pakistan Day.

Continued on Page 06

Russia warns against sanctions on Putin

Taking questions from reporters on Tuesday, Mr Biden replied "yes" when asked whether he could see himself imposing sanctions on the Russian president personally

AGENCIES

MOSCOW: Russia hit back Wednesday at US threats of direct sanctions against President Vladimir Putin, saying moves against the Russian leader would be ineffective and hurt efforts to lower tensions over Ukraine.

Officials from France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine were set for talks in Paris on Wednesday in the latest bid to ease a crisis sparked by fears that Moscow is preparing an invasion of its pro-Western neighbour. The West has warned Russia of severe consequences if it does invade, and on Tuesday, Washington said there could be sanctions per-

sonally targeting Putin. Mr Biden said there would be "enor-

EU risks self-inflicted wound with sanctions

PARIS: Western powers may be united on imposing sanctions on Russia if it invades Ukraine, but they could be costly for Europe as it has vast economic ties with its bellicose neighbour. Russia is the European Union's third biggest source of imports after the United States and China, with the

Continued on Page 06

mous consequences" for the world if Russia made a move on the nation, which sits on its south-western border. Taking questions from reporters on Tuesday, Mr Biden replied "yes" when asked whether he could see himself imposing sanctions on the Russian president personally in the event of an invasion. Such a move across Ukraine's border would mean "enormous consequences worldwide" and could amount to "the largest invasion since World War Two", he said.

Reacting to the news, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov dismissed the threats as worthless because senior Russian officials are barred from holding assets abroad. But such a move, he said, would do serious damage to diplomatic efforts to ease ratcheting tensions over Ukraine.



f murreebrewery.com



Thursday, January 27, 2022

Transgender

killed, four hurt in

wedding firing

PESHAWAR: A transgender was killed and four others

injured when firing incident took place between two

groups during a wedding

party in Garera Shahjehan

Police said the incident oc-

curred late night the other

day wherein firing took

place among two groups

during a wedding ceremony.

As a result of indiscriminate

firing, a transgender belong-

ing to Charsadda district

was killed while four others

The enraged youth also

fired at the police vehicle

however the police person-

nel remain unhurt in the

firing. Police have arrested

the suspects and recorded

their statements for further

PTI gears

up election

campaign for LG polls

DIR LOWER: Pakistan

Tehreek-e-Insaaf has inten-

sified its campaign for the

second phase of local gov-

ernment elections as prom-

inent political figures of

other political parties have

announced to join PTI on

Bashir Khan expressed

these views in a ceremony

held at Rashakai village of

He congratulated the new

entrants of the party and

said that record developmen-

tal works have been initiat-

ing in three and a half years

while no other political party

worked since last four dec-

ades. He said that construc-

tion of two grid stations for

Samar Bagh and Maidan area

costing to Rs3 billion rupees

besides provision of trans-

formers and construction of

new roads were among few

Parliamentary

Mohammad

basis of its performance.

Federal

Secretary

tehsil Munda.

investigation. – APP

injured.

area of Bannu district.

Swat, Dir Motorways enter last stage

PESHAWAR: Swat Motorway Phase-II and Dir Motorway, the two game-changer com munication projects of the incumbent government, has entered into last stage of papers and technical work and its ground breaking would be performed soon.

After successful completion of 81-kilometers Swat Motorway Phase-I from Karnal Sher Khan interchange Swabi on Peshawar-Islamabad Motorway to Chakdara Lower Dir District with an estimated cost of Rs34 billion by the previous PTI Government, the Pakhtunkhwa Highway Authority (PkHA) has expedited preparations to initiate construction work on Swat Motorway Phase-II following completion of almost all technical and papers work.

The PkHA officials told APP on Wednesday that major technical and paper work on Swat Motorway Phase-II starting from Chakdara to Fatehpur Baghdehri Madain in Upper Swat, has been completed and its groundbreaking ceremony would be performed soon.

The project would be completed under Public Private Partnership mode and on completion would benefit people of KP especially Malakand, Swat, Dir Upper, Dir Lower, Shangla, Buner, Chitral Upper, Chitral Lower and Bajaur districts. The total length of Swat Motorway Phase-II is 80 kilometers and would be completed with an estimated cost of Rs 60.5 billion including Rs 20.5 billion cost for land acquisition and resettlement and Rs 37.2 billion construction. – APP

PESCO notifies power suspension

PESHAWAR: Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) Wednesday notified power suspension from January 27 to 31 from various grid stations of the province due to unavoidable

maintenance work. Power supply would remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar City Grid Station on January 27, 29, 31 from 9AM to 2PM, resultantly consumers of 11 KV Jhagra, Chughalpura, Nishtarabad, Chamkani 1 feeders would face inconvenience.

Similarly, power supply would remain suspended from 132 KV Rehman Baba Grid Station on January 27, 29, 31 from 9AM to 2PM, resultantly consumers of 11 KV Chamkani 2 feeders would face inconvenience. Power supply would remain suspended from 132 KV Nowshehra City Grid

Station on January 27 from 9AM to 4PM, resultantly consumers of 11 KV Pir Sabaq feeders would face inconvenience. - APP

Govt decides effective operation against drug addicts

launch an effective operaprovincial metropolis of this curse. The decision was tak-Khan here on Wednesday in Commissioner's House with Commissioner Peshawar General (DG) Excise, the law-enforcement agencies, the representatives of was told that presently over 50 women are present on

and other public places. For cleansing society of this curse, the participants of the meeting constructed a committee headed by an Assistant Commissioner (AC). The commissioner directed all departments and NGOs to give names of their focal persons for the purpose. On this occasion, the Commissioner also directed concerned authorities to make arrangements for 1500 addicts. -APP

roads, squares, graveyards

Briefs Dawood extends full support to FCCI for economic conference

Atif Munir Sheikh, President FCCI, he said that the economy is the mainstay of the country and it is very encouraging that people in general and the business community in particular is trying to supplement the Government's efforts to stabilize the national economy

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The Ministry of Commerce & Investment will fully cooperate with Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) to organize the first ever national level economic conference at Faisalabad during next month, said Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood, Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce & Investment.

In a meeting with Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he said that the economy is the mainstay of the country and it is very encouraging that people in general and the business community in par-



the Government's efforts to stabilize the national economy. He said that the gathering of the economic policy makers would certainly suggest viable proposals to catalyze the economic process in the country.

He accepted the offer of President FCCI to grace the inaugural session of this three days conference as chief guest.

He was optimistic that Prime Minister Imran Khan would also attend its concluding session to encourage the efforts of the FCCI for sustained and durable economic growth.

During this meeting Mr. Muhammad Azhar Chaudhary Chairman Host Committee of this conference was also present.

SBBWU playing key role in women empowerment: Dr Razia

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Vice Chancellor, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University (SBBWU), Professor Dr. Razia Sultana on Wednesday said that the university will be among the top 10 universities of Pakistan in next five years due to hard work and professional dedication of teach-

Addressing the annual convocation, she said that Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University was playing important role in women empowerment for the last 17 years.

She said that most of the faculty members in the university are PhD degree holders and highly qualified, adding main function of universities is to promote culture of research.

Professor Dr. Razia Sultana said that the university has produced 10 PhD and 60 M.Phil scholars in last two years which is great achievement of the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University.

She said presently the university was working on 29 research projects and university will present commercial products soon.

She said that Kamyab Jawan Program was also launched from the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University. Dr. Razia Sultana congratulated the

graduates for achieving a milestone

proud and said that the graduates of the university can compete not only in country but all over the world. She advised graduates must strive hard to become good professionals and human beings and must show tolerance in their professional and

and making their parents and teachers



BISE issues schedule for Matric Exams 2022

FAISALABAD: Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Faisalabad has issued schedule for submission of admission forms for Annual Matriculation Examinations 2022. According to BISE spokesman, Annual Matric Exams 2022 would commence from May 10, 2022 and for this purpose, the candidates could submit their admission forms with single fee from February 01 to 28, 2022.

The admission forms will be received with double fee from March 01 to 14 and the same can be submitted with triple fee from March 15 to 22, 2022.

The admission forms and all necessary details about submission of admission forms can be obtained from Matric Branch of the board whereas the same are also available at board website www.bisefsd.edu.pk, he added. He further said that BISE had fixed single fee of Rs.1145 for private candidates of Science group for Part-1 (9th class) exams while Rs.800 would be charged from regular students of the same group. Similarly, Rs.1095 will be charged as single fee from private students of ninth class arts group whereas single fee for regular students of this

He said that single fee for private students of 10th class science group would be Rs.1745 and Rs.1695 would be single fee for regular students of this group. Similarly, private candidates of 10th class arts group will pay Rs.1695 as single fee while Rs.1645 will be single fee for regular students of

milestone achieved in PTI Six more schools closed due to

Covid-19

PESHAWAR: The district adminstration Mardan on Wednesday closed six more schools for 10 days after positive reports of coronavirus cases among students. In the wake of increasing number of positive cases of Covid-19, the schools shut down include government higher secondary school Kati Garhi Katlang ,girls high school Lundkhor Takht Bhai, girls high school Bakri Banda city school junior Clcampus, girls high school Shamsi road and government girls middle school Baji gahar Mardan.

The district administration has issued instructions that persons who tested positive to remain quarantine for 14 days at their homes.

The employees of schools and students above 12 years age would be not allowed

without vaccination. The Tehsil Municipal Adminstration (TMA) has been instructed to conduct disinfectants spray at closed schools. - APP

JI demands CM's resignation over Murree tragedy

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: A petition filed by group leader Jamaat e Islami Murree through former president of Murree Bar Association Jalil Akhtar Abbasi and Asad Iqbal against the Punjab government and local administration over the loss of precious human lives in the recent snowfall in Murree was heard in the Lahore High Court Rawalpindi Bench, Representatives of all the concerned agencies, Commissioner Rawalpindi, WAP-DA, National Highways and Tourism Department appeared in the court of Justice Chaudhry Abdul Aziz. Rejecting the report submitted by the government, the lawyers said how, those responsible for the incident can inquire into it. Justice Chaudhry Abdul Aziz, while expressing his displeasure over non-submission of report to the concerned agencies regarding the incident, directed all the agencies to submit report at the next hearing. Later, the court adjourned the hearing till January 31. A large number of leaders and dignitaries of various political parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami, were also present on the occasion. Speaking to media after the hearing, Sufyan Abbasi said that the main reason for the accident in Murree is the negligence of the institutions. We demand immediate resignation of the Chief Minister of Punjab and the responsible persons and also demanded that FIR on criminal charges be registered against the responsible persons of the concerned agencies for negligence. He further said that roads in Murree are still closed due to snowfall, the entire area is in darkness due to load shedding. He further said that the elected leadership of PTI has also failed miserably in fulfilling its responsibility.

Barrister Saif inaugurates Covid-19 PCR test center

"The rapid rise in the Corona rate is a major challenge for all of us and the provincial government is taking all possible steps to address this challenge"

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations, Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif Wednesday inaugurated the Covid-19 PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) Test Center at Khyber Medical University (KMU) Peshawar.

Vice-Chancellor KMU, Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq, Director KMU Public Health Reference Lab (PHRL) Dr. Yasir Yousafzai, Director Institute of Pathology and Diagnostic Medicine Dr. Asif Ali. and other concerned officials were also present on the occasion.

Talking to the media after the inauguration, Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif said "The rapid rise in the Corona rate is a major challenge for all of us and the provincial government is taking all possible steps to address this chal-

He said "The services rendered by KMU-PHRL in connection with corona tests are commendable and now the management of PCR tests within the university will not only help in reducing the rush regarding tests at hospitals but there will also be more secure and free diagnostic facilities available to the people at this center.

Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif said"We are proud of the public services that KMU is rendering in dealing with



the Corona pandemic by establishing of Corona Vaccination Center and PHRL."

He said "Not only large scale vaccination is necessary to prevent a rapid increase in the rate of Corona but also conducted in KMU-PHRL and 4000-6000 tests are conducted here on daily basis. He said that PHRL has been carrying out PCR tests since the beginning of the first wave of Covid 19 and during the last two years, 20 Co-

timely utilization of PCR test facilities

Earlier, vice-chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia

ul Haq while briefing the Special As-

sistant to the Chief Minister for Infor-

mation and Public Relations said that

so far 1.12 million tests have been

could be helpful in this regard."

rona test labs have been set up in the province from D.I. Khan up to Chitral. He added that 13 of these labs have been set up in the public and 7 in the private sector. He said that PHRL has a highly trained staff and in addition to different variants, genome sequencing facilities are also available here. In the end, the vice-chancellor Prof.

Dr. Zia ul Haq presented the University shield to Special Assistant for Information Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif and thanked him for visiting

PESHAWAR: The provincial government has decided to tion against drug addicts from next week to clean the en during a meeting held on the special directives of the Chief Minister Mahmood Riaz Khan Mehsud in the chair. Besides, the Director higher authorities of the district administration and social welfare department, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also attended the meeting. The meeting 1000 addicts including over

Commercialization of agri projects imperative: Fakhar Imam

The govt was giving incentive to cotton growers and for the first time, during last 8 years, minimum purchase price of cotton had been fixed at Rs 5000 per 40 kg

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Syed Fakhar Imam said on Wednesday that commercialization of agriculture projects was imperative to enhance overall yield, coupled with reaching the fruits of new technological inventions at grass roots level.

Addressing a meeting of agri scientists at Ayub Agricultural Research Institute (AARI) here, he enumerated the agriculture setup of Pakistan and said that no doubt Pakistan was predominantly an agrarian economy. "We have 196 million acres of total land, out of which, 50 million is being tilled and out of it, 75 percent is used for wheat cultivation. We have 5 major crops including wheat, cotton, rice, maize and sugarcane for which our scientists must focus on value addition which will certainly enhance the income of farmers and play a major role in weeding out rural poverty", he observed.

He said that last year Pakistan harvested 7 million bales of cotton, whereas, 9 million bales were expected this year.

Due to this additional 2 million bales, "We will add Rs 200 billion extra income to our agriculture sector". He said: "Textile has a loin share in our overall exports and we are planning to enhance our exports up to 30 billion dollars, out of which, textile share has been fixed at 17 percent.

He said the government was giving incentive to cotton growers and for the first time, during last 8 years, minimum purchase price of cotton had been fixed at Rs 5000 per 40 kg. He said the government was also

trying to enhance the yield of soya bean for which new technology was imperative as China had exploited this factor to stabilize its overall economy.

He said that fruits of agriculture research must be trickled down to farmers as it would not only enhance per acre yield but also cut down the production cost.

He urged upon the agriculture scientists to play their constructive role to enhance agriculture production and different varieties must be identified for different zones on agro-logical ba-



sis in order to get maximum yield of that particular crop.

Earlier, Chief Scientist AARI Dr Akthar said that Pakistan was fourth largest country in sugarcane production, 5th in cotton, 6th in mango and guava, 7th in wheat and 10th largest country in rice production. He said that AARI had so far introduced 659 varieties of different crops for cultivation including 90 verities of wheat, 58 of cotton, 32 of pulses and 28 varieties of sugarcane. He said that more than 15 ISO certified laboratories of AARI were also extending services to check the quality and efficacy of pesticide and fertilizer. Out of total samples, 3 % samples each of pesticides and fertilizers were found spurious, he added. The meeting was also attended by Chief Executive Officer Punjab Agriculture Research Board (PARB), Deputy Director Research Information Dr Asif Ali and others

Later, the federal minister also visited National Institute for Biotechnology & Genetic Engineering (NIBGE) and Nuclear Institute for Agriculture & Biology (NIAB) where he was briefed about the performance of these institutions.

Islamabad POST

Available in following cities

ISLAMABAD 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

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr	05:42 am
Zohr	12:20 pm
Asr	03:55 pm
Maghrib	05:33 pm
Isha	06:59 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 Aml	oulance1122	
& Rescue Servi	ices.4451122	
Motorway Polic	e9266044	
Motorway Police9270601-20		
Women Polic	e Stations	
Islamabad	9222596	
Rawalnindi	9270601-20	

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



Hospitals

CMH	5611111
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital.	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa Internation	nal.4603666



Denartments

Depart	
CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Bo	oard 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-12,9266316 Wapda Islamabad....9217579 Wapda Rawalpindi 111-309-309

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation	3203224
Potohar Town	9209224
RawalTown	5773343

Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....0331-5022125

Ehsaas Taleemi Wazaif App to empower millions

UNICEF Country Representative, Aida Girma said, "I would like to commend the Govt of Pakistan for prioritizing the Ehsaas programme"

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Protection, Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar Wednesday said Ehsaas Taleemi Wazaif mobile app will empower millions of Ehsaas beneficiary families to self-register their children at their doorsteps.

"This digitization is a result of massive hard work coupled with digital and reformative actions adapted over the last three years to ensure integrity and inclusion", she said while reflecting on the recent launch of Ehsaas Taleemi Wazaif application.

ISLAMABAD: The implementation Com-

mittee on Diamer Basha and Mohmand

Dams (ICDBMD) met on Wednesday here

at ICDBMD Secretariat to review progress

on these two multi-purpose mega projects.

The ICDBMD was constituted by the Su-

preme Court of Pakistan way back in July

2018 for early commencement and timely

completion of Diamer Basha and Mohmand

Dams, said a press release. Since its incep-

tion, the Committee holds its meetings after

regular intervals. The meeting was presided

over by Pakistan Water and Power Devel-

opment Authority (WAPDA) and ICDBMD

Chairman Lt Gen Muzammil Hussain (Retd).

In addition to the Ministry of Water Re-

Dr. Sania was speaking at a high-level panel discussion with country heads of international development partners to celebrate the launch of Ehsaas Taleemi Wazaif app, hosted by Ehsaas.. The event was themed

cash transfers in improving Human Capital Development in Pakistan". Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar, SAPM chaired the event. Discussions profoundly resonated with the theme of International Education Day 2022, "Changing Course, Transforming Education".

Expert panelists were-Dr. Christian Turner, British High Commissioner to Pakistan; Najy Benhassine,

Committee on Diamer Basha, Mohmand

sources Joint Secretary and ICDBMD Sec-

retary Syed Muhammad Mehar Ali Shah.

Joint Secretary (Budget) Finance, Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Secretary Board of Rev-

enue, NHA Member North Zone, Deputy

Secretary Prime Minister's Office, Diamer

Astore Commissioner and Planning Com-

mission Deputy Chief attended the meeting

on behalf of ICDBMD respective members.

WAPDA Members, Secretary and senior

officers were also present on the occasion.

Welcoming the participants, WAPDA / ICDB-

MD Chairman said that the Implementation

Committee has been tremendously contribut-

ing towards implementation of Diamer Basha

and Mohmand Dams. Reiterating his com-



cash transfer programmes. The fully digital, Ehsaas Stipends/Ehsaas Taleemi Wazaif programme was widely lauded. Felicitating the successful launch of Ehsaas Taleemi Wazaif app, Dr. Christian Turner, British High Commissioner stated, "What is happening with Ehsaas is quite extraordinary,

mitment for completion of the both projects

as early as possible, he apprised the meeting

that WAPDA is carrying out construction ac-

tivities on the projects day in and day out to

match the timelines despite COVID-19 pan-

demic that has negatively impacted the whole

world. At present, construction work is con-

tinuing as many as 13 sites of Mohmand Dam

and 10 sites of Diamer Basha Dam, he added.

The Chairman also updated the participants

of the impediments in the way to smooth

execution of Diamer Basha and Mohmand

Dams including COVID-19, financial flows,

emerging security scenario, land acquisi-

tion and completion of critical stretch of

relocated Karakoram Highway in case of

intervention. Country Director the World Bank, Najy Benhassine commended the Taleemi Wazaif of Ehsaas and said, "Our new strategy for Pakistan in the coming 5 years is targeted on girls' education. We support Ehsaas Taleemi

groundbreaking and at

speed with transformative

Wazaif, expansion of the conditional cash transfer programme and education system as a whole.'

We are pleased to know that the Government is expanding the conditional cash transfer programme across the country", said Country Director ADB, Yong Ye. UNICEF Country Representative, Aida Girma said, "I would like to commend the Government of Pakistan for prioritizing the Ehsaas programme."

Government of Pakistan's Ehsaas Taleemi Wazaif aims at providing financial assistance to those at the bottom of the pyramid for the education of their children up to higher secondary level.

Dams meets

Diamer Basha Dam. Though the recovery

plans are in place, the impediments, if not

addressed to by the quarters concerned,

may adversely affect the timelines set for

completion of the projects, the Chairman

concluded. Later, WAPDA Member (Fi-

nance) briefed the meeting of the matters

relating to financial close of the two projects

vis-vis foreign exchange component, as well

General Manager (Land Acquisition & Reset-

tlement), General Manager (Diamer Basha

Dam) and General Manager (Mohmand Dam)

also made presentations to the participants

about the progress and the issues regarding

Diamer Basha and Mohmand Dams.- APP

as financial needs and financial flows.

PM wishes Mahathir a speedy recovery

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday prayed for the speedy recovery of former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. "My prayers and good wishes go to my friend Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his speedy recovery," he said in a tweet. The former Malaysian prime minister is in stable condition after being admitted to a specialist heart hospital for the third time in just weeks, according to his daughter. The 96-vear-old has been receiving treatment at the National Heart Institute in Kuala Lumpur for the past two days, Marina Mahathir said.

Pak earns US \$228m from travel services

ISLAMABAD: earned US \$228.991 million by providing different travel services in various countries during the first five months of the current financial year 2021-22.

This shows the growth of 35.40 percent as compared to the US \$169.120 million same services were provided during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year 2020-21, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. During the month under review, the personal travel services increased by 35.42 percent, from the US \$168.400 million last year to the US \$228.051 million during July-November 2021. Among these personal services, the exports of personal expenditure rose by 111.76 percent while the education-related expenditure increased by 7.40 percent.- APP

National Metrological Institute Bill 2022 passed

ISLAMABAD: The National Metrological Institute Bill, 2022 was passed unanimously in a meeting of the on Science and Technology on Wednesday held here. The meeting was chaired

by Senator Afnan Ullah Khan and attended by Senator Fawzia Arshad, Senator Sana Jamali, Senator Muhammad Humayun Mohmand and senior officers of the Ministry Science and Technology, National Physical and Standards Laboratory along with all concerned. Minister for Science and Technology, Senator Syed Shibli Faraz was also present. Reviewing the contents and for testing and calibraof the Bill, the Committee tion of standards and equippointed out certain typo- ment. NPSL deals with the graphical errors; other than establishment of infrastructhat there was consensus in ture of meteorology to imprinciple that this Bill was overdue and it was a pity that it has been pending

since a quarter century. The Committee was briefed that the National Physical and Standards Laboratory (NPSL) was established roughly four decades ago under Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR), through a project as a national apex body for the maintenance of primary and secondary standards of measurement

plement and operate a unified and coherent national measurement system as per international requirements and practices for quality assurance and management system and to support legal metrology in Pakistan.

The organization also caters to a limited number of fields of metrology i.e. the science of measurements which includes mass, length, time and frequency, electrical, thermal and pressure measurements. - APP

IT Ministry supporting KI Innovation League

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication is extending all possible support for the success of Kamyab Jawan Innovation League project. "Objective of the programme is to empower the youth of the country, the proiect Innovation Challenge will be held for students of universities and colleges across the country," said an official of the Ministry of IT. – **APP**

Locally assembled mobile phones reach record high

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has surpassed imports and achieved self-reliance in local assembling of mobile phones of almost all major brands. In calendar year 2021, local manufacturing plants produced 24.66 million mobile devices, compared to 13.05 million in 2020, marking an 88 percent increase. Commercial smartphone imports fell to 10.26 million in 2021, down from 24.51 million in 2020, according to official data from the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA). In December 2021, the number of locally manufactured/assembled smartphones climbed by 2.54 million, bringing the total production for the calendar year to 24.66 million. The production of mobile phones by local manufacturing plants has more than doubled against the import in the country during 2021. According to Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) data the local manufacturing trend reflects a positive uptake on the PTA's Mobile Device Manufacturing (MDM) Authorization regulatory regime, with local manufacturing resulting in the production of 24.66 million phones in a short span of one year, including 10.06 million 4G smartphones. The successful implementation of the Device Identification Registration and Blocking System (DIRBS) along with conducive government policies including the mobile manufacturing policy has created a favorable environment for mobile handset manufacturing in Pakistan. - Agencies

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Argentine Republic Leopoldo Francisco

Sahores presents a football designed for the occasion of 70 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Argentina to Editor Daily Islamabad POST and CENTRELINE Ansar Mahmood Bhatti on the occasion of latter's visit to the Argentine embassy. - DNA

NAB briefs PAC about total recovery

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Wednesday examined appropriation accounts for the year 2018-19 (grant no 81. National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and NAB briefed the committee about its total recovery.

The meeting was held at the Parliament House under the chairmanship of MNA Rana Tanveer Hussain.

The meeting was attended by committee members including Munaza Hassan, Senator Sherry Rehman, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Shahida Akhtar Ali, Mushahid Ali Syed, Syed Hasnain Tariq, Sheikh Rohale, Shibli Faraz, Sved Naveed Qamar and senior officials of relevant government de-Rana Tanveer partments. Hussain said that corona-

virus was spreading widely

so implementation of SOPs

should be ensured in PAC meeting. He said that the Chairman NAB had also contracted with coronavirus. He had asked to adjourn the meeting for 15 days. Director General NAB Hasnain Ahmed said that the Chairman NAB was ready to attend the meeting but unfortunately his test for coronavirus was found positive. The Committee was informed that NAB has recovered more than Rs 821 billion by October 2021, adding that more than Rs 26 billion was recovered voluntarily while more than Rs 50 billion was recovered under plea bargain. The recovery was made in the form of cash, land and other properties. More than Rs. 500 billion has been recovered directly from various departments. Earlier in the meeting, Fateha was also offered for the departed soul of father of PAC member Hina Rabbani Khar

JANUARY 2022

Pakistan's Premier News & **Diplomatic Affairs Magazine**

Find us on: www.centreline.com.pk www.dnanews.com.pl www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@Postislamabad/@Editordnanews

A sister concern of

11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza, G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165



Briefs

Economy showing upward trends

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said on Wednesday that despite Covid-19, global high inflation and other economic challenges, Pakistan has sustainable growth rate of 5.37 per cent. In a tweet, the minister said exports, tax collection and agricultural produce showed upward trends.

He said that the first half of the fiscal year, IT exports increased by 35.8 per cent, FBR tax recovery by 32.4 per cent whereas State Bank of Pakistan reserves by 31.8 percent. Textile exports, he said increased by 26 per cent, services exports by 20.4 per cent, remittances increased by 13.3 per cent. Agriculture crops including cotton, rice, sugarcane, wheat and maize production increased which brought additional income of billions of rupees to the farmer community and their purchasing power has also increased. – APP

Rs 353.119 million for ANF academy

ISLAMABAD: The government has allocated funds amounting to Rs353.119 million to acquire two plots for construction of Anti Nar cotics Force (ANF) Academy in H-11/1 sector of the federal capital.

The federal government has earmarked Rs489.393 million in the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2021-22) for the projects being executed by the Narcotics Control Division. Out of total, the government has so far released Rs244.697 million funds. As per the official document, the government has also allocated Rs4.5 million for the acquisition of land for the construction of ANF Police Station at Hub, Balochistan. Rs131.774 million would be spent for construction of Model Addiction Treatment and Rehabilitation Center (MATRC) in Islamabad. - APP

Pakistan Railways retrieve land

Railways has retrieved land worth Rs 4725.796 million from the illegal occupants during the last one year in operation against the land grabbers across the coun-"The encroachment operation is launched with the assistance of railway police and district administration of the provincial government," an official in the Ministry of Railways said. He said Pakistan Railways has retrieved over 502 acres precious land worth billion of rupees from illegal occupants under its anti-encroachment operation across the country during the present government tenure. Giving details, the official said the department retrieved 258 acres land in Punjab, 129 acres from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 97 acres from Sindh and 18 acres from Balochistan. To a question, he said that more than 5,000 acres of Railways' land was under encroachment in Sindh and currently in the use of different individuals, groups and even business organisations. – APP

Tanzara Gallery to organize exhibition

ISLAMABAD: Tanzara Art Gallery would organize an exhibition titled 'Being and Becoming' by Zaam Arif, an American -Pakistani contemporary artist residing and working in Houston, Texas on Thursday.

Noshi Qadir, Tanzara Gallery official said that the works in Zaams first solo exhibition titled "Being and Becoming" at Tanzara are far more than a series of portraits. Each work is a deep exploration of the ontological existence of the human by the societal systems. He confronts it with a penetrating interpretation of human nature, transforming it into a visceral reality. The 21 oil and canvas paintings on display, explore much of the same ground. Zaam expresses his understanding of the contemporary human condition along with insights garnered. - APP

ISSI organizes workshop on cyber technologies, AI

The second day was opened with remarks by Dr Cécile Aptel, Deputy Director, UNIDIR, who said that Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) are at the heart of the discussion at the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE)

ISLAMABAD: The Arms Control & Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organised a Two Day Online Workshop "Cyber Technologies, Artificial Intelligence and International Security' in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), Geneva on January 24-25. The theme of the second day of the workshop was "Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy.

The second day was opened with remarks by Dr Cécile Aptel, Deputy Director, UNIDIR, who said that Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) are at the heart of the discussion at the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE). It is important to discuss the legal and ethical implications of

developments in the field of LAWS. She highlighted the technical complexities that states have to grapple with LAWS and autonomy, the importance of discussing the dual-use nature of the technology and its implications for international security. Session I on "Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy 101" was moderated by Ms Ioana Puscas, Researcher, UNIDIR. Speakers included Dr Yasar Ayaz, CPD/Chairman at National Center of Artificial Intelligence (NCAI) & Professor of AI & Robotics at NUST, Islamabad, and Dr Giacomo Persi Paoli, Head of Programme, UNIDIR. Mr Paoli explained key concepts involved in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and autonomy. AI systems range from deterministic that are fully predictable to Non-Deterministic that are less pre-

dictable. Talking about the

role of humans in AI he said



control i.e. no autonomy, to humans in the loop where humans need to validate and humans in the loop where humans intervene if necessary. Dr Ayaz spoke on how can AI be used for the benefit of humans. It is already been used widely in finance, judiciary and medical science in Pakistan. He underscored how it is a transformative technology with immense economic benefits. AI software market revenue world-

in 2021 and is expected to increase. Countries are investing hundreds of billions of dollars in AI.

Session II on "AI, Autonomy and UN" was moderated by Mr Usman Jadoon, Director General. UN Division. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan. Speakers included Ms Aamna Rafiq, Research Associate, ACDC-ISSI, and Ms Ioana Puscas, Researcher, UNIDIR. Ms Puscas said that discussions started on

and 11 guiding principles were adopted in 2019. She identified two distinct positions that have emerged at the UN - one that endorses the need to develop specific law in the contest of Autonomous Weapons Systems (AWS) and the second position endorses non-legally binding instruments. While there is agreement on the need for compliance with international humanitarian law, no consensus was reached over substantive matters of the 2021 GGE meeting. Ms Rafiq discussed the way forward based on the 11 principles that have been adopted at GGE. She highlighted the need for implementation mechanisms and proposals for implementation at the UN like the national legal reviews and establishing links between national and international regulations. Session III on "Black Box

Understanding of AI Systems" was moderated by Dr Giacomo Persi Paoli, Head of Programme, UNIDIR. Speakers were Major General (Retd.) Ausaf Ali, Advisor Strategic Plans Division, Pakistan, and Dr Pascale Fung, Director, Centre for Artificial Intelligence Research, Professor, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. Maj. Gen. Ali in his presentation stated that predictability and understandability are widely held to be the vital qualities of AI systems and represents an important point among the many different parties to the debate on emerging technologies in the area of LAWS and other forms of military AI. He also raised concerns regarding the AI system including extensive use in military applications, absence of legal framework, open-source access to AI system and third Unlocked: Predictability and part risk amongst others.

achievement of PTI govt DNA ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) Senator Faisal Javed Khan on Wednesday said that universal health coverage was the biggest achievement of the PTI government, even country like USA could not provide this facility to its citizens.

Health

coverage biggest

In a statement, congratulating people of Islamabad on issuance of Health Card, he said that after Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, every family in Punjab, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Balochistan and Tharparkar would now have access to free medical treatment up to one million rupees.

Faisal Javed who is also Chairman of Senate Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting, said that Sindh government was also offered cooperation, but they do not care about the people. He expressed the hope that PTI would come to power there and would give health card to every family in Sindh province.

Nosham technical reportin final phase

ISLAMABAD: The geological experts have completed mapping of Nosham area of Balochistan under a coal exploration and evaluation project, and now "the compilation of geological maps and technical report is in progress and near completion." "Initial study of maps, toposheets, aerial photographs and satellite imageries has been completed and the data has been transferred from aerial photographs/satellite imageries onto toposheets." according to an official report available with APP.

The Rs42.318 million project titled "Exploration and Evaluation of Coal in Nosham and Bahlol Areas, Balochistan" had been approved in 2017. As per the project update, drilling of three borehole at Nosham area, Barkhan District has been completed to the cumulative depth of 778 meters, where coal seams encountered at different depths.

Making advancement in the project, the experts have also completed geological logging of exploratory borehole/logs, besides concluding geophysical survey (Resistivity) in the project area.

The experts have measured five stratigraphic sections, following which compilation of the field data, analyzed and integrated at field labs items to prepare the required geological maps, was initiated. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ahmed Ameen Rabaie, Ambassador of Palestine received Prof. Dr. Muhammad Farooque Hassan Vice Chancellor of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences Sakrand at the Embassy. The visit was very fruitful as the ambassador and Vice chancellor discussed very important matters of bilateral relations. - DNA

RTA accelerates operation against SOPs' violators

Regional Transport Authority (RTA) Rawalpindi on the directives of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Tahir Farooq, has accelerated its ongoing operation against Covid-19 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) violators. According to Secretary, RTA Rawalpindi Rashid Ali, the authority on the directives of the DC had launched a campaign to ensure implementation of the SOPs to control spread of Covid-19 cases. He said the teams of the authority were conducting raids and checking implementation of the SOPs at different routes while those found indulged in violations of the SOPs were fined and the vehicles were also being impounded. Mobile squads were also performing duties at different public transport terminals and at various routes to facilitate the people, he said adding, the operation would

continue and the vehicles found involved in violating the SOPs would be imposed fines or impounded. RTA teams inspected various buses and public transport vehicles (PSVs) at different routes and impounded 24 vehicles in violation of Corona virus SOPs besides imposing fines amounting to Rs 32,000

during last three days. He urged the citizens to follow the SOPs and adopt all possible precautionary measures against coronavirus. It is pertinent to mention here that despite a surge in Covid-19 cases (fast-spreading Omicron variant) in Rawalpindi district, the public transport, especially the van and Suzuki pick up based transport, poses a serious threat to the residents due to non-compliance with the SOPs as social distancing for prevention of coronavirus pandemic are being violated despite warnings and fines by the authorities concerned. The district administration is taking actions against the transporters, shopping plazas, marriage halls, restaurants and other public places for not following all the precautionary measures.

A large number of vehicles were being inspected and fines were imposed by RTA Rawalpindi but still, the transporters, drivers, and passengers are not fully following the SOPs which may cause danger to the health system. The majority of the citizens are not observing social distancing in the local transport and the transporters are just concerned about earning money through accommodating maximum passengers in a van or Suzuki pickups. Hundreds of vans and Suzuki pickups are plying as public transport and hundreds of passengers have no options except for using these over-crowded vehicles on different routes. - APP

Pakistan Science Expo postponed

ISLAMABAD: The two-day Pakistan Science Expo earlier scheduled to be arranged by Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) from January 28 has been postponed due to the NCOC latest guidelines to avoid the spread of COV-ID-19. According to an official of PSF, the foundation is continuously in coordination with NCOC and will announce the new dates of the expo soon. The preparations for the expo were completed by PSF including the registration of around 120 stalls carrying innovative science and technology related products. The expo was aimed at encouraging collaboration among the government, industry and academia through providing a platform for organizations to showcase their accomplishments in the field of Science, Technology and

Role of women inevitable in civilized society's construction

Ashrafi said the parents should not underestimate their daughters as they were being called 'Bushra' (good news) in the holy Quran

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's aide on interfaith harmony Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi Wednesday said the role of women in the construction of a civilized society was inevitable. He was addressing a seminar for female on 'The Role of Aalimat in Creating Peace in the Society' organized by Shari'ah Academy of International Islamic University Islamabad as a 'guest speaker'. Ashrafi termed Hazrat Khadijaul Kubra as role model for women because she was the first lady who testified the Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him" as the Prophet of Allah Almighty. He said there was no need for the women to be confined within the four walls of the house as Hazrat Khadijatul Kubra was a dominated figure in the business community of Makkah and the Holy Prophet happily tied the knot



with her. He urged the women to come ahead and prove your mettle in all spheres of life as neither Islam forbid women from education nor trade. Further shedding the light on the significance of women in the Islamic his-

tory, he said the four caliph of Islam - Hazrat Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and

Ali used to consult with Syeda Fatima, Hafsa and Aysha over certain issues. Ashrafi quoted a living example from his private persona of life and said my strength was my daughters. He said at a certain juncture of his

37-year political and religious life, he wanted to leave all his activities but his daughters raised his morale saying they did not want to see him a coward man but a bold person. He said, "Those words infused a new spirit in my life and today, what I am, it is because of my mother, wife and daughters," he added. Ashrafi said the parents should not underestimate their daughters as they were being called 'Bushra' (good news) in the holy Quran. Moreover, Allah Almighty had revealed a complete chapter 'Suratul Nisa' about women in the divine command, he added. - APP

hundred years old and were used as route to Gandharan City of Taxila. Karim Ahmed, a visitor said that this place is very peaceful and calm, adding that he always enjoy visiting here with his family. The fresh water spring is also close to the caves which further increase the beauty and attraction of the site. Few food outlets were also available near the caves which facilitate the visitors with fresh snakes and foods. A food outlet owner said that people are coming to Shah Alla Dita caves and particularly on weekend more peo-

ple visit this place. According to Capital Development Authority (CDA), relics of the Buddhist era dating back to the 8th century can be found here along with burnt diyas and trees with amulets tied to them. These caves are next to the shrine and tomb of Shah Allah Ditta. The caves were also known as the "Sadhu ka Bagh" "Losar Baoli" or Stepwell nearby way up in the Margalla Hills. The site present number of small spots to see,

it is a nice place also for family picnic.

Shah Alla Ditta

caves attract visitors

The caves were also known as the

"Sadhu ka Bagh", "Losar Baoli"

or Stepwell nearby way up in the

Margalla Hills The site present

number of small spots to see, it is

a nice place also for family picnic

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Shah Allah Ditta a centuries old Bud-

dhist caves located at the foothills of the Margalla

Hills in federal capital was attracting a large number

of visitors. The Buddhist caves were believed to be

Archaeological evidence indicates that the caves and the platform-like formations surrounding the area were first used for meditation by Buddhist monks and later by Hindu Sadhus before Muslim ascetics took over during the Mughal period. The caves were surrounded by the great Margalla hills which increase the beauty of this area.



Murree Brewery Company Limited located in Rawalpindi is an icon reflecting the past and the present history of the subcontinent.

Murree Brewery Company is pleased to invite friends from diplomatic missions to visit us and share the experience of our efforts towards keeping it afloat for over 160 years of operation.

We cordially invite diplomatic missions to visit us on any Saturday from 10 am to 1:30 pm to enjoy our hospitality and our products tasting. However, since, we are located in the Red Zone / Prohibited area and it will be mandatory to obtain No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs well in advance of the intended visit date. We look forward to welcoming you all soon.

For further information please contact the following.

Maj (r) Sabih Ur Rehman Mobile: 0300 8553342

Fertiliser shortage protests

N its attempts to pile on pressure on the ruling government, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has announced that it would stage a sit-in outside Karachi Press Club on Jan 30 to protest against massive hike in the prices of essential products, including petrol and electricity, and also against shortage of gas and fertiliser in the country. This announcement was made during the Kissan March which was held in Karachi and other parts of Sindh on the appeal of PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari to protest against urea shortage and other economic hardships faced by the growers in the country. The agricultural sector has been suffering in recent years and especially during the pandemic as Pakistan faces serious food insecurity challenges. Compounding these issues are the effects of climate change as crop yields have been adversely affected. The situation is made more severe by already strained water availability that is expected to worsen over the coming decades. The PPP is attempting to spin the narrative that the PTI government is insensitive to the plight of farmers and is responsible for the current urea shortage. Leaders of the PPP have stated that these protests along with the farmers will continue in the province till February 27 when Mr Bhutto-Zardari would lead a long march from the city to Islamabad against the government.

The grievances of the farmers are legitimate as they claim that they have not been getting adequate prices for their produce and are now being forced to stand in lines and pay high prices for sourcing fertiliser. This strategy could work well for the PPP in terms of applying further pressure on the PTI government given the street power farmers possess. Perhaps the opposition party is also taking inspiration from the protests that took place across the border.

The government must look into how these grievances of the farmers can be addressed. Attempts at gaslighting the victims or shifting blame on them—as was witnessed in a recent National Assembly session last week—will not do the ruling government any favours and will only further inflame the situation.

Islamabad POST

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 223
Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com
Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960



Pakistan railways' initiatives

HERE have been three significant developments this month, with regards to Pakistan Railways. Firstly, and more recently, a freight train service has been launched to link Karachi port with the rest of Pakistan. The details of the freight train service include the commissioning of a 3.7km, high-tech train track laid at the Hutchison Ports Pakistan connecting the facility to the rest of the country through the Pakistan Railways extensive network spread throughout the country. The second development took place in early January, with the inauguration of the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) freight train at Margalla railway station, where ambassadors of Turkey, Iran, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan were present on the occasion. Thirdly, on January 11, Pakistan Railways launched the country's first reefer freight train, aiming to provide economical and environment-friendly freight solutions. These are significant developments. The establishment of the ITI track is a promotion of Pakistan's foreign policy goal of regional connectivity and is an important milestone for the friendship of three for three Muslim countries Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey. It is also a stepping stone for international trade for Pakistan and paves the way for more such international tracks to be built.

The linking of the Karachi port with the rest of the country is also highly important—Karachi, as any port city is for all countries, is imperative for all business, commerce or trade. A freight track linking the port to other business centres of the country, like Lahore, Multan and Faisalabad, is an absolute necessity, and should have been in place sooner. While these developments were much needed, it is regrettable that they did not take place earlier. Now that these milestones have been reached, it is important that the government keep a check to ensure they are being carried out properly. There are several issues with the functioning of Pakistan Railways—long-distance freight and passenger trains have considerable delays. The signaling system is insufficient for the current operations, and neither is the telecommunication system. There is low night visibility, restricted train speed, and no backup system. These issues must be fixed if any of these initiatives are to be successful.

America's simmering Hindutva extremism problem

CJ Werleman

Narsinghanand is not only the head priest of the Dasna Devi temple in Uttar Pradesh, but is also widely considered a leader of the Hindu nationalist or Hindutya movement

WNDANCE'S 'powerful' doc 'Jihad Rehab' is US propaganda 20 years too late. The Biden administration, whether aware or not, is aiding and abetting the reach and influence of Hindu nationalist groups through associated charity organisations. After nearly a full month of domestic and international pressure, Yati Narsinghanand, one of the Hindu extremists who organised an event in Haridwar, India, that called for the genocide of Muslims, was arrested by authorities, following intervention by the Supreme Court.

Narsinghanand is not only the head priest of the Dasna Devi temple in Uttar Pradesh, but is also widely considered a leader of the Hindu nationalist or Hindutva movement. He routinely spews venomous hate towards religious minorities, saying in 2019, "Islam should be eradicated from Earth," and "all Muslims should be eliminated".

On the eve of the deadly 2020 Delhi Riots, which left more than 50 Muslims hacked, burned and shot to death, he urged supporters to "finish off Islam"

ers to "finish off Islam".

Narsinghanand, and the Hindutva movement he supports and leads, is why human rights experts, including Dr Gregory Stanton, founder of Genocide Watch, have warned that the "preparation for genocide is underway in India and Kashmir". He recently described the Hariday in the conference as an

"incitement to genocide".

But the arrest of Narsinghanand not only has implications for India but also the Unit-

ed States, where Hindu nationalist groups have been allowed to operate freely and prosperously as tax-exempt religious and charity organisations.

One such organisation is the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHPA) – the US-based informal affiliate of India's VHP, which operates as the religious wing of the Hindu nationalist paramilitary outfit Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a million-member army that draws its inspiration from Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party and other European fascist movements of the 20th Century.

In 2018, the CIA identified the VHP as a "religious militant organisation," responsible for extremist violence.

Last year, the VHPA invited Narsinghanand to be its keynote speaker for an online event, as part of a series of speeches and sermons to celebrate the Hindu festival of Chaitra Navrati. His invite was later cancelled, after Hindus for Human Rights collected hundreds of signatures, calling upon "people of conscience to stand up to Hindutva and all hate perpetuated in the name of religion".

Rutgers University Professor Audrey Truschke, a scholar in Hindu-Muslim relations in South Asia, slammed the VHPA for inviting Narsinghanand, saying: "Hosting someone who calls for genocide is unacceptable for US-based non-profits." She called the would-be event: "Another step – a somewhat extreme step – in the acceleration of #Hindut-va hate by US organisations."

So how are these Hindu extremist organisations flying under the radar in the United States, especially given that the Biden administration has made countering "domestic extremism" a top national priority?

Last year, Biden unveiled an unprecedented national strategy to counter domestic extremism, which included a priority to confront "the longstanding drivers of domestic terrorism: racism and bigotry". Yet somehow, Hindu nationalist groups calling for the genocide of religious minorities as a means to transform India into a Hindu-only country, have escaped his attention.

Worse – the Biden administration is either unwittingly or knowingly aiding and abetting

the reach and influence of Hindu nationalist groups, as revealed in a recent investigation by journalist Raqib Hameed Naik. He discovered that the US government doled out nearly \$1 million in Covid-19 relief aid to five organisations tied to the Hindu nationalist movement, including the VHPA, which received more than \$170,000 in US taxpayer-funded assistance in 2020. In other words, the US government handed \$170,000 to an affiliate of an organisation that the US has accused of extremist violence..

Each of these organisations has either direct or informal ties with the RSS, whose founder, MS Golwalkar, accused Muslims and Christians of being "traitors" and "internal threats", while suggesting that they should be "purged" from India, the same way Hitler ethnically cleansed Jews from Germany.

The failure of the US government to identify and condemn Hindu nationalist organisations has blinded the American public into misbelieving that they are representative of the Hindu religion or Indian secular democratic values, despite some of these groups, including the HAF, openly declaring that: "Hindutva is not the same thing as Hinduism." Last year, then-Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey pledged \$2.5 million to Sewa International as part of a \$15 million donation for coronavirus relief efforts in India, while internal communications at Google and Microsoft reveal management at the two tech giants encouraged employees to donate to the Hindu nationalist "charity".

Do they know that Sewa International was stripped of its charity registration in the United Kingdom, after an investigation revealed it raised money from British donors in 2002 for earthquake relief, but instead funnelled funds to Hindu nationalist organisations responsible for the 2002 Gujarat Riots, which left up to 2,000 Muslims dead?

It seems that a big part of the problem is that Western audiences have never heard of Hindutva or Hindu nationalism, which means that the US government has a responsibility to identify, condemn and strip these groups of their tax exempt status.

eir tax exempt status.

– Courtesy: TRT World

The brotherhood of Guantánamo Bay

Mansoor Adayfi



In 2010, when we were transitioned to communal living in Camp 6, our bond deepened. Interrogators and guards were fewer, camp rules were relaxed to give us more freedom, and we began to interact more with each other, as well as the camp staff

was raised in a family that emphasised strong religious values such as brotherhood, compassion and kindness. I also observed these morals practised throughout my small village in Yemen. At home and school, I was taught to follow the example of Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him), and especially loved his saying, "I have been sent only for the purpose of perfecting the highest morals."

Years later, it was only through my interactions with fellow detainees at Guantánamo that I fully understood what this meant. Through our shared faith, we developed a bond that could not be broken, even as we suffered the most horrendous torture and abuse

most horrendous torture and abuse. In the autumn of 2001, I was travelling in Afghanistan when I was kidnapped by local warlords, presented to US forces as a "senior Egyptian al-Qaeda operative" and sold to them. I was just 18 years old. Shortly after, in February 2002, I was transferred to Guantánamo. Like the other detainees, I did not know where I was, why I was there, or why there were constant beatings and shouting. I was confused, terrified, angry, and would often rebel against the constantly changing rules. Being imprisoned for 14 years, I essentially grew up in Guantánamo. I would often recall the lessons I was taught in my childhood and even during the relentless abuse, would reflect on the Prophet's tradition

and teachings about moral character. After living together for years, being transferred from one camp within Guantánamo to another, from makeshift cells to solitary confinement to prison cells, we, the prisoners developed a closeknit community. We had a shared life, culture, and memories. We went through it all together, for better or worse, and became a family. In 2010, when we were transitioned to communal living in Camp 6, our bond deepened. Interrogators and guards were fewer, camp rules were relaxed to give us more freedom, and we began to interact more with each other. as well as the camp staff. Instead of praying in separate cages, we were able to pray collectively in rows like we would in mosques. Instead of eating on our own, we were able to enjoy meals together just like we would at home with our families. Instead of playing with a foot ball alone, we were able to play in teams just like we would outside of prison. And instead of talking to the same neighbours every

day in the cages, we now could talk to tens of prisoners in different blocks. We did not have much, but we had each other. When the prisoners would call each other, they would say "our Afghan brothers", "our Yemeni brothers", and so on. We taught and learned from each other about many different topics and cultural traditions. We borrowed the best traits from each other's cultures. Arabs started behaving like Afghans and Afghans

started behaving like Arabs. Unsurprisingly, the interrogators would try to turn us against each other. There were prison blocks where the majority of the detainees were either Arabs or Afghans. One day, when the interrogators wanted to isolate me, they moved me to an Afghan block, thinking that my life would be harder because there were no Arabs I could speak to.

Little did they know that if you ended up in a block with a group that is not your own, you would actually be lucky. You would be treated as their guest as long as you were there, and they would try to comfort you in any way they could. And this is what happened to me. The Afghans treated me like a family member. I ended up teaching Arabic to an illiterate Afghan prisoner and listening to the beautiful poetry of another - an Afghan poet and singer in his 60s who wrote two books of poetry in Pashto at Guantánamo. He always sang his poetry for the block and would sing for me as well. With Arabs making up the majority of detainees at the camp, many were involved in protests and resistance against the torture and the abuse there. In the beginning, most of the Afghans and prisoners of other nationalities tried not to get involved. The camp administration took that as a sign of fear and tried to exploit it to create divisions.

One day, a Pashto translator came to distribute sheets of paper just for Afghan prisoners. Written on it in Pashto and Dari was the word "hypocrites" with some Arab prisoners' photos. The first Afghan prisoner who received that paper threw it at the translator and spat at him. Interrogators really did not understand our brotherhood. They were deluded into thinking they could change us. The longer we stayed together the stronger our bond grew.

Guards and other camp personnel were surprised by our behaviour. They were told that they would meet the worst of the worst – killers, "terrorists", monsters who were capable of snapping their necks in a second. When the guards started to work with and talk to us, their views completely changed. Many prisoners and guards developed strong friendships, and some of the guards even converted to Islam.

The bonds we formed and the good moral character I witnessed in each of my fellow prisoners showed me the power of the Prophet's teachings. Islam is based on perfecting the relationship between us and our Creator (Allah), but also the relationship with ourselves, our families, neighbours, and all who may surround us – including our enemies. These bonds are interconnected, interdependent, and shape who we are and who we become. They challenge us, nurture us, and strengthen us even in times of hardship. I learned that even when we cannot control what happens to us, even when others shed their humanity, we must do everything in our power to preserve ours. We still have the power to embody a high moral ethic as individuals and our relationships with

(The Writer is an activist and former Guantanamo Bay prisoner)

-Courtesy: Al Jazeera

one another. In Guantánamo, we prac-

tised the Prophet's precepts every day.

Settler terror against Palestinians a ticking bomb

Osama Al-Sharif



Seven Israeli human rights activists were injured during a settler attack near the Palestinian village of Burin

HEY have been called "subhuman" and "terrorists," and their actions described as being similar to those of "terror organizations." Those being called out are the radical Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank and the labels were slapped on them not by Palestinians, but by key Israeli figures, including former army officers. Last week, seven Israeli human rights activists were injured during a settler attack

near the Palestinian village of Burin. The activists were there to show solidarity with Palestinian farmers whose orchards had previously been damaged by Jewish settlers. According to Israeli press reports, about 15 masked assailants came from the nearby illegal outpost of Giv'at Ronen. They attacked the activists, hurling stones at them and setting one of their cars on fire. They fled the scene before the Israeli army arrived. Footage of the attack went viral, but this was

not an isolated incident. For years, radical settlers have been getting more daring and more provocative in their attacks against hapless Palestinian villagers; uprooting olive trees, burning cars, attacking Palestinian children, setting houses on fire and, most recently, running down innocent pedestrians. While the international community looked the other way as these attacks became the norm for Palestinian villagers, a growing number of key Israeli figures are now warning of the damage the settlers are doing to the country's image and the dangers they pose to Israeli society itself. Others have warned that such brazen attacks are making the West Bank "a ticking bomb" that could explode at any minute.

Retired general and former deputy military chief Yair Golan described settlers as "subhuman" because of their attacks on Palestinians. Now a legislator with the Meretz party, he told the Associated Press last

week: "You can't have a free and democratic state so long as we are controlling people who don't want to be controlled by us." He had previously prompted a backlash with comments that likened the atmosphere in Israel to that of Nazi-era Germany. His criticism of "fascistic trends in modern-day Israel similar to Nazi Germany" had cost him his job in the military.

Most of the attacks come from what Israel calls unauthorized or illegal outposts — settlements that have not been approved — with the settlers carrying out almost daily campaigns to terrorize Palestinian residents; killing their cattle, shooting at their windows and uprooting their olive trees.

Such acts will continue to build up pressure inside the West Bank and it would only take one major incident to ignite the Occupied Territories. Meanwhile, the Israeli government continues to authorize more illegal housing units in defiance of international law.

These terrorist acts by Jewish settlers will continue to divide Israeli society, which is leaning further to the right, with waning support for a peaceful settlement with the Palestinians. At some point, there will be an outbreak of violence and the crisis will put pressure on Israel internally, across the region and beyond. Bennett must be wary of the ticking bomb in the West Bank.

- Courtesy: Arab News

Islamophobia

issue...

From Page 01 Titled, "The Dinner Table Prejudice: Islamophobia in

Contemporary Britain," the survey found that Muslims were the UK's second least-

liked group after gypsy and

Irish travelers, with 25.9

percent of the British pub-

lic feeling negative toward

Muslims, and 9.9 percent

very negative. Speaking at

the report's launch, Zara

Mohammed, the first fe-

male secretary-general of

the Muslim Council of Brit-

ain, said Islamophobia was

definitely real, contrary to

what some people thought,

and that it impacted on all

aspects of society.

Briefs

FM Qureshi talks to Azeri counterpart

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a telephonic conversation with Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov. The two sides reviewed bilateral relations and exchanged views on ways to further strengthen mutual cooperation. The Foreign Ministers emphasized the deepening of trade and economic linkages as well as increased cooperation in education and energy sectors. They welcomed the holding of the 7th Session of the Joint Ministerial Commission in Baku on 1-2 December 2021, and creation of new Joint Working Groups in the fields of energy, rail and road transport, tourism and sports.

Foreign Minister Qureshi underscored the importance of regional connectivity and stressed the importance of enhancing direct air-links, rail and road connectivity in order to promote trade and people-to-people contacts. The two sides also discussed peace and stability in the region and reaffirmed commitment to continue supporting initiatives on economic and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. The two Foreign Ministers discussed collaboration at regional and international fora and agreed to remain in touch to strengthen joint efforts on matters of mutual

Sehat Card launched...

From Page 01

health expenses. In Pakistan, he said, the launch of such facility was a "landmark step" to accommodate the people bearing the burden of expensive medical treatment.

He said the philosophy behind the Qaumi Sehat Card was in line with the goals of a socio-welfare State.

Also, the national security is in fact linked with the welfare of people who are made of State, he added."This will prove as a defining moment in improvement of healthcare services in Pakistan," he said.Imran Khan said the health card was a defining moment in encouraging private sector to join the medical network especially in rural areas and create an environment of competition for the public sector hospitals to improve their

Govt to create...

From Page 01

March 23 was very sensitive, he said, several main roads would be closed and possibly cellular services may also be closed due to the arrival of foreign dignitaries for the OIC meeting. The Interior Minister said, "If you want to annoy the Muslim leaders for the sake of your personal politics then the PDM should come on March 23. Come on March 23 and you will face a political defeat and be humiliated. We will create no problem for you if you don't create any problem for the law." He questioned the purpose of the opposition's march. The opposition would fail to gather the public saying, how many participation of the public was in the tractor trolley rallies, he said. The opposition failed to defeat the government on any motion or bill during its three and a half years in power so far, he added.

UK Home Office...

From Page 01 Daesh after traveling to Syria, The England and Wales Court of Appeal found that it was unlawful to remove people's nationality without providing proper notice.

Identified in legal records only as D4, the woman is being held in a Syrian prisoner camp, Al-Roj, and was not informed by UK authorities that her British citizenship had been removed for more than 10 months. The Home Office had previously appealed a decision made by the High Court, which ruled that the stripping of D4's citizenship was "void and of no effect." -DNA

Stage is set for Pakistan Super League 7 from today

Babar Azam, who made the record for most T20I wins as captain in a calendar year with 20 in 2021, will lead Karachi Kings. Mohammad Rizwan, first-ever batter to score more than 1,000 T20I runs in a calendar year, will lead Multan Sultans

LAHORE: The stage is set for the seventh edition of HBL Pakistan Super League to commence tomorrow on, Thursday at the iconic National Stadium in Karachi with defending champions Multan Sultans facing off 2020 champions Karachi Kings following a curtain-raiser opening ceremony.

Babar Azam, who made the record for most T20I wins as captain in a calendar year with 20 in 2021, will lead Karachi Kings. Mohammad Rizwan, first-ever batter to score more than 1,000 T20I runs in a calendar year, will lead Multan Sultans.

Babar Azam said on the eve of the match: "I am very excited to be leading Karachi Kings this season. This is the first instance that I will be captaining a side in the HBL PSL and I am looking forward to it.

"The first match of the tournament always has a lot of eyeballs and Multan Sultans can prove to be a tough opposition. I am sure the fans will get to see a thrilling contest. "Peter Moores is a seasoned coach and I have had fruitful discussions with him. Karachi Kings will display good, competitive cricket this season." Mohammad Rizwan said: "We have all the potential to defend our HBL PSL title and we will be taking the field tomorrow with that mind set. This season will present us new challenges and we will have to plan accordingly.

"Babar Azam is a wonderful batter and captain, and his leadership will certainly have a

5650 personnel to perform security duties

KARACHI: A comprehensive fool-proof A specialized command and control bus security plan in connection with the PSL-07 matches scheduled to commence from January 27-2022 in the city has been prepared by the Security Division of Sindh Police. According to spokesman for DIGP Security and Emergency Services Division, around 5650 personnel in total will be deployed for the security.

Around 1700 personnel of Security Division including 1200 Special Security Unit (SSU) Commandos, 1500 personnel of Traffic Police, 500 personnel of Special Branch, 250 personnel of Rapid Response Force (RRF) and personnel of Sindh Rangers will perform security duties along-with personnel from other law enforcement agencies at National Stadium Karachi, practice grounds, Karachi Airport, routes, hotels and other different areas, while sharp shooters will also be deployed at

good impact on Karachi Kings. I am hopeful that the HBL PSL 7 will kick off with a great contest between the two sides.

As per the National Command and Opera-

will also be stationed at National Stadium to monitor law and order situation in surroundings of the stadium. While, aerial surveillance will also be made during movement of the teams.

Moreover, Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T) team comprising highly trained and well equipped commandos including lady commandos will remain alert at SSU Headquarters as quick response force to challenge any emergency situation.

It has been decided for the convenience of public that all roads will remain open for the commuters except one track of Sir Shah Suleman road. Spectators will be transported from parking points to the stadium via shuttle bus service.

To assist the spectators, they will thoroughly be guided and assisted from parking points to the enclosure by the SSU commandos attired in tracksuits. - APP

tion Centre (NCOC) directive, the seating capacity has been reduced to 25 per cent for all matches in Karachi, while a decision on the number of spectators in Lahore to be

taken in due course. The health and safety protocols for this edition is available here. On the second match day on Friday, Quetta Gladiators will play Peshawar Zalmi with the match starting at 2pm PKT, while the third match day on Saturday will serve the fans a double-header with Multan Sultans playing Lahore Qalandars and Karachi Kings taking on Quetta Gladiators.

Lahore Qalandars, captained by Shaheen Shah Afridi, who has had stratospheric rise in international cricket since his debut in 2018, will hope the change in leadership leads to a change in their fortunes and they secure the glittering trophy. Islamabad United are led by Shadab Khan. Sarfaraz Ahmed, who is the only player to lead his side in all the editions, will continue to command his Gladiators from Quetta, while Peshawar Zalmi will be led by Wahab Riaz. The HBL PSL has established itself as one of the top T20 leagues around the world and it has featured most sought-after cricketers from around the world. The competitiveness of this league and the quality of action has served up and coming Pakistan cricketers opportunities to learn, enhance their skills and learn nitty-gritties of the game. National Stadium will host the first 15 matches till 7 February, before the action moves to Lahore, where Gaddafi Stadium, the home of Pakistan cricket, will stage the last 19 games from 10-27 February. - APP

"I think what's really great about this report and its contribution to the body of evidence is that it shows us not just the pervasive nature of the problem but also that Muslims are some of the least-liked people in the population."In my one year so far as the secretary-general of the MCB, what we have seen is unfortunately a very changing landscape for British Muslims and one that is becoming increasingly hostile."This is the reality of how Muslims are perceived in everyday Britain, and that is in 2022 as well," she added. More than one-in-four people quizzed for the sur-

> the UK existed where Shariah law ruled. And 26.5 percent of those questioned agreed with the statement that, "there are areas in Britain that operate under Shariah law where non-Muslims are not able to enter," the study said. Among Conservative Party voters and those who elected to leave the EU, the figure increased to 43.4 percent. A further 36.3 percent of Brits said they thought that "Islam threatens the British way of life," and 18.1 percent supported, and 9.5 percent strongly supported, the idea of banning all Mus-

vey, and nearly half of Con-

servative Party supporters

and those who voted to leave

the EU, held conspiratorial

views that "no-go areas" in

"British people acknowledge their ignorance of most non-Christian religions, with a majority stating they are 'not sure' how Jewish (50.8 percent) and Sikh (62.7 percent) scriptures are taught.

EU risks

self-inflicted...

From Page 01

27-nation bloc relying heav-

ily on the energy-rich na-

tion's supplies of gas. This

makes Europe more vulner-

able than the United States

economically if the West

makes Russia pay for an in-

vasion."Geographic proxim-

ity goes hand in hand with

close economic and security

implications and ties," Gun-

tram Wolff, director of the

Bruegel think tank in Brus-

sels, told AFP. The United

States and EU have threat-

ened to hit Russia with

sanctions after Moscow de-

ployed more than 100,000

troops to the border with

Ukraine, raising fears of a

looming invasion. The EU

already slapped sanctions

on Moscow after it annexed

Crimea from Ukraine in

2014, but Russia remains an

important economic part-

ner as the bloc's fifth big-

gest trade partner. – APP

lim migration to the UK.



ISLAMABAD: The delegation of World Bank called on Special Assistants to the Prime Minister Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam. – DNA

Collins, Swiatek advance to Australian Open semifinals



SPORTS DESK

MELBOURNE: Iga Swiatek took three hours in the afternoon heat to beat 36-year-old Kaia Kanepi 4-6, 7-6 (2), 6-3 on Wednesday, with the payoff being a spot in the Australian Open semifinals against Danielle Collins

"This match was crazy," the 20-year-old, 2020 French Open winner said. "First set I think my mistake was I had so many break points, I felt like I missed my chances. In the second set, ... I felt like she's playing so fast that I can't be tight. I had to finish my forehands." The temperature hit 36 degrees Celsius (97

degrees Fahrenheit) on Day 10, continuing a week of hot days at the year's first Grand Slam tournament. Collins won the opening match on Rod Laver Arena before the heat peaked, swinging it in her favor with a key service break in the final game of the opening set on her way to a 7-5, 6-1 victory over Alize Cornet. No. 115-ranked Kanepi made her Grand Slam debut in 2006 but was playing in the quarterfinals in Australia for the first time, completing a career set after making it to the last eight twice at each of the sport's three other major tournaments. She was coming off an upset, three-set

win over No. 2-ranked Aryna Sabalen-

ka and took the game to Swiatek, who saved nine set points before losing the first set. Swiatek rallied in the second, exchanging service breaks twice before winning it in a tiebreaker.

There was another exchange of breaks early in the third set and Swiatek was broken again when she was serving for the match in the eighth game. She eventually clinched on Kaneni's serve. scrambling to stay in the point until the Estonian player sent a forehand wide. After the first three quarterfinals were decided in straight sets - Ash Barty beat Jessica Pegula and Madison Keys beat Barbora Krejcikova on Tuesday the last one went all the way.

As she left the court, Swiatek wrote on the TV camera lens: "Thank you for the support. # Tired." Collins' win means there are two Americans in the last four. Keys, the 2017 U.S. Open runner-up, will play reigning Wimbledon and 2019 French Open winner Barty. Swiatek of Poland is the only one of the four in the Australian Open semis for the first time. Collins lost to Petra Kvitova in the semifinals here in 2019, which remains her best run to date at a major. Keys lost to Serena Williams in 2015 and Barty lost a semifinal final in 2020 to eventual champion Sofia Kenin. Collins underwent surgery last year to treat endometriosis, a condition which had caused her severe pain during tournaments in 2021.

Babar Azam wants to stick to his strengths as captain

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani Skipper Babar Azam wanted to stick to his strengths and perform saying receiving the International Cricket Council (ICC) award was an honour.

The ICC recently announced the awards to commemorate the performances from 2021. Azam was not only named as the ODI Cricketer of the Year but he was also included in ODI and T20I Team of the Year as captain as well.

"It is not only an honour for me but for Pakistan as well. The ICC deemed me worthy of becoming a captain for both their limited-over team of the year, it is something that I don't take lightly. I will try to stick to my strengths as captain and hopefully I will be able to perform well," cricketpakistan.com.pk quoted him as saying. Azam, who would lead Karachi Kings in the seventh edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) said he was delighted to be leading Karachi Kings and hopes to do well alongside his deputy Imad Wasim.

"I will like to thank God almighty because this will be the first time I'll be captaining a franchise. The preparations are ongoing and things are going according to plan. There is no rift with Imad - we have been playing for Karachi for the past five years and also featured in a number of international matches. We are on the same wavelength and his opinion is still very important as he is the vice-captain," he said. Babar, however, claimed that there has been no change in his attitude off the field. "There has been no change in the way I carry myself off-the-field. The only thing I'm doing more off-the-field is to ensure how I can buck up the players and get their best performances on the stage and help Pakistan," he said. - APP



BAKU: On instruction of FM Shah Mehmood Qureshi Pakistan ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee delivered invitation for 48th CFM to Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan Bayramov Jeyhun. Meeting of OIC Foreign Ministers will be held in Islamabad on 22-23 March. - DNA

both a private and public setting.

Bagheri greeted the delegation, empha-

sizing that Azerbaijan-Iran relations had

advanced significantly in recent years and

had entered a new phase. The parties em-

phasized that the experience of fruitful

collaboration at the bilateral, regional,

Azerbaijan, Iran eye prospects of military co-op

"The sides exchanged views on the prospects of Azerbaijan-Iran cooperation in the fields of military, militarytechnical, and military medicine, the organization of mutual visits of expert groups, and other issues of interest"

News Desk

TEHRAN: Azerbaijani Defence Minister Col-Gen Zakir Hasanov and his Iranian counterpart Maj-Gen Mohammad Reza Gharaei Ashtiani have discussed military cooperation between the two countries, the ministry reported.

The meeting of senior military officials took place during Hasanov's official visit to Iran. "The sides exchanged views on the prospects of Azerbaijan-Iran cooperation in the fields of military, military-technical, and military medicine, the organization of mutual visits of expert groups, and other issues of

interest," the ministry said. The meeting highlighted the activities of the joint working group established by the Azerbaijani and Iranian defence ministries to develop military cooperation, as well as steps taken under bilateral agreements. Hasanov expressed gratitude for the warm welcome, emphasizing that Azerbaijani-Iranian relations have a long history and are

built on solid foundations He invited Iran's defence minister to visit

Azerbaijan on official business. In turn, Ashtiani expressed his delight at the Azerbaijani delegation's visit to Iran, emphasizing the two countries' longstanding religious, historical, and cultural ties. He emphasized that strengthening military cooperation between Azerbaijan and Iran has critical importance for both countries. The parties signed a protocol outlining the meeting's outcomes.

In addition, Hasanov became acquainted with a variety of military products on display at the Iranian Defense Ministry's exhibition hall.

As part of his official visit to Iran, Hasanov met with the Iranian Army's General Staff Chief, Lt-Gen Mohammad Hossein Bagheri, according to a separate report from the

and international levels provides a solid ministry. Following the official welcome foundation for the continued development ceremony, the top brass held meetings in of Azerbaijan-Iran relations. Hasanov briefed the opposite party on the new situation in the region following the 44day war with Armenia in 2020, as well as the ongoing reconstruction in Azerbaijan's liberated territories. Hasanov invited Bagheri to Azerbaijan for an official visit, emphasizing the importance of the recent bilateral meeting between the Azerbaijani and Iranian leaders. The parties also discussed expanding military, military-technical, and military-medical cooperation, as well as arranging recip-

> The meeting was followed by the signing of a protocol outlining the meeting's outcomes and the release of a joint press statement.

the two countries.

rocal visits by military representatives from

Hungarian PM to visit...

From Page 01 to several reasons. It will be the first ever visit by a prime minister, from either side, the ambassador said. According to a press release received here from Budapest, Viktor Orban, who is currently serving his 3rd consecutive term as Prime Minister of Hungary, is now the longest serving leader in the European Union, after departure of German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The ambassador said the

Hungarian prime minister's visit was also important as it would be the first visit by a leader of the European Union to Pakistan in 15 years. Both the countries had engaged closely during the past two years, and specially during 2021, he said, adding the foundation for the latest warmth in the relationship was laid during the visit of Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjarto to Pakistan on the invitation of Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, in April. A large business delegation had also accompanied the Hungarian foreign minister during the visit, he added.

Business / World



Briefs

Lebanon signs power deal with Jordan

Power-starved Lebanon signed an agreement Wednesday to import electricity from Jordan via Syria with the aim of reducing chronic outages and heeding international calls for reform. The agreement signed by Energy Minister WalidFayad with his Jordanian and Syrian counterparts is expected to give Lebanon two extra hours of mains electricity a day, doubling the supply currently provided by the cash-strapped government which has struggled to afford fuel imports for its power plants.

"This is an important, historic moment for Lebanon.. not because of its impact but because of its symbolism," Fayad told a news conference. He described the deal as a "modest but very important agreement for the Lebanese people, who need every extra hour of electricity."

Lebanon has not had roundthe-clock mains electricity since the end of the 1975-1990 civil war.But an unprecedented financial crisis has led to power cuts lasting 22 hours a day, forcing most Lebanese to rely on expensive private generators.

Jordanian Energy Minister Saleh al-Kharabsheh said the step comes as "our brothers in Lebanon face sensitive and difficult circumstances". Lebanon and Jordan also signed an electricity transit agreement with Syria, which said that it stands ready to connect its power grid. - APP

Backlash in Greece over snow storm 'fiasco'

ATHENS: Outrage against the government and transport operators grew in Greece on Wednesday after a major snow storm stranded thousands of motorists on the country's most modern motorway, which remained blocked for a third day. As Greek dailies headlined with a "fiasco" and the chief evecutive of ficer of the private company running the AttikiOdos ring road resigned, work crews struggled to free hundreds of immobilised vehicles abandoned by their drivers around the capital.

"A government buried in snow," said leftist Efsyn daily, while even pro-government Eleftheros Typos daily spoke of "mistakes that brought chaos.

The snow storm also knocked out power in over a dozen Athens neighbourhoods, with repairs still ongoing on Wednesday as snow continued to impede access to some areas.

"We haven't slept all night, our (fingers and toes) feel like they are about to fall off," a woman in the southern Athens suburb of Alimos, who said she had no electricity for over a day, told Star TV. On Tuesday, the army was brought in to help police, fire and state crews extricate some 3,500

Sino-Pak ties new dimensions are emerging

stranded motorists. - **APP**

BEIJING: The friendship between Pakistan and China has not only proved to be trustworthy in every difficult time but also its new dimensions are emerging, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Wednesday. While CPEC is an extraordinary economic project and hearts are getting closer after its inauguration, its agricultural sector has a fundamental importance in Pakistan's economy.

Since the consolidation of CPEC, there have been tremendous opportunities for trade in agricultural commodities between Pakistan and China. Last year, an MoU on onion trade was signed between Pakistan and China to make such a possibility a reality. The MoU was signed between Pakistan's Department of Plant Protection and China's General Administration of Customs China.

Through this MoU, it was decided that the Department of Plant Protection would conduct a world-class pest control survey during the onion production season, which would enable Pakistan to supply world-class onions to China. - APP

Riyadh and Bangkok restore ties, decades after gem theft

The two countries announced in a joint statement late on Tuesday "the full re-establishment of diplomatic relations" during a visit by Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha to Riyadh

Thailand have announced the resumption of diplomatic ties, after more than three decades of frozen relations linked to the theft of jewels from a Saudi palace. Thai-born janitor KriangkraiTechamong stole \$20 million worth of precious gems in 1989 from the home of a Saudi prince, triggering a spate of murders in Bangkok and a feud between the countries dubbed

NATO

finalising

written

proposals

for Russia

BRUSSELS: NATO is close

to completing its written

proposals for Moscow af-

ter Russia issued a raft

of security demands, and

should deliver them this

week, alliance diplomats

said Wednesday. "Many of

the Russian demands are

unacceptable or unrealistic,

but the response identifies

a number of issues on which

it is possible to work on

their concerns," a Western

"The question is whether this is what the Russians

want." Moscow blindsided

the West by publishing two

draft treaties for the United

States and NATO in Decem-

ber that would see Washing-

ton's influence rolled back

in eastern Europe. - APP

diplomat told AFP.

the "Blue Diamond Affair". The two countries announced in a joint statement late on Tuesday "the full re-establishment of diplomatic relations" during a visit by Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha to Riyadh.

"This historic step is the result of long-standing efforts at different levels to re-establish mutual confidence and friendly relations," the joint statement

added, following a meeting between the Thai premier and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The two countries agreed to appoint ambassadors in the near future. Saudi Airlines meanwhile announced that flights to Thailand would resume in May.

The Thai government said the Saudis had flagged that they were seeking eight million skilled workers, including in hotels, healthcare and

Thailand indicated it had a ready supply of skilled workers to help fill the need, RachadaDhanadirek, a Thai deputy government spokeswoman, said in a statement. Thailand had repeatedly sought to restore ties, in part to benefit its crucial tourism industry. Saudi Arabia had long accused Thai police of bungling their investigation into the iewel theft, with allega-

were snapped up by senior officers. Thai police later returned some of the jewels but Saudi officials claimed most were fakes, while the whereabouts of the most precious gem - a rare 50-carat blue diamond - remains unknown, Rivadh sent a businessman to investigate in 1990 but he disappeared in Bangkok days after three Saudi diplomats were shot dead in the city.

idence, a case was dropped against five men, including a senior Thai policeman, accused of involvement in the Saudi businessman's murder. Thai government spokesman Thanakorn-Wangboonkongchana said Prayut had expressed regret over the 1989 and 1990 incidents and promised to reopen investigations if any new evidence came to light. - APP

Omicron risk remains very

GENEVA: The risk level related to the Omicron variant remains very high, the WHO said late Tuesday, with the numbers of new Covid-19 cases hitting another record high last week. "Over 21 million new cases were reported, representing the highest number of weekly cases recorded since the beginning of the pandemic," the World Health Organization said in its weekly epidemiological coronavirus update. The UN health agency said the number of new infections increased by five percent in the week to Sunday - compared to the 20 percent rise registered the week before. "A slower increase in case incidence was observed at the global level," the WHO said. Nearly 50,000 new deaths were also reported, it added - a similar figure to the week before. The report said Omicron continued to increase its dominance globally over the other variants of concern.

"The current global epidemiology of SARS-CoV-2 is characterised by the dominance of the Omicron variant on a global scale, continued decline in the prevalence of the Delta variant, and very low-level circulation of Alpha, Beta and Gamma variants," the WHO said. "Countries that experienced a rapid rise in Omicron cases in November and December 2021 have been or are beginning to see declines in cases. - APP

Second NY cop dies after gun battle in Harlem

NEW YORK: A New York policeman wounded in an exchange of gunfire last week died Tuesday, raising the toll in the tragedy to two, officials said. The death of Wilbert Mora, 27, as a result of the gun battle Friday night in Harlem was announced by police commissioner Keechant Sewell. "He was murdered in the line of duty – fighting until the very end," read the Twitter account NYPD News. Mora and his partner were

responding to a report of a domestic disturbance in an apartment in Brooklyn after a woman called to say her son was acting violently. The colleague, 22-year-

old Jason Rivera, was shot and killed by the suspect, a 47-year-old man who was also shot in the exchange and died Monday of his wounds. Three other police officers have been shot and wounded since January 1, when former cop Eric Adams took over as mayor of the city of nine million people. Adams vowed Monday to rid New York of guns, including by deploying plainclothes police on the streets, after the recent spate of violence. - APP

DURNALISTS

BRUSSELS: Members of Kashmir Council Europe holding a demonstration in front of the Indian embassy in Brussels. - DNA

Uzbek-Pakistani cooperation is actively moving forward

News Desk

TASHKENT: Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sardor Umurzakov held talks via videoconference with Advisor to the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on trade and investment Abdul Razak Dawood. The agenda of the negotiations included a wide range of issues of bilateral cooperation in such areas as investment, mutual trade, industrial cooperation and the transport and logistics sector. The implementation of the agreements reached during the visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan to Uzbekistan in July 2021 was substantively reviewed. The progress achieved in the promotion of joint projects and initiatives was discussed, the existing issues in each direction were considered and worked out. Commitment was expressed to close cooperation in order to accelerate the implementation of agreed projects.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman,

Federal Board of Revenue

(FBR) DrAshfaq Ahmed

on Wednesday hinted for

achieving revenue target

of Rs 8 trillion by 2023 as

it would set the country's

economy in a new direction.

He said that Prime Min-

ister Imran Khan has his

own vision for revenue col-

lection and economic devel-

opment in the country, in

which, achieving revenue

target of up to Rs 8 trillion

Chairman expressed these

views while talking to the

is one of top priorities.

in increasing trade turnover was noted: at the end of 2021, the volume of mutual trade increased by 46 percent compared to the previous year. In this context, the progress of work on the draft Preferential Trade Agreement was studied. The parties agreed to intensify joint work in this direction in order to agree on the document and accelerate its signing during the current year. The Uzbek side welcomed Pakistan's ratification of the Transit and Trade Agreement. It was discussed that in the near future negotiations will be organized between the leadership and experts of the transport and customs departments of the two countries in order to agree on the mechanisms for the practical implementation of the Agreement.

In a separate order, proposals were considered to deepen investment cooperation, strengthen ties between the business circles of the two countries, as well as establish cooperation in the banking sector. An agreement was

trade laws at Chaman and

Torkham borders. He said

that transparent trade

brought prosperity and de-

velopment in the country.

He vowed that, "we would

digitalize every FBR's agen-

cy". He said that FBR cur-

rently has the largest data

portal which is in a dire

This data can be very

important in the trade

and economic develop-

ment of the country. He

said that at present, the

role of FBR was very im-

portant in all three trade

corridors including Cha-

man and Torkham, which

would be strengthened

with China Pakistan Eco-

need of digitization.

Dr. Ashfaq for achieving

revenue target of Rs 8trl

revenue target is Rs 5.830

trillion which is expected

to increase till Rs 6 trillion

by June 2022. We have col-

lected Rs 300 billion more

revenue than our target till

He expressed his hope that

this year, the FBR would

achieve all its revenue tar-

gets and would further play

its role in the country's

economy. Replying to a

question, he said that Paki-

stan Customs was the pro-

tector of economic borders

of the country and that they

have always been playing its

He said that Pakistan

Customs was playing its

role for trade promotion.

December 31.

reached to organize a visit by a delegation of the leadership of Pakistani companies and commercial banks in February this year to discuss promising areas of cooperation and the implementation of mutually beneficial projects.

Issues related to the implementation of joint projects in the transport and logistics sector were also considered. In particular, further steps were discussed on the practical implementation of the Termez-Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway construction project. In addition, the relevance of intensifying bilateral passenger and freight traffic between the two countries was noted. The dialogue also made it possible to discuss preparations for a number of planned bilateral events, including a regular meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, as well as a business forum with the participation of representatives of the private sector of the two countries.

Urgent need for Pak to benefit from Chinese tech

ISLAMABAD: Union of Small and Medium Enterprises (Unisame) President ZulfikarThaver said that there was an urgent need for Pakistan to seek Chinese technology, collaborations, partnerships and joint ventures under the multi-billion-dollar CPEC. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro, "It should be in the most essential items on CPEC agenda (for Pakistan). The (Pakistani) government should aim to create self-sufficiency in food and chemicals to reduce dependency on drastically increasing imports," he remarked in a statement issued here. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Mustafa Yurdakul called on Minister of State & Chairman BOI Muhammad Azfar Ahsan & Secretary BOI FareenaMazhar. Both sides underscored the importance of Turkish investments for Pakistani market & discussed avenues for mutual cooperation. - DNA

CONDOLENCE

US approves \$2.56 billion

in military sales to Egypt

WASHINGTON: The US State Department approved Tues-

day two major military equipment sales to Egypt of trans-

port aircraft and radar systems, despite ongoing concerns

in Washington over Cairo's human rights record. The sale

of 12 C-130 J Super Hercules transports and accompanying

equipment is worth \$2.2 billion. The US Defense Security

Cooperation Agency said the sale, still not finalized, "will im-

prove Egypt's capability to meet current and future threats

by providing airlift support for its forces by moving supplies,

equipment, and people." The aircraft can also be used for

maritime patrol and rescue missions, it added. In a sec-

ond deal, Egypt can buy ground-based air defense systems

worth \$355 million to help it fend off air threats. The deals

come despite ongoing unease in Washington over Egyptian

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi's tough treatment of political

opponents, with rights groups estimating that Egypt holds

about 60,000 political prisoners. In September, the State

Department put a hold on \$130 million in military aid al-

ready budgeted for Egypt because of lack of improvement in

the human rights situation in the country. And in early No-

vember, Secretary of State Antony Blinken urged Egypt in

bilateral talks to make "tangible and lasting improvements"

on human rights. But for fiscal year 2022, which began on

October 1, 2021, the Biden administration budgeted \$1.4 bil-

lion in bilateral assistance - most of it military related - for

Cairo, the same as the previous year. – **Agencies**



APNS expresses profound grief over the sad

demise of

Syed Shams-ud-Doha Shah

Chief Editor

Daily Al Falah, Peshawar.

May Allah the Almighty rest his soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the family to bear the loss.



All Pakistan Newspapers Society



Islamabar POST



THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022 | WWW.ISLAMABADPOST.COM.PK

Briefs

Romania ready to host NATO presence

BUDAPEST: Romania is in talks with the United States and France over ways to enhance their troop count in the country and was ready to host an increased NATO military presence, President Klaus Iohannis said on Wednesday. The U.S. Department of Defense said on Monday it put about 8,500 American troops on heightened alert, awaiting orders to deploy to NATO's eastern flank should Russia invade Ukraine. France has also offered to send more troops if needed. "I have been constantly saying we are ready to host an increased allied presence on our territory," Iohannis said. "Following the announcements made by the United States and France we are in contact with the two allies to establish concrete ways to realise their military presence." Iohannis was speaking after a meeting of Romania's supreme defence council to address security concerns after Russia massed tens of thousands of troops near Ukraine's borders. He said diplomatic talks were key to de-escalate tensions. On Wednesday, the defence council assessed the potential impact of a conflict on businesses and the energy and banking sectors, Iohannis said. EU member-state Romania was also preparing for potential refugee inflows from Ukraine, with which it shares a 600 kms border.

NATO has a multinational land force of up to 4,000 troops in Romania, a member since 2004. The United States also has soldiers stationed at separate bases in Romania and in Bulgaria. "The current crisis proves once more that ... consolidating allied presence on the eastern flank including in our country is very important," he said. "The measures NATO has taken until now to reinforce its military presence on the eastern flank are an eminently defensive response to the rising security challenges in the region." - Agencies

Pak reaffirms solidarity with Kashmiris

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: As India observed Republic Day on Wednesday, Pakistan reaffirmed its "unshakable resolve" to continue to raise its voice and extend all possible support for the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir, who marked it as a black day. "Today, when the Kashmiris in IIOJK (Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir)and around the world mark 26th January as a black day against India's oppression, the government and people of Pakistan reaffirm their unshakable resolve to continue to raise their voice and extend all possible support for the right of self-determination of the people of IIOJK," the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a statement.

He said it was deplorable that in the past few days, the Indian occupation forces had further intensified the military siege already in place in the occupied territory for more than seven decades. The spokesperson said coercing innocent Kashmiris to hoist Indian flags on the Republic Day was typical of India's high-handedness to project a false sense of 'normalcy' and a hopeless attempt at masking its systematic and widespread oppression. He said the Indian government's decision to award so-called gallantry awards to the personnel of its occupation forces was vet another affront to the dignity of the countless vic-

tims of India's state terrorism. He said the Indian occupation forces had been making the people of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir subject to gross human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, suspension of fundamental freedoms, rapes, and the use of draconian laws such as Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Public Safety Act with complete impunity.

IATA wants curbs removed for vaccinated

LONDON: The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has urged governments around the world to employ their two years of Covid-handling experience to do away with travel restrictions, which it said were "a mess". Calling for the adoption of "unique solutions" to manage global travel, IATA Director General Willie Walsh, in a statement on Tuesday, urged governments to accelerate the relaxation of travel restrictions for fully vaccinated passengers with a WHO-approved vaccine as Covid-19 continued to evolve from the "pandemic to endemic stage'

Walsh said it was the need of the hour to remove all travel barriers, including quarantine and testing, for fully vaccinated individuals as "with the experience of the Omicron variant, there is no mounting scientific evidence and opinion opposing the targeting of travellers with restrictions and country bans to control the spread of Covid-19." - APP

Business community invited to invest in AFEZ

Azerbaijani Ambassador further pointed out that a total of 2137 Pakistani companies were registered in Azerbaijan covering key sectors including industry, trade, services, construction, transport and telecommunication

DNA

KARACHI: The Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov, while highlighting the potential, opportunities and incentives being offered to foreign investors, invited the business and industrial community of Karachi to look into the possibility of investing in the Alat Free Economic Zone (AFEZ) where no value added tax, withholding tax or any other corporate tax was applicable and there was no restriction on foreign ownership. Exchanging views at a meeting during his visit to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry, the Envoy added that Pakistani investors by setting up their business units in Azerbaijan, in addition to availability of complete infrastructure, tax exemptions and other incentives, will experience a business-friendly environment due to reduced red tape and ongoing reforms in the macroeconomic environment, human capital & labor market, infrastructure & utilities, investor protection, foreign trade facilitation and technology & innovations.
President KCCI Muhammad Idrees,



JEDDAH: Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood called on Secretary General of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Hissein Brahim Taha at the OIC Secretariat in Jeddah and highlighted Pakistan's role as a founding member of OIC & its steadfast espousal of Ummah's causes. The Foreign Office in a tweet said the meeting focused on issues including Pak-OIC cooperation, IIOJK, situation in Afghanistan, Islamophobia and preparations for 48th OIC-CFM in Pakistan. During the meeting, the Secretary-General congratulated Pakistan on its chairmanship of the 48th session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers and wished it every success, a news report at the official website of the OIC said. Both sides reviewed the ongoing preparations for Pakistan's hosting of the 48th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers. - APP



Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Naqi, Vice President Qazi Zahid Hussain, Chairman of Diplomatic Missions & Embassies Liaison Subcommittee Zia ul Arfeen, Former President KCCI Majyd Aziz, Second Secretary of Azerbaijan Embassy, Shahbala Karimov, Third Secretary/ Media Attaché Azerbaijan Embassy Elchin Mehdiyev and KCCI Managing Committee Members attended the meeting.

Azerbaijani Ambassador further pointed out that a total of 2137 Pakistani companies were registered in Azer-

baijan covering key sectors including industry, trade, services, construction, transport and telecommunication while the overall investment by Pakistani companies in Azerbaijan stood at US\$4.2 million during the period from 1995-2021. "Azerbaijan with a population of 10.1 million, GDP per capita of US\$3693 and foreign direct investment of US\$14.8 billion in the non-oil sector can offer profitable investment opportunities to the business com-

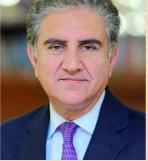
ables, transport, mining, digital economy and tourism sectors", he added. Highlighting the business opportunities between the two countries, he said that Pakistani businessmen can export clothes and other textile products, optic and medical equipment, phar maceutical products, rice, mangoes, bananas and other tropical fruits while Azerbaijan can export cotton & cotton yarn, polymers of ethylene or propylene, black fermented tea, tomatoes,



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Bajwa calls on Prime Minister Imran Khan. – DNA

Economic stability crucial to achieve foreign policy goals

Qureshi on Wednesday said for Pakistan to achieve its foreign policy objectives, putting its 'economic house in order' was crucial. Addressing the launch of the Report on 'Leveraging Private Investment for Pakistan's Sustainable Development' here at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he said the government was working towards a more hospitable investment environment to help bolster the confidence of investors. The foreign minister said Pakistan was committed to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations' Agenda 2030 to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth. He emphasized



that Agenda 2030 and SDGs needed to become a global framework to encourage the private sector to capture the benefits and tradeoffs of sustainable development. He recalled that the country had achieved an encouraging growth of 5.37 percent despite the fact that the macro-economic indicators pointed in the wrong direction in August 2018 when the government assumed power. Qureshi said with a country like Pakistan still being in the IMF programme, achiev-

ing the objectives of sustainable development was a challenge. In this regard, he said, Pakistan needed to be innovative and think out-of-the-box solutions to spur growth. He said the government's priority had changed with the recent launch of a new national security policy focusing on economic policy that encompassed food and water security. The foreign minister said linking sustainable growth to development was the goal of the government and expressed confidence that the report would set guiding principles for inclusive and sustainable development. He said the Foreign Office had a lead role to play in this regard and encouraged the diplomats to get out of the concept of working in silos and rather focus on a coordinated approach. Resident Representative UNDP Pakistan Knut Ostby said the global development financing sector was at the crossroads with many countries struggling in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. He said the UNDP was providing policy advisory and technical assistance to Pakistan and proposed the government adopt a holistic policy framework. - DNA

Kazakh Envoy urges exchange of real information

The govt of Kazakhstan would do all it can to decrease the gap between rich and poor and move towards equitable distribution of wealth and resources

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Yerzhan Kistafin, Kazakhstan's ambassador to Pakistan has stressed upon the need to exchange proper and authentic news exchanges reflective of ground realities between the two countries, for much needed mutual understanding. For this purpose, he has reiterated his proposal for closer collaboration between the ministries of information of Pakistan and Kazakhstan. He was speaking at a special online session "Understanding Recent Happenings in Kazakhstan" organized by the Eurasian Century Institute (ECI), Islamabad.

The envoy gave a detailed briefing to researchers and experts of international relations on this month's troubling events in his country, candidly explaining the context as well as forward linkages of these protests. He noted that the chaos created with

loss of lives and property besides threatening the stability of the state was essentially a coup de'tat aimed at toppling the government.

He shared that while the issues of socio-economic inequality and grievances of people are a reality, and a large number of people were on streets to express their discomfort, but the people's rightful expression was misused and mislead by forces with vested agendas. He noted that evidence of foreign involvement has already emerged in investigation until now and it would be made public in due course of time. Mr. Yerzhan highlighted that his coun try is back on the stable trajectory, and the government has announced sets of much-needed economic, socio-economic and political reforms that would be implemented in months and years ahead. The government of Kazakhstan would do all it can to decrease the gap between rich and poor and move towards equitable distribution of wealth and resources. He made it clear that interests of local and foreign investors would ne safeguarded at all costs. The envoy made it clear that his country has a close strategic partnership with the Russian Federation, and the help of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in dealing with this chaotic situation only strengthens this partnership.

Positivity rate still higher than 10%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's COVID-19 positivity ratio remained above 10% for the seventh consecutive day, the National Command and Operation Centre's (NCOC) data showed Wednesday morning, with the government mulling over more restrictions for cities with high positivity rates.

The country recorded a positivity rate of 10.17% as 5,196 new coronavirus cases were recorded after 51,063 tests were conducted across Pakistan in the last 24 hours, NCOC's figures showed. The overall positivity rate and daily COVID-19 case count, however, has registered a minor decline in the last two days, as per the NCOC stats.

With the detection of new cases, the number of total cases have jumped to 1.386 million, while 15 more patients have succumbed to the virus, taking the death toll to 29,137, the official stats showed. The federal government has decided to control the COVID-19 situation before allowing citizens to get back to their normal routine and impose further restrictions in cities with a positivity ratio higher than 10%. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), in a notification late last night, issued directions to the airport staff across the country to wear masks amid the rise in cases due to the Omicron variant. The notification said staff members and passengers would not be allowed inside the airport premises without wearing masks.

Police use tear gas to disperse MQM-P protesters

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Protests by MQM-P workers and leaders erupted on Wednesday on Shahrah-e-Faisal against the controversial local government bill. The protesters, who had gathered in large numbers in the afternoon hours, attempted to reach the Chief Minister House for a sit-in. As a result, the flow of traffic was severely affected on the road considered to be the city's main artery. The police, however, baton-charged the crowd and used tear gas shells in an attempt to dissuade it from entering the red zone.

MQM-P representatives said several women and children participating in the protests sustained injuries, while the police arrested several MOM-P leaders and activists. Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA) Sadaqat Hussain was also injured because of the baton charge. However, the police have successfully cleared the area near CM House, the report said.

Contingents of south police were deployed to the site of the protest to disperse the demonstrators. According to the traffic police, the Shahrah-e-Faisal road started to become choked and as protesters continued to advance forwards, therefore, they had no choice but to use force and fire teargas shells. The protesters, however, insisted that they were staging their protest peacefully, but the police went ahead and used force to disperse them, the report said. Per reports, the police have cleared the area and roads have been cleared for the commuters, while five people have been arrested so far from the area near CM House. MQM-P leaders and workers have left for the press club where the top leadership is expected to hold a press conference in order to decide on an action plan. Commenting on the action of the police to disperse the protesters, former mayor of Karachi Wasim Akhtar said that the "worst form of state force was used against the protesters," adding that several workers and leaders were injured because of the baton charge.

Gov't successful to jack-up growth rate at 5.37%

"This (growth) was not expected by anybody but it happened," the federal minister said while addressing a press conference here adding that all sectors of economy including manufacturing, agriculture and services witnessed growth during the period

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Shaukat Tarin said Wednesday that despite four big crises the country had to face during past three-and-half years, the economy has been heading on right direction as it grew by 5.37 percent during fiscal year 2020-21 and is expected to grow by 5% during the current year.

"This (growth) was not expected by anybody but it happened," the federal minister said while addressing a press conference here adding that all sectors of economy including manufacturing, agriculture and services witnessed growth during the period.

He said, that earlier the growth for the last year was expected to hover around expecting 3.94, but since the large scale manufacturing witnessed considerable growth in June 2021, which jacked up overall growth fig-

He expressed the hope that growth during the current year is expected at 5 percent as overall revenue collection has witnessed tremendous growth, with electricity utilization increasing by 13 percent exports on rise and bumper crops expected. Enumerating four big

crisis the incumbent government had to face during the past three and half years, the minister said, when the incumbent government took over, it had to pay around \$29 billion as there were \$20 billion current account deficit whereas payments of around \$9 billion were also due. He said the Prime Minister went to

friendly countries and collected dol-

lars, however the country had to go

later, which was the toughest one following which the govern-Covid-19

ment had to increase discount rate, make currency devaluation, enhance utility prices to overcome deficit. He said the second crisis was spread of pandemic, which he called was 'once in a century crisis' that had affected the country as well as the whole world.

into IMF programme

He added, the third crisis the government had to face was commodity price cycle which was recorded at 20 years' high and resultantly countries four big imports increased from 85 to 100 percent. He clarified that the imports went up more due to price hike than increase in commodity. He said, the fourth crisis was created

due to situation in Afghanistan when United States left and frozen reserves of the neighboring country and impacted Pakistan's currency market.

He said when Covid-19 pandemic hit the world, the Prime Minister took tough decision and opted for smart lock-down to ensure businesses run In addition, he provided incentives for enhancing exports, particularly textile sector, injected money in agriculture to reduce dependence food imports and accorded priority to construction. He said the Covid-19 was handled successfully adding the Economist Normalcy Index kept the country at first three position for three consecutive times, adding that now even advanced countries were following Pakistan's smart lockdown strategy. He said that owing to prudent policies, the exports from the country increased by up to 29% whereas the remittance also wit nessed a considerable growth.

Karot Power Company wins **NEPRA CSR** stalwart award



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China

to Pakistan Nong Rong Wednesday expressed gratitude over the NE PRA's CSR Stalwart Award to the Karot Power Company, the entity for Karot hydro power project under the umbrella of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). In a tweet, the Chinese envoy said the company was awarded for its unwavering commitment to community development. "By joint contribution, extensive consultation and shared benefits, CPEC is win-win cooperation", he added. Karot hydro power plant is among the early-harvest high-priority projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative. The run-of-river project has iconic importance being a source of sustainable, low-cost, clean and green energy. The \$2 billion project has entered the commissioning phase as over 95% civil and electromechanical works of 720 megawatts Karot hydro power plant have been completed. The project is expected to become fully operational by June this year. - APP