



Islamabad POST

Saturday, February 05, 2022

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

European Union warns Russia of tougher sanctions over Ukraine

Detailed News On Page-07

Sri Lanka and Pakistan trusted partners: Envoy

Detailed News On Page-08

Fact-finding mission urged for IIOJK

Detailed News On Page-04



Briefs

No 'rest or relent' until Kashmir freedom

NEW YORK: Pakistan will not "rest or relent" until the Kashmiri people have realized their right to self-determination through a free and impartial plebiscite in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions, Ambassador Munir Akram said Friday. Speaking in a webinar commemorating Kashmir Solidarity Day on Feb 5, the Pakistan envoy said that the Kashmir dispute was the unfinished agenda of self-determination in the South Asian sub-continent. At the outset, Ambassador Akram welcomed the distinguished panelists, reminding the audience that it was a day to reaffirm "our unflinching support to our Kashmir brothers and sisters" waging a heroic and epic struggle against India's barbaric occupation for more than seven decades. — APP

Hasnain's action declared illegal

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board said on Friday after the test conducted on pace bowler Muhammad Hasnain bowling action at the ICC's accredited testing centre in Lahore on 21 January and the report reviewed and verified by the Cricket Australia's independent expert found his bowling action to be illegal. "The PCB today received a formal and detailed report from Cricket Australia on Mohammad Hasnain's assessment test, which stated his elbow extension for his good length delivery, full length delivery, slow bouncer and bouncer exceeded the 15-degree limits, said a spokesman of the PCB here. "The PCB has discussed the report with its own bowling experts and is confident that the problem can be resolved. The PCB will now appoint a bowling consultant who will work with Mohammad Hasnain so that he can rectify his bowling action and be ready for a reassessment.

Holiday Notice

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

Govt ends dialogue with TTP

Sheikh Rashid says the talks could not go ahead as there were things that could not be accepted

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed on Friday said that the federal government while rejecting the conditions announced to end dialogues with the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Briefing the Senate Committee on Home Affairs, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that the Afghan Taliban had initially held talks with the banned TTP and tried to persuade them to settle issues with Pakistan but the talks could not go ahead as there were things that could not be accepted. The interior minister said that there were people of the outlawed TTP in the border areas of Afghanistan and many groups may have come together, adding that two of their terrorists had been killed in Islamabad recently. Sh Rashid said that the conditions laid out by them were not acceptable to the government following which they ended the ceasefire themselves, adding that we have received indications that negotiations will not succeed. Regarding terrorism in Balochistan, the minister said the communication that was intercepted in Thursday's incidents, people were not only in touch with Afghanistan and India but also from other places. "Seven people including a major were martyred in the attack," he added.

Security forces kill 3 terrorists

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Three terrorists were killed including two high value targets at Balgatar, Kech in a follow up clearance operation conducted on a makeshift Terrorist hide-out linked with recent terrorist activities in Panjgur, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement. According to ISPR, the terrorists hide out was surrounded on a major intelligence tip off. Security Forces encircled the well dug out Terrorists and in intense exchange of fire killed all 3 Terrorists hiding there. The killed individuals include terrorist commander Summar alias Bahar, terrorist commander ALtaf alias Lalik and Terrorist commander Phailan Baloch who was involved in terrorist activities against security forces in Hoshab, Panjgur and other areas. The killed terrorists were involved in terrorist activities in complete Balochistan. Cache of arms and ammunition recovered from hide out.

India: Hijab wearing students face ban

27 students were barred from entering a government-run pre-university college

FOREIGN DESK

NEW DELHI: The southern Indian state of Karnataka is witnessing a deepening hijab row, with the Indian media reporting a second incident in recent weeks of Muslim students being denied entry to their educational institution for wearing headscarves. According to Hindustan Times, 27 students were barred from entering a government-run pre-university college — which is equivalent to a high school — on Thursday for wearing hijabs in the coastal town of Kundapur in Karnataka's Udipi district.

A video of the incident was widely shared on social media. The report said the decision not to allow entry to students wearing hijabs was taken after

Kashmir Solidarity Day to be observed

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Kashmir Solidarity Day is being observed on Saturday to reiterate Pakistan's resolve to stand by Kashmiris to continue to extend all possible support to them till the realization of their right to self-determination. At his weekly news briefing in Islamabad on Friday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Asim Iftikhar

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka taking part in ceremonies on occasion of 74th Independence Day of Sri Lanka. (Detailed news on Back Page). — DNA

State Bank receives \$1.053 bn from IMF

Reserves swell to USD 16.7 billion; rupee strengthens

ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan said Friday that it received \$1.053 billion from the International Monetary Fund after the successful completion of 6th review of Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme for Pakistan.



"Following the successful completion of the 6th review of the IMF program, #SBP has received the next tranche of \$1.053 billion," the State Bank tweeted. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Wednesday had approved 6th tranche of EFF programme for Pakistan. The IMF mission led by Ernesto Ramirez Rigo had held virtual discussions during October 4–November 18, 2021 in the context of the 2021 Article IV consultations and the sixth review of the authorities' reform program supported by the IMF's Extended Fund Facility (EFF). The Pakistani authorities and IMF staff had reached a staff-level agreement on policies and reforms needed to complete the sixth review under the EFF, however the agreement was subject to approval by the Executive Board, following the implementation of prior actions, notably on fiscal and institutional reforms. It is pertinent to mention here that the fund had approved \$6 billion, three-year loan facility for Pakistan back in July 2019 to help resuscitate the country's ailing economy. Tareen expressed the hope that the country's economy would grow at a rate of 4.5-5pc in the current fiscal year, despite commodity price shocks in the international market, and that the growth rate would increase to six per cent in the next fiscal year. — APP

ISPR refutes Indian COAS' LoC claims

The ceasefire agreed "only due to Pakistan's concerns for the safety of people of Kashmir"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Maj Gen Babar Iftikhar on Friday rejected Indian Army Chief Manoj Mukund Naravane's claim that the ceasefire arrangement on the Line of Control (LoC) was holding because India had negotiated from a "position of strength". The 740-km LoC had seen unprovoked artillery shelling and firing from across the dividing line until February last year when India and Pakistan recommitted themselves to the 2003 ceasefire, bringing relief to the lives of the affected population.



On Thursday, Indian Army Chief Naravane said the ceasefire continued to hold because India had negotiated from a position of strength.

Speaking about the ongoing military

Continued on Page 06

US backs potential Saudi, UAE arms sales

Says it will continue to support the defence capabilities of its allies

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: The US State Department has approved Washington's latest raft of proposed weapons sales to the Middle East, with Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) preliminarily approved for deals — if they are not blocked by US Congress. The sales come at a time of heightened tensions with Iran, and as the UAE has

seen a rare string of attacks claimed by the Houthis, a rebel group that a Saudi-led military coalition, of which the UAE is a member, continues to fight in Yemen. Saudi Arabia has been regularly targeted by Houthi missile and drone attacks in recent years. The United States has said it will continue to support the defence capabilities of its allies in the region — notably Saudi

Continued on Page 06

Pak, China ties time-tested and timeless: PM

Prime Minister Imran Khan reiterated that as the flagship project of BRI, CPEC had strategic significance for both Pakistan and China and was delivering tangible benefits to the people of two countries

CENTRELINE REPORT

BEIJING: The Prime Minister held a virtual meeting with He Lifeng, Chairman of China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and Vice Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in Beijing. During the meeting, both sides reviewed the progress of ongoing CPEC projects and discussed the preparations for future initiatives. The Prime Minister was accompanied by cabinet ministers and senior officials for the meeting while Mr. He Lifeng was accompanied by Vice Chairman Ning Jizhe and Tang Dengjie and other senior officials of the NDRC. In his remarks, the Prime Minister said that Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership was time-tested and timeless. Despite COVID-19 pandemic, work on all CPEC projects progressed steadily due to joint cooperation of both sides. The Prime Minister appreciated efforts of the NDRC and relevant authorities of both sides in this regard.



Prime Minister Imran Khan reiterated that as the flagship project of BRI, CPEC had strategic significance for both Pakistan and China and was delivering tangible benefits to the people of two countries. He noted with satisfaction that CPEC's early-harvest projects have transformed Pakistan's economic landscape thus laying a solid foundation for sustainable economic growth.

Reaffirming the commitment of two sides to timely completion of CPEC and its high-quality development, the Prime Minister said that both sides would continue expediting efforts to achieve Gwadar's potential as a hub of regional commerce and industry while also prioritizing preparatory work on the ML-I and other key energy projects. In his remarks, Chairman NDRC said

that China attached immense significance to CPEC and was firmly committed to its steady progress and development. He noted that China has become Pakistan's largest investment and trade partner in last seven years and both sides were keen to maintain the momentum of overall economic and trade ties in future as well. Chairman He added that NDRC and all

relevant Chinese institutions would continue their efforts to encourage Chinese state-owned and private enterprises for investment in CPEC projects. In this regard, both sides had decided to establish new green, digital, health, trade and industry corridors, which would enhance sector-wise cooperation in these areas. Thanking the Prime Minister for his firm support, Mr. He Lifeng expressed China's readiness to assist Pakistan in the areas of industrialization, agricultural modernization, science and technology and socio-economic development. During the meeting, both sides welcomed the signing of the Framework Agreement on Industrial Cooperation between the Board of Investment (BOI) and the NDRC which would, inter alia, facilitate relocation of China's industrial units to CPEC SEZs and accelerate investment from China and elsewhere. Both sides also signed the Minutes of the 6th JWG meeting on Gwadar which was held on 30 December 2021. The Minutes were signed by Mr. Asad Umar, the Federal Minister of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, and Mr. Ning Jizhe, the Vice-Chairman of NDRC.

Inside...

FESCO installing industrial, commercial domestic connections — Page 02

Adm. Rao's memoirs underscore coastal sections as stakeholders — Page 03

Dr Shahzad for sending fact-finding mission in IIOJK — Page 04

The violation of Human Rights in Occupied Kashmir — Page 05

China's Olympics begin, with lockdown and boycotts — Page 06

China, Russia oppose NATO expansion amid tensions — Page 07

Sri Lanka, Pakistan always been trusted partners: Envoy — Page 08

FESCO installing industrial, commercial domestic connections

FESCO was facing problems for purchase of new material due to corona pandemic, devaluation of the dollar and lack of interest from the vendors but FESCO continued the tendering process

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The procurement process in line with the vision of the FESCO Board of Directors (BOD) is continuing despite corona and fluctuation in the valuation of dollars, said Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) Engr. Bashir Ahmed. He said that pending industrial, commercial, domestic and agriculture connections are being installed on priority basis and all defective meters would also be replaced till the end of this month. He further said that despite a comprehensive plan from FESCO (BOD), FESCO was facing problems for purchase of new material due to corona pandemic, devaluation of the dollar and lack of interest from the vendors but FESCO continued the tendering process. By the grace of Allah and sustainable efforts of FESCO administration now



sufficient material is available at FESCO stores, he added. He said that 963 distribution transformers, 103000 single phase electricity meters, 675 Kilometer PVC cable, 18855 Kilometer Rabbit, Dog, Osprey and Ant conductors and 4310 structure & poles are presently available at FESCO regional store and after the availability of all

material FESCO is installing different sorts of electricity connection on war footing. He said that FESCO has also escalated the electrification of new villages under the SAP program. Similarly, procurement worth 3829 million is in progress for the GSC & GSO Department of Project Management Unit (PMU) while 6 power transformers of 31/40 MVA, 12 power transformers of 20/26 MVA, 590 Towers, 750 Kilometers rail conductor, other cables and safety equipment have already purchased. He disclosed that due to comprehensive and systematic planning, FESCO would not face material shortage in the coming years while replacement of the two-phase transformers under annual maintenance program, up-gradation of grid stations and work on different LT and HT proposals would be completed till end of March. He said that the Customer Services Department has also upgraded to facilitate the FESCO consumers.



SIALKOT: Ambassador of Kazakhstan the Republic to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin along with Former Senior Vice President Chamber of Commerce Khurram Aslam Butt along with others visiting to the residence of national poet Dr. Allama Iqbal (Iqbal Manzil). – APP

PCR test rate cut down in Sindh

DNA

KARACHI: The Sindh Healthcare Commission (SHC) on Friday reduced the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test charges to Rs4,500 per test to increase the percentage of people tested for Covid-19 as there is surge in cases in the province. As per notification, the test charges from home is fixed at Rs4,800. Meanwhile, the Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) from laboratories cost Rs1,200, said the Sindh Healthcare Commission. According to the commission, prices were fixed after meeting with all stakeholders including laboratories and hospitals in Karachi. Chairman Sindh Commission Ahsan Qavi said that people should complain to the Healthcare Commission if they were overcharged for the Covid-19 testing. The commission has also stressed to take strict action against the public and private hospitals and laboratories if they charge more for the PCR test. It is pertinent to mention that earlier the Punjab Health Commission had reduced the PCR test charges to Rs4,800 per test to increase the percentage of people tested for Covid-19.

1,500 poultry units distributed in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: The livestock department will distribute 1,500 poultry units under the next phase of promotion of the poultry industry in the Faisalabad division. Director Livestock Dr Haider Ali Khan said here Friday that 500 poultry units would be given in district Faisalabad, 22 in Toba Tek Singh and 400 units each in districts Chinot and Jhang. He said that poultry units would be distributed in Toba Tek Singh on Feb 8, in Faisalabad on Feb 9 and 12, in Jhang on Feb 22 and in Chinot on Feb 23. He said that each poultry unit comprises five hens and a male hen and it will be given for Rs 1,140 per unit. – APP

US Embassy spends \$6.4 mn on preservation of Nusserwanjee building

KARACHI: U.S. Consulate joins Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture and Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture and Sindh Exploration and Adventure Society to celebrate preservation and renovation of Karachi's historic Nusserwanjee Building. US Consul Generalark Stroh, IVS President Dr. Kaleemullah Lashari, SEAS Secretary General Dr. Asma Ibrahim were main figures at the ceremony, says US Consulate release here on Tuesday. This landmark restoration was made possi-



ble through a \$ 140,000 United States Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) grant to restore the building implemented by SEAS and facilitated by IVS. The United States has awarded more than \$6.4 million dollars (approximately 1.1 billion rupees) for 30 such cultural heritage projects across Pakistan. Consul General Stroh explained that the U.S. Mission supported the preservation of heritage sites like the Nusserwanjee Building realizing that these sites mean so much more than bricks and mortar.

They strengthened communities, and they were an investment in building a stronger and more prosperous Pakistan, he said. "I am proud, together with IVS, SEAS, and the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, the U.S. Consulate has played a part in ensuring that this piece of Karachi's history is now preserved for future generations."

In addition to the Nusserwanjee Building, other U.S. AFCP projects in Sindh included the restoration of the tombs of Sultan Ibrahim and Amir Sultan Muhammad at the Makli Hill necropolis, the conservation of Varun Dev Hindu Temple on Manora Island, and the recently inaugurated project to restore Frere Hall. These projects exemplify the United States' commitment to work with Pakistan and Sindh governments to preserve its rich cultural heritage and diversity to preserve its rich cultural heritage and diversity. – APP

CM KP Mahmood Khan expresses solidarity with Kashmiris

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has expressed solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) in their struggle to get right of self-determination and said that independence is the fundamental right of the Kashmiris. In a message issued on the occasion of Youm-e-Yekjehti Kashmir (Kashmir Solidarity Day) here on Friday, the KP Chief Minister said that we are standing beside people of Kashmir in their struggle of independence. The chief minister urged international human rights organizations to play their due role in ensuring the implementation of the resolutions of United Nations. He said that peace in the region

is linked with the resolution of Kashmir issue and no durable peace would be ensured without its settlement. Reiterating the resolve to extend moral, diplomatic and political support to the people of Kashmir, he said that the over seven-decade long struggle of independence by the oppressed Kashmiris is unprecedented. He said that struggle of Kashmiris for independence would succeed ultimately and they will soon start journey towards peace and progress. Mahmood Khan said that India, which called herself as big-gest democracy of the world, has unleashed a reign of cruelties and barbarism on innocent Kashmiris since last seven decades that are highly condemnable and cruel. He said that the adopting of new tactics by India with each passing day to suppress the struggle of independence by the people of Kashmir



and besieging them since last one year through one sided and illegal steps is a matter of grave concern for the comity of nations particularly United Nations and other human rights organizations.

He said the peaceful movement of Kashmiris for freedom is matchless precedent of struggle that could not be suppressed. He said that the present government is not only supporting the peaceful struggle for the right of self-determination by the unarmed and oppressed people of the Indian Occupied Kashmir rather is also on the forefront at all available forums. The chief minister said that in the manner through which Prime Minister Imran Khan taken up the case of Kashmir on the floor of the General Assembly of the United Nations has no precedent in the history. He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, the people of Pakistan and its government will continue their full political, moral and diplomatic support to the struggle of independence of Kashmiris.



LONDON: Ambassador of Sahiwal Sohail Anjum Ansari presenting a souvenir to PML leader and former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Sohail is in London these days. – DNA

OGRA to hold public hearing at Peshawar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In order to extend an opportunity to General Public with respect to the Regulatory issues pertaining to SNGPL, Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority has decided to hold Public Hearing on February 7, 2022. In this regard, all the interested persons/parties are requested to attend and present their complaints / grievances, preferably in writing in the hearing. The same will be held and start at 11:00 a.m. at the conference hall of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry building.

President upholds FTO decisions

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi while upholding the decisions of Federal Tax Ombudsman regarding maladministration of FBR officials in processing refund cases has directed the FBR to implement FTO's recommendations. The departmental plea regarding bar on jurisdiction of FTO in such cases has also been set aside by the president. He has directed the commissioner -IR, Commission West ZONE ISLAMABAD and commissioner IR Enforcement 11-CTO Karachi their orders by exercising powers conferred U/S 122 A, as per law; and report compliance within 30 days. In all three cases the background of the case was similar as under:

In the first case: pertaining to sahiwal against order framed under section 170(4) of the income Tax Ordinance, 2001 (the ordinance) for tax year 2018 by commissioner.I.R Sahiwal Mr Nazir Ahmad Proprietor of M/s Bilal Commission Shop. In the second Case an individual filed return of income for tax year 2020 under section 114(1) of the ordinance claiming refund amounting to Rs 0.188 million and e-filed refund application for tax year 2020.

In case no 3, Mr. Yousuf irshad hussain,(the complainant) a propertie cocern,filed returns of income for tax years 2016 to 2019 under section 114 (1) of the income tax ordinance ,2001 the ordinance claiming refund amounting to rs 0.051 million ,Rs 0.048 million ,Rs 0.063 million and Rs 0.063 million and Rs 0.072 million. – DNA

Lodhran police install complaint boxes

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

LODHHRAN: First time in South Punjab's history DPO Lodhran Abdul Rauf Babar has installed complaint box on several locations throughout District Lodhran, "catering the complainants and ensuring the timely justice to them is our moral and basic duty, revolutionary reforms in Lodhran Police continues" said by District Police Officer Lodhran Abdul Rauf Babar. On orders of DPO Abdul Rauf during the first phase suggestions/complaint boxes have been installed at 10 different locations in District Lodhran, purpose of installing the boxes is to bring transparency and improvement in Lodhran Police, people can put in any complaint regarding criminal elements and Police. DPO Abdul Rauf said that purpose of installing the boxes is to keep informed about people's suggestion, he added that he has all the keys to the installed boxes so that boxes can be opened on time and resolve the complaints, people can convey their suggestions without any fear so that society can be moved forward towards positive activities and it is possible with the help of common Pakistani Citizens.

People can blow whistle against crimes and criminals, corrupt police officials, drug dealers, gamblers or any kind of criminal activity so that Police can take action against them with full responsibility and without discrimination. Former Chairman Municipal Committee Lodhran Sheikh Iftikhar Uddin Tari said while lauding the Lodhran Police's revolutionary step that complaint boxes will play an effective role in attaining information of criminal safehouses, women and child harassment, drug dens and crimes throughout the district, public can put their complaint discretely without unveiling their identity



on simple parchment, he added that we have to keep our coming generations safe by ourselves so that our younger generation can study in healthy environment and play their role in Pakistan's prosperity. Civil Society's representative Muzaffar Iqbal Chaudhry told that role of Police in remote areas of South Punjab is very important which impacts negatively or positively on the society however it is Lodhran's fortune that such honest and eligible DPO has been making District Lodhran peaceful with his professional and academic qualifications and due to same professional decorum corruption has been reduced by 70% in 10 Police Stations throughout the Lodhran District and registering of free FIR has been made possible. DPO Abdul Rauf said that citizens who could not reach complaint office during office hours can also put their complaints along with their NIC Copy in the box while lost or other important documents can also be put inside the box. All citizens are requested that they should play their role in improving and eliminating the crimes and any kind of secret information can be put into the box without showing their identity.

BRT-Peshawar to be recognized as one of three cities in the World next week

ISLAMABAD: Peshawar will be one of the three cities in the world being recognized at the 2022 Sustainable Transport Award ceremony in Washington DC, USA next week. According to a Gwadar Pro's report on Friday, the BRT-Peshawar is recognised as sustainable transport system in the World: At the ceremony, the BTR will be declared as "new state of the art gender and environment-friendly bus rapid transport system". The northwestern city of Peshawar is amongst those three cities of the world that are transforming their streets, prioritizing sustainability, and expanding access and mobility for all residents. Three cities including Tartu, Peshawar, and Bogota have been honored for transforming their streets, prioritizing sustainability, and expanding

access and mobility for all residents. MOBILIZE, which is the annual sustainable transport summit of the Institute for Transportation and Development (ITDP) and the Sustainable Transport Award Committee (STAC) organize the event on February 9. "Peshawar, Pakistan received our second honorable mention for their new gold-standard BRT system that cuts through emissions and travel times, while providing dedicated access for women and

passengers with disabilities," according to STAC. BRT, a flagship project of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was launched on August 13, 2020. The project was completed at a cost of Rs. 69b. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) imported buses from China for the BRT project. With the last import of 30 buses from China in February 2021, the BRT bus fleet reached 158. Besides buses, all the machinery running the system has been imported from China. – APP

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

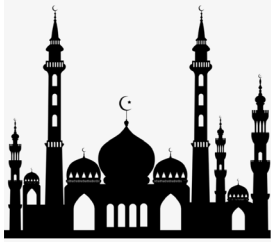
JHELUM
Iqrash News Agency
03005412069

KHARIAN
Ijaz News Agency
03068863870

LALAMUSA
Gulzar Ahmed Noshi
03359494788

SARA-I-ALMAGIR
0300 5428178

SERVICES



Namaz Timings

Fajr..... 05:37 am
Zohr..... 12:22 pm
Asr..... 04:03 pm
Maghrib..... 05:41 pm
Isha..... 07:06 pm



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIAFlightInfo.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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



Complaints

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Wasa Water Tank

Rawalpindi.....0331-5022125

Adm. Rao's memoirs underscore coastal sections as stakeholders

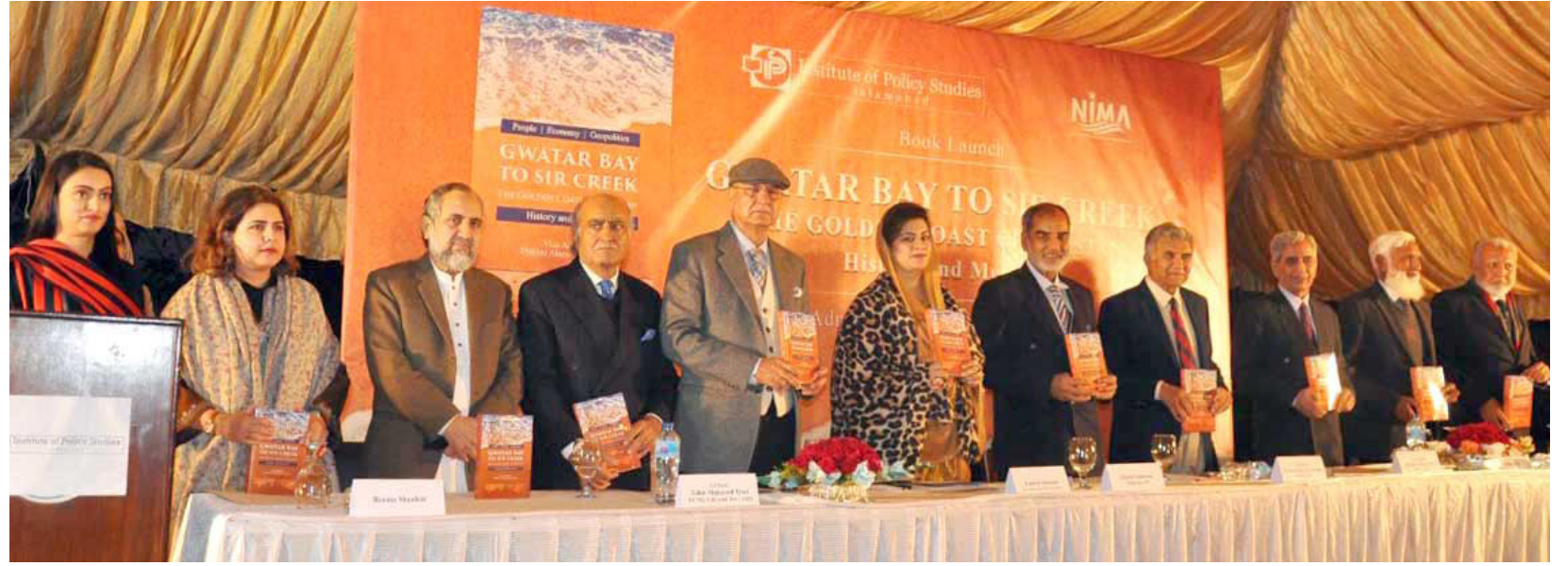
The gathering was also addressed by Ambassador (ret'd) Khalid Mahmood, Chairman, Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad, Ammara Durrani, Assistant Resident Representative, Chief Development Policy Unit, UNDP and Ambassador (ret'd) Syed Abrar Hussain, Vice Chairman IPS

STAFF REPORT/DNA

ISLAMABAD: Local communities as stakeholders are an essential element for the success of a policy as they contribute to national cohesion and economic growth if given ownership and provided the right opportunities. This holds true for the coastal communities, and while acknowledging this aspect, Pakistan Navy follows a humanistic approach in its security strategy as evinced by various development projects based along the country's coast. This was highlighted by speakers at the book launch ceremony of Gwatar Bay to Sir Creek: The Golden Coast of Pakistan - History and Memoirs, authored by Vice Admiral Itikhar Ahmed Rao (ret'd) and published by IPS Press, the publishing arm of Institute of Policy Studies (IPS). The event was organized jointly with National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA).

The session was chaired by Admiral Mohammad Asif Sandila (ret'd), former Chief of Naval Staff, co-chaired by Khalid Rahman, Chairman IPS, and graced as guests of honor by Kanwal Shauzab, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah (ret'd), former Chief of Naval Sta, Lt Gen Tahir Mahmud Qazi (ret'd) and Vice Admiral Abdul Aleem (ret'd), Director General NIMA. The gathering was also addressed by Ambassador (ret'd) Khalid Mahmood, Chairman, Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad, Ammara Durrani, Assistant Resident Representative, Chief Development Policy Unit, UNDP and Ambassador (ret'd) Syed Abrar Hussain, Vice Chairman IPS.

The participants were of the view that the book provides insight into the latent human angle to Pakistan's coastline; the development potential that has become critical for the politics and economics of the region. As such it is important to en-



gage and empower the local population not just along the coast but all over the country for national security.

The book provides a number of pointers on how to make this happen. It was observed that policy formulation is not a mechanical process and cannot be done in isolation to history and background. It must include consultations with stakeholders, as evident from various incidents shared in the book.

In this context, the speakers stated that amid the current negative narratives about Pakistan, the book depicts a success story that how the successive governments consistently worked for retrocession of Gwadar to Pakistan from Oman, which was finally achieved in 1958. Reflecting on his rich experiences along the coastal belt, Admiral Rao shared several anecdotes from his book where he remained at the center of many development-related works, especially in solving a quandary of the

fisherfolk in the Sir Creek region. This initiative culminated in the digging of the Marines Canal that continues to help the fishermen in gathering enough catch for sustainability while remaining safe.

The former Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) rued the prevailing sea-blindness in the country, albeit appreciating that gradually awareness about the issue is beginning to be raised through different steps taken by various research and academic institutions. Admiral Sandila acknowledged that he got attuned to many historical facts by reading the book. He spoke highly of the quality of the references used in the book, while stating that the work also presents a vision for the coastline which can prove to be very beneficial for the country going forward.

Khalid Rahman signified the importance of such comprehensive work, especially for research and policy arenas, in the digital era where even the most expe-

rienced and significantly placed policy practitioners and key opinion leaders are compelled to express their views in a short manner. In such an environment, solid and sustainable policy-making should be based on reports and books that are factual and works of research and not just built on information gathered in real-time, he added.

Kanwal Shauzab called the book a reflection of the author's 40 years of experience in the maritime domain, offering insightful geographic, economic, social and development perspectives of the region. She commended the author for an inspirational work written in a very simple, jargon-less language, thus making it an easy read for experts and newbies alike. Ammara Durrani termed the book a work of a polymath that brings together several social sciences disciplines that make up public policy. She said the government is well aware of the regional disparities and has kept re-

gional equalization as one of the cornerstones for policy-making. In this context the book should be an essential read for developmental policymakers, diplomats, and commercial stakeholders looking to invest in the coastal areas.

Ambassador (r) Khalid Mahmood said development of Gwadar should be people-centric. He said Pakistan also needs to focus on different aspects like applying to the International Seabed Authority for an exploration license, shipbuilding, port construction, etc. to boost blue economy. Vice Admiral Abdul Aleem (ret'd) was of the view that the maritime community is also responsible for sea-blindness. Besides, academia is not coming up with work focused on the maritime sector and as such there is poor understanding of this vital area of the economy. Lt Gen Qazi (ret'd) highlighted the book's immense scholastic value and said that it presents the perspective of Pakistan on Sir Creek and other regions.

Afghan crisis may be a security threat to Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Experts at a webinar called upon the world to resolve the current humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan immediately which, they said, is lingering on with each passing day and may cause security threat to Pakistan. The webinar titled: 'The Afghanistan Impact - Security Threats to Pakistan Confirmation', was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here.

Speaking on the occasion, Pakistan's former ambassador to Afghanistan Mr Ayaz Wazir said that in the last six months incidents of uprising within and outside the Afghan state are under

control which shows the worth of Taliban regime. First, he said, we should be looking at our own interests in Afghanistan and then we should take care of the regional interests in coordination with other countries. He maintained that the major issue faced by the Taliban government at the moment is the humanitarian crisis. However, after the talks between Taliban representatives and the US government that held in Norway, the world has started dispatching aid for the Afghan people.

"I hope the world countries would reconsider their opinion in the light of their individual interest as to how to interact with the Taliban government in

future," Mr Wazir said. The Taliban have to prove that they are capable of running a country effectively like any other state, he said, adding that an inclusive government will be welcomed with open arms by the international community. Stressing the need for engaging select people from the previous Afghan government, he said Afghanistan should go for fair elections, or at least the Afghan jirga should be called to solidify their position to the world as the representative of the state.

SDPI Executive Director Dr Abid Suleri said that the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is lingering on and may cause problems for Pakistan in terms of influx

of refugees, food shortages, etc. The renewed wave of militant groups especially in Balochistan has made us awakened to proceed with caution within our own country, he added. He called upon the world to take the impending food and refugee crises in the war-torn country seriously, otherwise it may harm regional peace. Veteran journalist and writer Mr Zahid Hussain said the recent change in Afghanistan has created a situation that has shaken the entire geopolitics. The country was dependent on foreign aid for the last 20 years and still in need of aid for its economic survival, he said, adding that soon after the Taliban takeover, the country's survival is at stake.

All set to observe Kashmir solidarity day

RAWALPINDI: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Headquarters, Marzia Saleem on Friday said that all set to observe Kashmir Solidarity Day on Saturday in befitting manner. She said that Kashmir Solidarity Day would be observed on Feb 5 to express wholehearted support of the Pakistani nation to the just struggle of Kashmiri people for their inalienable right to self-determination. She informed that like other parts of the country, all arrangements had been finalized to observe Kashmir Solidarity Day here to reiterate complete solidarity with the brethren of IIOJK. India is keeping a major part of the internationally-acknowledged disputed Himalayan Jammu Kashmir state in her illegal and forced occupation at the might of her occupational military power since October 27, 1947 against the aspirations of the people of the State. She said that it would be a public holiday and preparations were in full swing to observe the Day to highlight the plight of the oppressed Kashmiri people and remind the world community of its obligations towards the resolution of the longstanding dispute and added that rallies, public meetings, and seminars would be held on Saturday to draw attention of the world community towards grave human rights violations and brutalities against innocent Kashmiris by the Indian security forces. - APP

'Public issues being solved on priority'

DNA
ATTOCK: Member National Assembly and Chairman District Coordination Committee for Public Grievances Major (ret'd) Tahir Sadiq has said that all resources are being utilized for the solution of public issues. He was chairing the meeting of the District Coordination Committee for Public Grievances at the deputy commissioner's office on Friday. Member Provincial Assembly Malik Jamsheer Altaf, Provincial Minister for Social Welfare Syed Yawar Abbas Bukhari, District President PTI Qazi Ahmad Akbar Khan, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam's Representative Malik Ejaz, Deputy Commissioner Attock Imran Hamid Sheikh, DPO Attock Rana Shoab Mehmood, Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Attock Dr. Waqar Ali Khan, Additional Deputy Commissioner General Mehreen Baloch and other were also present on this occasion.

Imprisonment of HR defenders unjustifiable: Claire Bidwell

ISLAMABAD: A Scottish Human Rights activist and Co-founder of a group on social media called "Let Kashmir Decide" Claire Bidwell on Friday said the silencing and imprisonment of the Kashmiri leaders and Human Rights defenders in IIOJK is unjustifiable. In an online interview with APP, she said that it was up to the Kashmiris to decide and their voice needs to be heard at all levels. "Illegal occupation by India is completely unacceptable, the human rights abuses occurring are intolerable and need to be stopped immediately to protect innocent youth, women, children and elderly facing the longest human siege since August 5, 2019," Claire said. She said the blackout of Kashmiri Media outlets was concerning, adding, "The closure of amnesty International office in India has stopped international efforts to gauge the level of human rights abuses and massacre carried out of unarmed innocent people in the occupied valley. They are unable to stop killings of Innocent Kashmiri men in fake encounters." "The rapes of women and girls and the blinding of children with pellet guns are used as a weapon of war. We are unable to tell the full extent of the genocide occurring, the grouse affect on the environment in terms of mass deforestation and melting of glaciers due to mass military activity in IIOJK." To a question she expressed, "Our aim is to raise international awareness of the Kashmir conflict and human rights violations occurring in Indian occupied Kashmir". Ms Bidwell mentioned that she was standing in complete solidarity with the Kashmiri people and was shocked and alarmed by the Human Rights abuses and illegal occupation that was allowed to happen under the patronage of Indian occupant state. - DNA

3,137 drivers fined during last month: SSP Traffic

DNA
ISLAMABAD: As per directions of IGP Islamabad Muhammad Ahsan Younis ITP constituted special squads to take action against vehicles with fancy and non-pattern number plates in the capital city. The action has also been ordered against those preparing such number plates and vendors, according to the officials. According to the details, Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) have challaned 3,137 vehicle During last one month in on going campaign for violating traffic rules. The ITP has intensified action against fancy and non-pattern number plates, Senior superintendent of Traffic Police Rai Mazhar Iqbal said that the efforts of the officers and Jawans have helped significantly reduce the number of fatal accidents. He said further similar initiatives need to be taken to ensure safety of lives of the citizen and make Islamabad an accident-free city. He further said that in future, the ITP aim to enforce a zero tolerance policy as it is moral responsibility to spread awareness regarding road safety while enforcing laws. Similarly, the behaviour of citizens on the road reflects the social norms of the society, he added.

18 booked for violating marriage act

RAWALPINDI: Saddar Barooni Police raided at a wedding ceremony and arrested 18 persons including two female dancers for making aerial firing and hosting dance party. SHO Saddar Barooni police station and his team raided at a wedding ceremony on Girja Road on violation of Marriage Act, Sound System Act and other sections regarding aerial firing and hosting dance party with female dancers and liquor. During raid, police arrested 18 persons namely Moiz Ashfaq, Hasibullah, Jan Bacha, Zubair Ahmed, Malik Zain, Shoukat, Muhammad Tahir, Muhammad Salman, Muhammad Kamran, Hayat Khan, Faizan Ali, Hamid Hamayoun, Amanat Ali, Zeeshan Zaman, Muhammad Zawar, Shahid Iqbal and two dancers, Rashna Kanwal and Sana Zaheer. - APP

COMSTECH and MSTF sign MoU to enhance co-op

The program will support young scholars and technologists by providing them 6 to 12 month long fellowships

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is signed by COMSTECH the Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of the OIC, Islamabad, Pakistan, represented by its Coordinator General, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary and Mustafa (PBUH) Science and Technology Foundation, Tehran, Iran represented by its CEO, Mahdi Safarinia, on Friday. The MoU will encourage discussions and cooperation between the both organizations and individual scientists and employees within

each organization in relation to opportunities for collaborative research activities and increasing the capacity of actual and potential role-players who avidly seek the advancement of science, technology, and innovation in the Islamic World. The MoU is devised to support the development of collaboration between the both organizations in areas of mutual interest with the focus on the value that can be achieved through working in collaboration to achieve the shared aims and objectives. Both organizations will jointly promote cooperation, consult with each other on identifying best prac-

tics in the use of technical cooperation methodologies in the areas of science and technology, socio-economic development, rapid industrialization, and related areas of common interest. Both organizations will exchange documentation and information in their respective fields of competence, implement programs and projects to develop the technological and scientific capacity of OIC member states, and jointly apply for funding opportunities available from domestic and international sources to develop the technological and scientific capacity of OIC member states.



Briefs

CDA to inaugurate Islamabad Art Gallery on Feb 6

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) would inaugurate Islamabad Art Gallery (IAG) at F-9 Park Islamabad on February 6. Chairman CDA Amir Ali Ahmed will inaugurate the new Art Gallery at famous F-9 Park. IAG would be a place for art and art enthusiasts in the heart of Islamabad. The artists community welcomed the establishment of new gallery. Renowned artist Film Star and Producer Jamal Shah said that this was a visionary decision on part of Chairman CDA to add a fantastic landmark to the Cultural infrastructure of Islamabad and will remind people of the Serpentine Gallery in the Hyde park London. It indeed is a very good news for the artists community to get new state of the art gallery. He expressed the hope that the gallery would promote art and culture and will also create opportunities for the emerging artists.

Ministry taking all actions for smooth Hajj

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony has said that it is taking all anticipatory actions for smooth operation of Hajj 2022. Through the Hajj Policy 2022 had not been announced yet due to certain reasons but the ministry in advance had adopted some measures for facilitating the intending pilgrims, a Religious Affairs' Ministry official told APP on Friday. He said the ministry had floated tenders for the procurement of 40,000 doses each of Meningococcal (Meningitis ACYW-135) and Quadrivalent / Tetravalent Seasonal Influenza vaccines. It had also invited the expression of interest from the scheduled banks to collect applications of the intending pilgrims for Hajj-2022, the official added. Similarly, talks were under way with private airlines for the transportation of the pilgrims to Saudi Arabia and back, he said. The official explained that the ministry was making all such arrangements for smooth sailing if the Hajj Policy 2022 was announced any time. It had to follow the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority rules and it took a due course of time for making all the following arrangements. He also urged the intending pilgrims not to submit their hard-earned money to any private tour operator as long as the Hajj Policy 2022 was announced by the ministry. He also cautioned the tour operators of strict action for collecting money in the wake of Hajj applications. - APP

ITP issued 3,137 fine tickets during January

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has issued some 3,137 fine tickets over various traffic violations during the month of January. The ITP had constituted special squads to take actions against traffic violations at major avenues in the city, said an ITP official on Friday. Similarly, he said the authority has expedited actions against those vendors preparing non-pattern and fancy number plates. He said as per senior superintendent of Traffic Police RaiMazhar Iqbal directions efforts were afoot to ensure traffic discipline in the city that helped significantly reduce the number of fatal accidents. The official added that all the zonal officers were strictly warned to enforce a zero tolerance policy against traffic rules violators. The ITP officers were well trained through seminars and have been instructed to treat citizens with love, sincerity and humility, he said. He was of the view that violation of traffic rules led to accidents and appealed to the citizens to abide by traffic laws to ensure smooth flow of traffic in the city as well as to protect lives of others and properties. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Atta Bandial addressing to the delegation of Command and Staff College Quetta during visit to Supreme Court of Pakistan. - DNA

Dr Shahzad for sending fact-finding mission in IIOJK

Dr Shahzad urged the int'l community to play their due role in giving the people of IIOJK their legitimate right to self-determination

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in Senate Dr Shahzad Waseem on Friday underlined the need for sending an international fact-finding mission to the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) to assess and compile a comprehensive report on the ever-worsening human rights situation there. Participating in a debate during a special session of the Senate on Kashmir, he said there were two reports of United Nations Commissioner on Human Rights about massive human rights violations in IIOJK and now "We demand to send a fact-finding mission there to compile the third report."

Recently, he said the Russell Tribunal on War Crimes had submitted a report, holding India responsible for committing genocide in occupied Kashmir and making illegal settlements. He said the whole Pakistani nation was standing with the people of Kashmir for their right to the plebiscite and would express complete solidarity with them on February 5. Dr Shahzad urged the international community to play their due role in giving the people of IIOJK their legitimate right to self-determination. He asked the world powers to pressurize India to

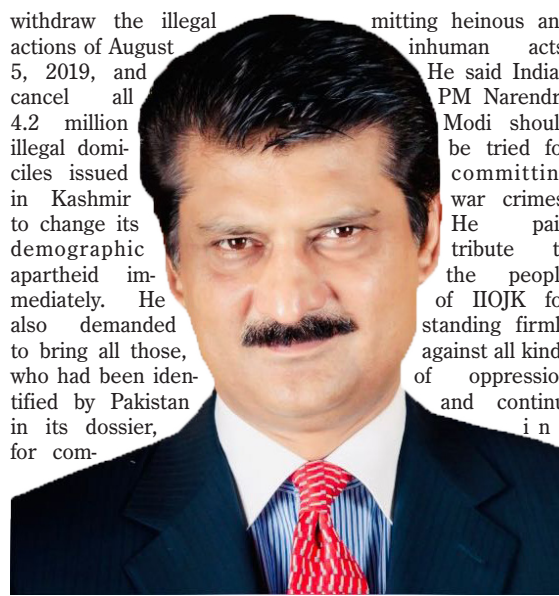
withdraw the illegal actions of August 5, 2019, and cancel all 4.2 million illegal domicile issues issued in Kashmir to change its demographic apartheid immediately. He also demanded to bring all those, who had been identified by Pakistan in its dossier, for committing heinous and inhuman acts.

He said Indian PM Narendra Modi should be tried for committing war crimes. He paid tribute to the people of IIOJK for standing firmly against all kinds of oppression and continuing their indigenous struggle to get the right to self-determination. Leader of the House said today IIOJK had turned into the biggest prison of the world where innocent and unarmed Kashmiris were facing the worst-ever oppression at the hands of brutal Indian forces.

He said the people of Kashmir did not take a sigh of relief since the first Indian army man landed there, regretting that Kashmiris were still waiting for their right to self-determination despite several resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council in favor of Kashmiris. Dr Shahzad said Prime Minister Imran Khan internationalized the Kashmir issue

by effectively highlighting it at all forums. After the illegal action of August 5 by India, he said PM Imran became 'ambassador of Kashmir' and presented the Kashmir issue in the United Nations General Assembly, met the world leaders and apprised them about the plight of people of IIOJK and massive human rights violations being committed by Indian forces. He said in the recent special session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Kashmir issue was highlighted. As the result of Pakistan's efforts, he said, "the Kashmir issue was internationalized and India faced isolation among the comity of the nations."

Armed forces in Pakistan play very important role and are held in high esteem as they lay down their lives for national cause of the country. They are also regulated under constitutional provisions and are called to act in aid of civilian democratic institutions under special circumstances like flood, earthquakes etc. - APP



Health expert stresses for early diagnosis of cancer

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Health Expert on 'World Cancer Day' being observed today (Friday) across the world including Pakistan stressed upon the need to raise awareness for early diagnosis, self-examination and timely treatment of cancer disease which is a leading cause of death. A senior

consultant Neurosurgeon Dr. Muhammad Feroz while talking to PTV news said masses should be given awareness through media as it is necessary to combat cancer, which is alarmingly increasing in the country. Dr Feroz said that the public should be aware of the cancer's seven warning signals that include change in bowel or bladder habit, unusual bleeding or discharge,

thickening or lump in breast or elsewhere, indigestion or difficulty in swallowing, obvious change in wart or mole and nagging cough or hoarseness, etc. He said that basic precautions regarding cancer control are prevention, early diagnosis, timely treatment and palliative care. "Self-examination can save many lives and, in some cases, extend the lifespan of a person", he added.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Netherlands Wouter Plomp loves to commute on the cycle to reach his office. - DNA

NUST to support Kamyab Jawan Markaz in varsities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology Shibli Faraz, alongwith Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Usman Dar held a meeting to discuss matters pertaining to collaboration between the Ministry of Science & Technology and PM's Kamyab Jawan Programme. Shibli Faraz highly appreciated the initiatives launched for youth employment under the umbrella of Kamyab Jawan Programme. The Federal Minister expressed keen interest and support of his Ministry in support of Kamyab Jawan's initiatives,

said a press release. While briefing the Minister, Dar said that under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, the government is ensuring institutional arrangements for youth development alongside their engagement at all levels. "Kamyab Jawan's business loans scheme has so far disbursed Rs. 32 billions among young entrepreneurs and has skilled up more than 100000 youth, especially in hi-tech fields under Rs. 10 Billion Kamyab Jawan's Skills for All project. We have also launched various youth engagement projects with a total cost of Rs. 4 billion", said Usman Dar.

Dar further said that under the project titled "Kamyab Jawan Markaz" more than 100 youth development centres will be established in all public sector's universities across the country. These centres will provide multiple services to students including career counselling and access to various opportunities in both public and private sectors. Shibli Faraz assured his support for establishment of a model Kamyab Jawan Markaz at the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). He said "NUST will provide all possible support and technical assistance for the benefits of Pakistani youth."

Online submission of entries in full swing in art contest

ISLAMABAD: The online submission of artwork in Art contest organized by Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) in collaboration with Ministry of Climate Change (MOCC) and National Ozone Unit (NOU) for Asia Pacific Regional Ozone2Climate were in full swing. The participants can upload their work online by filling out the form on the website: www.ozone2climate.org. According to NOU, any people in the South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Island Countries Networks are eligible to participate. Parental consent is required for participants aged under 15 years. The eligibility for an individual or group of participants with the age 15 years or younger as of 16 September 2021 (the World Ozone Day). Parental consent is required in this category when submitting application and artwork. In General category for an individual or group of participants with the age older than 15 years as of 16 September 2021 (the World Ozone Day). The contests are open to an individual or group of participants with nationality of or residing in the South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Island Countries Networks of the Compliance Assistance Programme. Eligibility of applicants and youth category will be proven through national ID/passport when selected as the winners at the national level for entry to the regional level contest. - DNA

Pak stands with Kashmiris against Indian atrocities

Dr. Waleed Rasool, an academician and researcher from Kashmir, said that India was applying an indigenous demographic model in Kashmir, adding that, 'the way India turned different casts other than Hindus in Northeast India into minorities, the same is happening in IIOJK'

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: 'Nobody can undermine Pakistan's solidarity with the Kashmiris' said Mr. Shehryar Khan Afridi, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir. While speaking at the event organized by the Institute of Regional Studies in connection with the Kashmir Solidarity Day, he said 'the entire nation of Pakistan has always stood with the people of Kashmiris and will continue to stand alongside its Kashmiri brothers and sisters'. It was due to Pakistan's government and intelligentsia's continuous efforts towards exposing India's fascist ideologies that world has started looking at India from a different lens, he argued. Mr. Afridi said that 'India's unilateral action of 5th August 2019 has injected a new energy into

the Kashmiri struggle and the Indian forces are now facing multidimensional resistances in IIOJK'. While highlighting the role of Kashmiri diaspora, he stressed that 'It was imperative to strengthen linkages with the Kashmiri diaspora abroad especially in the United States and the United Kingdom to further the Kashmir cause'. He stated that all parties in Pakistan despite their political differences were united on the Kashmir cause, however, he stressed that the defeatist approach on Kashmir should be shunned. While speaking on the occasion, Ms. Andleeb Abbas, Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs said that the 'IIOJK was a test case for us. We have to prevent genocide happening in Kashmir as Dr. Gregory H. Stanton of Genocide Watch has warned an impending genocide in IIOJK due to the fascist policies of the

BJP regime'. She lamented that world was keen on talking on human rights and even on animal rights but was turning a blind eye on the grave human rights violations in IIOJK. Ambassador Iftikhar Asim, Spokesperson Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reiterated Pakistan's support to Kashmiris. He stated that the government has vociferously projected the Kashmir cause internationally. He was of the view that Pakistan's stance has been reinforced by the UN by declaring that 'Kashmir remains a disputed territory and its resolution would only be possible through exercising the right of self-determination guaranteed by the UN resolutions'. While responding on genocide predicted by the Genocide Watch, FarzanaYaqoob, former Minister AJK, argued that 'genocide is already underway in IIOJK

and has been happening for the last seventy years'. She appreciated Pakistan's support to the people of Kashmir and urged Pakistani youth to play their role by projecting the sufferings of the people of IIOJK. Dr. Waleed Rasool, an academician and researcher from Kashmir, said that India was applying an indigenous demographic model in Kashmir, adding that, 'the way India turned different casts other than Hindus in Northeast India into minorities, the same is happening in IIOJK'. He urged overseas Kashmiris to galvanize international support for Kashmir cause as systematic demographic changes was underway in IIOJK which would directly impact the longstanding stance of plebiscite. Shamim Shawl of All Parties Hurriyat Conference, said that Indian atrocities were not restricted to male activists, wom-

en had also been subjected to physical and mental tortures by Indian forces. She stressed the need to protect vote bank amid systematic demographic changes unleashed by India. She urged Kashmiri diaspora to maintain its linkages with the people of Kashmir. Earlier, Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz, President IRS in his opening remarks spoke about the Kashmir issue, the atrocities committed on the innocent people of IIOJK and the possible impact of the domicile law. He called upon the international community to raise their voice for the innocent people of Kashmir so that they can be given the rights promised to them by the Security Council resolutions. He emphasized that Pakistan will not give up its support to the people of Kashmir and continue to expose India's fascist policies in IIOJK.

Command & Staff College delegation calls on CJP

ISLAMABAD: A 49-member delegation of Command and Staff College Quetta headed by Lt Colonel, Hashim Iqbal Bajwa, Directing Staff, and comprising course participants from military bureaucracy of 20 friendly Countries called on Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Atta Bandial here on Friday as a part of their study tour. The Chief Justice welcomed the delegation and gave them an overview of the Constitution of 1973. He informed them about the trichotomy of power in Pakistan, functions and importance of each organ of the State i.e. Parliament, Executive and Judiciary. The Chief Justice briefed them on the judicial system, its functioning, role, dispensation of justice and constitutional jurisdiction of Supreme Court, High Courts and District Courts to provide relief to the people. He explained that Supreme Court, under constitutional scheme, possesses special jurisdiction of the judicial review to examine certain acts of legislative and executive organs of the State on criterion provided in the Constitution. Furthermore, Chief Justice told them about the fundamental rights enunciated in the Constitution. He further explained that Armed forces in Pakistan play very important role and are held in high esteem as they lay down their lives for national cause of the country. They are also regulated under constitutional provisions and are called to act in aid of civilian democratic institutions under special circumstances like flood, earthquakes etc. - APP

Atrocities on women in IIOJK need world attention

ISLAMABAD: Atrocities on women in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) need an immediate attention of the authorities concerned as they are still treated as a second class citizen due to their vulnerability in areas such as education, customs, traditions and poverty. Talking to APP, Human Rights Activist Noreen Raza on Friday said it was important for the empowerment of women that they should actively participate in the political process of the nation. The Kashmir conflict has affected tens of thousands of Kashmiri people for almost 74 years, making their existence subservient to military decisions taken by the Indian state, she said. They know no other lifestyle except for the one that has been constructed by the decades-old conflict, she added. She further said, the conversations on Kashmir have always been dominated by India on Pakistan's political perspective, with little or no thought spared for rampant human rights abuses and the suffocating military presence in Indian Occupied Kashmir, which has one of the largest troop deployments in the world intricately spread across the disputed region. - APP

ECP issues notice to PMS Officer

ISLAMABAD: District Election Commissioner (DEC) Dera Ismail Khan on Friday directed the PMS Officer, Zia-ur-Rehman to appear in person or through counsel to explain position for violating the code of conduct and directions of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on February 5. According to a notice issued by the DEC, who is also District Monitoring Officer, the said government officer has been called under Sub Section 3 of Section 234 of Election Act 2017. It added, in case of non-compliance, the matter will be reported to the ECP for appropriate action under the relevant rules and laws. It said that through different sources it was observed that the said officer has participated and addressed political gathering arranged in Iqbal Marriage Hall, Zafarabad Colony, Tehsil and District D.I.Khan, on February 03 2022, as part of election campaign of JUI-F candidate namely Muhammad Kafeel Nizami. - APP

Stabilisation measures

AFTER eight months of back-and-forth consultations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gave the green light on the release of the next \$1 billion tranche in Pakistan's \$6 billion Extended Facility Fund (EFF) on Wednesday. The decision was a result of the government getting the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Bill across the line. Getting the disbursement approved was only a step, however, on the long road towards stabilising the economy. The government's biggest problem has been controlling inflation, and this release is not likely to help in slowing down the rate of price increases, at least until the tail end of the year.

Beyond the politics of the SBP bill, there are the very real belt-tightening measures that the government has to take to remain in the programme going forward. This is only the halfway stage; roughly \$3 billion has been released with another half to go. The central bank now has the autonomy to determine interest rates, price stability and the exchange rate without government intervention, and out of these, the last is something that needs to stabilise in order for us to get some much-needed respite from our overly-burdened import bill. Other attempts to trim it down have not been adequate so far.

Another factor to consider is that the overall purchasing power of the average citizen—especially those below or near the poverty line and the salaried class—will greatly decrease as the government begins to implement the IMF-mandated changes. The revised FBR targets, sales tax rationalisation across industries, the readjusted electricity rates and the personal income taxation reforms are all policies that will directly affect the living standards of a large part of households in Pakistan.

Now that this tranche has been granted, the government must look to find some growth in an economy that is contracting through austerity decisions. This is no easy task but some small gains can be made through ensuring that industries keep producing export output, and focusing on not stifling key industries such as digital and IT while imposing taxes and other measures. This can be a hard year with a move towards stabilisation or another year of dismal economic performance with nothing positive on the horizon. Only the government can decide which path we take.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

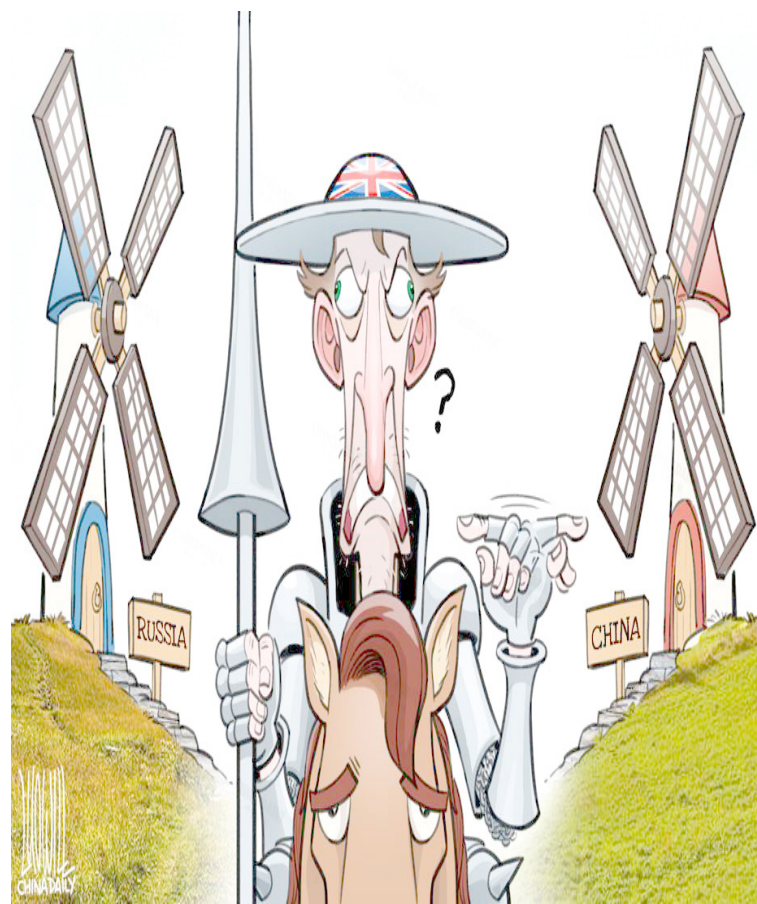
Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 231

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

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



India refuses visas

DEVOTED Pakistani pilgrims, belonging to far-flung areas of the country had gathered in Lahore, preparing to cross the Wagah Border into India, in order to attend the annual Urs of Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer from February 3 to 14. However, at the last moment, the Indian state, for no apparent reason, and without any precedent, refused the issuance of visas, leaving the pilgrims in utter mental stress.

This shameful incident should be an eye-opener to the rest of the world. Pilgrims crossing the border to visit sacred sites has long been cited as one diplomatic initiative that could lead to reduced tensions and better relations between India and Pakistan.

This incident, of the stranded Pakistani pilgrims, refused visas at the last minute, should leave no questions as to which country is interested in peace, and which country is the aggressor. This act by the Indian government should be contrasted with Pakistan's highly hospitable treatment of Indian religious tourists. Pakistan High Commission in November issued about 3,000 visas to Indian Sikh pilgrims to enable them to participate in the 552nd birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak in Pakistan, with Prime Minister Imran Khan himself taking several initiatives to facilitate Sikh pilgrims. It should be noted that India's behaviour is not only unethical, but it violates the agreements India itself signed. The Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines 1974, a bilateral agreement between India and Pakistan facilitating Indian and Pakistani nationals to visit certain religious shrines in both countries, covers five locations in India, including the shrine of Ajmer Sharif Dargah. Considering India's history of renegeing on bilateral agreements, perhaps the world should not be surprised that the 1974 Protocol was not respected either.

Despite the history of hostilities, conflicts and aggression between the two countries, the one unique characteristic found in both India and Pakistan was multiculturalism and the historical sanctity placed by the subcontinent on mysticism, religion and spirituality. It is extremely regrettable that the Modi government and the new wave of fascism that has swept in India are actively undoing any mutual respect in even this one sacred aspect. It is hoped that Pakistan at least will commit to respecting tradition, and not fall to India's level.

The violation of Human Rights in Occupied Kashmir

Dr. M Akram Zaheer



Kashmiris have long speculated that India intends to settle military and paramilitary families in Kashmir as well as establish semi-permanent military colonies in Kashmir

SINCE 1947, Article 370 had given Jammu and Kashmir a semi-autonomous constitutional status. Under its provisions, the region had freedom in all matters except its legislature, constitution, flag and communications, foreign affairs and defense. Ending this status is a fresh attempt to eradicate the Kashmiri people, their rights and the linguistic, social, cultural, economic and political existence of the local people. The legality of the special status solution is being challenged by legal and constitutional experts in India, who have opposed the country's Supreme Court decisions in recent years. With the recent abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A, India has allowed permanent resettlement of non-Kashmiris in Kashmir. The Constitution of Kashmir first defines membership and settlement. Non-Kashmiris are now allowed to buy property, keep it and settle in Kashmir permanently.

Under these changes, for example, Gujars (Bakarwal) in Kashmir are immediately at greater risk. They migrate seasonally with the animals to look after the animals and the land. Indian laws regarding land as a

sole property will not allow them to live on land as they have historically done. These changes will also lead to population rearrangement in Kashmir.

Kashmiris have long speculated that India intends to settle military and paramilitary families in Kashmir as well as establish semi-permanent military colonies in Kashmir. Indigenous peoples from Asia, such as Kashmiris, have long faced threats to their existence and inherited rights, especially "relative" land rights, as colonial relations between indigenous peoples and settler states make land encroachment profitable. This will make indigenous peoples aliens. Since 5 August 2019, India cancelled all access and communication with Kashmir. The Internet, cell phones and landlines have been cut off, and 14.7 million people cannot access essentials such as food and medical aid as India moves to gain full control of its territory using military force. Apart from the extremely rare media, Kashmiris have not been able to communicate with each other or with the outside world. The entire area of Jammu and Kashmir is basically under siege.

Kashmiris are additionally targeted because they are primarily Muslim and culturally and linguistically distinct. The Indian Government has gained so much control over the social media that their accounts are suspended on the pretext that they have written anything against Hindutva ideology or Hindu fascism. They cannot write freely about how the Indian regime uses its power to oppress and suppress Kashmiris, and cannot upload the photos of the Kashmiri freedom fighters, particularly Burhan Wani. This is how their voices stand suppressed and they are unable to demonstrate their inhuman situation on a wider spectrum across the globe.

Now the families of those who joined the freedom struggle at their own will are being harassed and intimidated even during nights. The Armed Force Special Power Act (AFSPA) gives the Indian army full impunity to barge into houses and kill inhabitants when they feel it necessary. This law has been misused so many times where innocent people were brutally killed and the killers did not face a trial. Coming to the roads, no vehicle including ambulances and other

emergency services are allowed to ply on the National highway, which is an important lifeline and the main thoroughfare for every state, which the army travels on. This thing causes the backing up of local vehicles that may stretch to a few miles. This creates extreme problem to the commuters particularly patients, doctors, officegoers, and so on. They have cut down forest trees and thereby converted the hills into nude mountains. Many of the wild animals got killed due to their habitats' destruction.

The media, academics, and legal and political analysts have never touched on indigenous rights, as stated in the UN declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, when Kashmir is being debated. But an indigenous rights framework is needed to carefully assess the various rights violations facing Kashmiris. India is violating several international human rights conventions and declarations it has signed which apply to Kashmir.

There has been a terrible silence by the world leadership on the ongoing crimes in Kashmir. Kashmiris have been the guardians, gardeners and custodians of Kashmiris' land, water, each other and inhuman life. Regardless of the colonial boundaries, the most important thing is what Kashmiris want as an independent indigenous people. Under the UN declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, India has a duty to consult with local people, rather than making decisions that affect them unilaterally, and give them the highest priority to self-government and self-determination. If provided an opportunity. In 1948, the UN resolution on Kashmir would have ratified the right of Kashmiris to determine their own future. The world is not taking cognizance of the Indian brutality in Kashmir. It is because of the fact that India with its huge population is their greatest product consumer, be it arms and ammunition, social media, food products, oil, and so on. Therefore, the countries who have their interests in India cannot raise their voice against India. If they happen to say anything and ever condemn any Indian cruelty, then India snatches their voices.

Holocaust Museum highlights stakes in a battle for soul of Islam

James Dorsey

Crackdowns on freedom of expression in countries like the UAE and Bahrain have allowed the two countries to portray an image of near-unanimous public support for their burgeoning relations with Israel. However, the crack downs have not stopped expressions of anti-Jewish sentiment in countries like Kuwait

CONTROVERSY over the opening of Southeast Asia's first Holocaust museum highlights differences in the Muslim world over the limits of religious tolerance and Muslims' ability to debate those limits. The controversy over the museum in Minahasa, North Sulawesi, home to one of Indonesia's two known synagogues, comes as the United States and American Jewish groups have pressured the world's largest Muslim-majority democracy to recognize Israel. Indonesia's minuscule Jewish community is estimated to number about one hundred. US and Israeli officials believe that recognition of Israel by Indonesia, or one of Asia's other largest Muslim-majority countries, would allow Saudi Arabia, the custodian of Islam's two holiest cities, Mecca and Medina, to follow the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain in establishing diplomatic relations with the Jewish state. The two smaller Gulf states established relations with Israel in 2020.

The controversy over the museum at the Shaar HaShamayim Synagogue also erupted as autocratic Arab countries sought to rebuild ties to their erstwhile Jewish communities in a bid to project themselves as beacons of religious moderation and tolerance. Crackdowns on freedom of expression in countries like the UAE and Bahrain have allowed the two countries to portray an image of near-unanimous public support for their burgeoning relations with Israel. However, the crackdowns have not stopped expressions of anti-Jewish sentiment in countries like Kuwait.

"Is this who we have become in a country whose heritage prides itself on coexistence? What a pity. What a loss for us. How heartbreaking for our forefathers, a few of whom were Jews who lived here alongside us," said Kuwait-based poet and writer Nejud Al-Yagout. Ms. Al-Yagout spoke out after the US embassy in Kuwait was accosted last November on social media for wishing Jews a happy Hanukkah feast. By contrast, the controversy in Indonesia has focused more on the condemnation of Israeli policy towards the Palestinians than on anti-Jewish sentiment. It highlighted sharp divisions among Indonesian Muslims in dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and their ability to put their differences on public display. The controversy was fueled by the fact that the Holocaust museum became

a reality because of support from Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial to the Jewish victims of the Nazi Holocaust. A Yad Vashem executive participated by video link in last month's inauguration of the museum on International Holocaust Day. Yad Vashem's role sparked speculation that the museum was a backdoor to furthering Israeli-Indonesian relations. "The Indonesian government should act decisively and immediately demolish the museum because it is provocative and its presence is not welcomed among many in this country," said Muhyiddin Junaidi, deputy chairman of the advisory board of the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), the country's top body of Islamic scholars. Echoing Mr. Junaidi's remarks, Sudarnoto Abdul Hakim, the group's deputy chairman for foreign affairs, insisted that "Jewish communities and the descendants of Jewish people everywhere, including in Indonesia and North Sulawesi, should...see fairly, clearly the brutal acts that have been perpetrated by Israeli Zionists against the Palestinian people since 1948." Mr. Abdul Hakim suggested that Jewish leaders meet with the Council "to prevent things that are not desirable... I think this is a good step to resolve the issue in a persuasive way."

Mr. Abdul Hakim's potentially ominous remarks and Mr. Junaidi's call for the museum's destruction contrasted starkly with statements by Yahya Cholil Staquf, the newly elected chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama, the world's largest civil society movement that has an estimated following of up to 90 million people. A proponent of humanitarian Islam, Mr. Staquf, joined global leaders in commemorating the United Nations International Holocaust Remembrance Day last month. "Holocaust remembrance serves as a memorial and vivid reminder of the cruelty, violence, and suffering that so many human beings... have, for thousands of years, inflicted upon others. Today, in remembrance of the Holocaust and its millions of victims, Nahdlatul Ulama and I wish to raise our voices in a simple, heartfelt call: Let us choose compassion." Mr. Staquf said in a virtual event co-hosted by the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center founded to honour one of the world's foremost hunters of Nazi criminals. Unlike the Indonesian council and the US embassy in Kuwait's detractors, Mr. Staquf did not shy away from recognizing the genocide against the Jews while at the same time demanding justice for the Palestinians. Mr. Staquf made that clear, not only in his call for compassion but also by speaking at an event hosted at about the same time by the Palestinian embassy in Jakarta.

"Palestinian self-determination is a humanitarian mandate. All parties, including Hamas, Fatah, and the world community at large, must set aside their subjective interests and focus upon improving the lives of the Palestinian people. For the fate of the Palestinians is the fate of humanity," Mr. Staquf said. He was referring to the Islamist group that controls the Gaza Strip as well as the party that governs the West Bank. The divergence in approach between Mr. Staquf and the Indonesian Council spokesmen is about much more than the Palestinian issue. It is about what the essence of Islam should be in the 21st century, an Islam that looks backward and nurtures grievances or an Islam that seeks to reach out, build bridges, and find solutions.

Entrepreneurship Inculcates prosperity

Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi

China claims that no one lives in the country below the official poverty line of 2.30 USD per day at their disposal

ECONOMIC progress of leading economies around the globe is the consequence of entrepreneurship, which flourished in their societies due to specific facilitation to develop an appropriate ecosystem to assist relevant stakeholders particularly the entrepreneurs. China's claim of eliminating the poverty, according to current standards, is the result of entrepreneurial culture in almost every sector of the economy from high-tech industries to agri-products. China claims that no one lives in the country below the official poverty line of 2.30 USD per day at their disposal. This is indeed incredible, in a country of almost one and a half billion people you can't find a single person below the poverty line. This all happened due to the entrepreneurial culture which China inculcated in the society over the years. Small scale entrepreneurs are vital drivers of China's economy; they constitute 60% of GDP, provide 80% of jobs and contribute about half of national tax revenue. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have been declared as

the backbone of US and EU economies. In the United States 30 million small businesses account for nearly two-thirds of net new private sector jobs in recent decades. According to the official website of the European Commission SMEs, surprisingly, represent 99% of all businesses in the EU. The website further states, "SMEs employ around 100 million people, account for more than half of Europe's GDP and play a key role in adding value in every sector of the economy. SMEs bring innovative solutions to challenges like climate change, resource efficiency and social cohesion and help spread this innovation throughout Europe's regions. They are therefore central to the EU's twin transitions to a sustainable and digital economy. They are essential to Europe's competitiveness and prosperity, industrial ecosystems, economic and technological sovereignty, and resilience to external shocks."

Mostly people realise their dreams out of their own conviction and personal endeavours, but now there are enough opportunities to seek formal guidance and counselling to develop well thought business plans from vision & mission to market analysis, survival income estimates, startup finance to growth aspirations. Therefore all those who desire to realise their dreams through entrepreneurship should look around themselves for possible mentoring opportunities focusing websites of relevant organizations. Partnership remains a taboo in our society even today, which limits the potential of entrepreneurial initiative. In today's closely knitted global

community it is the collaboration which multiplies chances of success and faster growth. Hence it is necessary for aspiring entrepreneurs to welcome partnership opportunities, adopting necessary regulations, in terms ideas, expertise, finance, and facilitations to bring synergy in their operations.

Currently Pakistan stands at 120 on the Global Entrepreneurship Development Index (GEDI), while India at 68 and China at 43. It is our belief as Muslims that nine out of ten sources of income come from business activities while honest and sincere businessman will be placed with prophets, siddiqin and al-shuhada. This faith requires genuine commitment from all stakeholders to cultivate entrepreneurial culture in the society with enabling environment. The key role of the government remains vital to develop nurturing ecosystem to flourish entrepreneurship in the Country. Initiatives such as ITBs, NICs and Ignite are worth appreciating but ignoring other sectors are damaging for equitable progress of the Nation. The government needs to develop sector-wise incubation centres and sector specific funds to seed startups in every sector of the economy. The bottom line remains, the promotion and facilitation of entrepreneurial culture in the society is inevitable for prosperous future of our coming generations.

— The writer is Associate Professor Management Sciences Head, Center of Islamic Finance COMSATS University (CUI) Lahore Campus, drabdussattar@cuilahore.edu.pk

Briefs

Salah, Mane set for Cup of Nations final showdown

WEB DESK

YAOUNDÉ: Liverpool teammates Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane are getting ready to face off against each other in the Africa Cup of Nations final in Cameroon this weekend after Egypt beat the hosts on penalties on Thursday to set up a clash with Senegal.

Egyptian captain Salah did not need to step up in the semi-final shoot-out as Cameroon failed three times from the spot, allowing the Pharaohs to win 3-1 on penalties after a goalless 120 minutes in Yaounde. That was after Mane starred with a goal and an assist as Senegal overcame Burkina Faso to win 3-1 in the first semi-final a day earlier.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp could have been forgiven for wishing both players had been knocked out of the tournament sooner so they could return to Anfield, but he expressed delight for the attacking duo on Friday. "It is a great achievement for both getting through to the final," Klopp said in a press conference ahead of his team's FA Cup tie against Cardiff on Sunday. That game will be played just a few hours before the Cup of Nations climax at the Olembe Stadium.

"So far it's been a really successful tournament for our boys. It will be exciting."

"Now it's obviously not so easy because one will definitely be really happy after and the other one much less so, but both have a good chance to achieve something really big."

It will be a second AFCON final appearance for Salah, a member of the Egypt team beaten by Cameroon in the 2017 showpiece in Libreville. The 29-year-old has already admitted his determination to lift the Cup of Nations for his country, having made his international debut in 2011, a year after they won their last continental title.

ISPR refutes Indian COAS' LOC claims

FROM PAGE 01

stand-off with China on India's northern border, Naravane said the "developments adequately underscore the requirement for ready and capable forces, with an optimal component of boots on ground backed by modern technology".

Reacting to the Indian army chief's comments, the DG ISPR termed the claim "clearly misleading".

The ceasefire was agreed "only due to Pakistan's concerns for the safety of people of Kashmir living on both sides of the LoC", he tweeted. "No side should misconstrue it as their strength or other's weakness."

The surprise truce announced in late February 2021 had brought an end to years of violence along the frontier that saw thousands of skirmishes rattle the Himalayan territory, where the two sides have used artillery, mortars, and small arms.

The deal effectively reinstated an earlier ceasefire signed by the two sides in 2003 that had been trampled by thousands of violations in recent years.

The ISPR said the original deal had largely held until 2016, when tensions exploded in occupied Kashmir, resulting in a surge in violence between the two sides.

As fighting along the LoC raged, ties between the rivals went into freefall with India repeatedly accusing Pakistan of sending infiltrators across the LoC, while Islamabad lambasted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government for stoking Hindu nationalist sentiment against Muslims.

The two sides came close to another all-out war after an attack inside India-occupied Kashmir in 2019 led to bitter-for-tat air strikes. But even after stepping back from the brink, fighting along the LoC escalated, reaching an apex in 2020 with thousands of clashes reported.

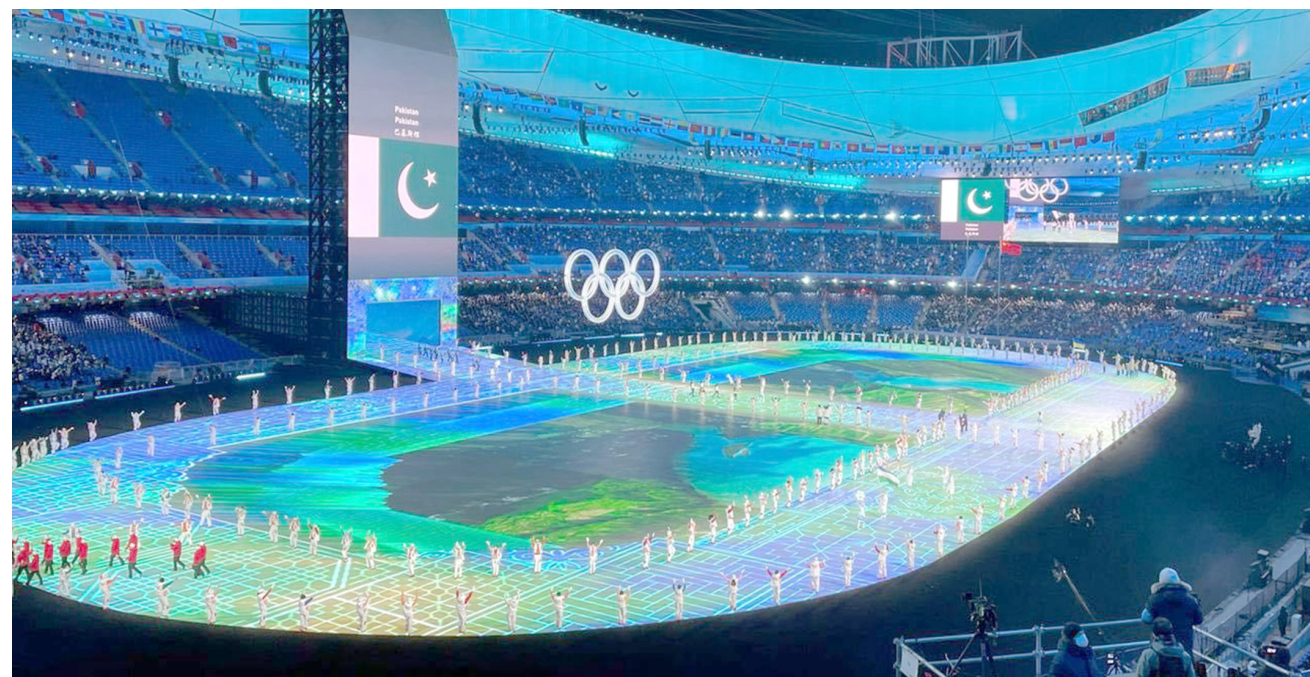
But the damage from coronavirus and slowing economies — along with a geopolitical tug of war — appeared to have convinced both sides to halt for the time being.

China's Olympics begin, with lockdown and boycotts

Chinese President Xi Jinping declared the Games open during an opening ceremony heavy on ice-blue tones and winter imagery that was held in the same lattice-encased National Stadium that hosted the inaugural event at the 2008 Olympics

SPORTS DESK

BEIJING: The country where the coronavirus outbreak emerged two years ago launched a locked-down Winter Olympics on Friday, proudly projecting its might on the most global of stages even as some Western governments mounted a diplomatic boycott over the way China treats millions of its own people. Chinese President Xi Jinping declared the Games open during an opening ceremony heavy on ice-blue tones and winter imagery that was held in the same lattice-encased National Stadium that hosted the inaugural event at the 2008 Olympics. That makes Beijing the first city to host both winter and summer Games. And while some are staying away from the second pandemic Olympics in six months, many other world leaders attended the opening ceremony. Most notable: Russian President Vladimir Putin, who met privately with Xi earlier in the day as a dangerous standoff unfolds at Russia's border with Ukraine. The Olympics — and the opening ceremony — are always an exercise in performance for the host nation, a chance to showcase its culture, define its place in the world, flaunt its best side. That's something China in particular has been consumed with for decades. But at this year's Beijing Games, the gulf between performance and reality will be particularly jarring. Fourteen years ago, a Beijing opening ceremony that featured massive pyrotechnic displays and thousands of card-flipping performers set a new standard of extravagance



to start an Olympics that no host since has matched. It was a fitting start to an event often billed as China's "coming out." Now, no matter how you view it, China has arrived — but the hope for a more open country that accompanied those first Games has faded. For Beijing, these Olympics are a confirmation of its status as world player and power. But for many outside China, particularly in the West, they have become a confirmation of the country's increasingly authoritarian turn.

As if to underline that transformation, the opening ceremony Friday was staged at the same stadium — known as the Bird's Nest — that held the 2008 version. Back then, Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei consulted on its construction. Now, he is one of the country's best known dissidents and lives in exile. Chinese authorities are crushing pro-democracy activism, tightening their control over Hong Kong, becoming more

confrontational with Taiwan and interneting Muslim Uyghurs in the far west — a crackdown the U.S. government and others have called genocide.

The pandemic also weighs heavily on this year's Games, just as it did last summer in Tokyo. More than two years after the first COVID-19 cases were identified in China's Hubei province, nearly 6 million human beings have died and hundreds of millions more around the world have been sickened.

Babar's 90 goes in vain as Zalmi beat Karachi

SPORTS DESK



KARACHI: Peshawar Zalmi bowlers and Shoaib Malik guided their team to a comprehensive nine-run win against 2020-champions Karachi Kings in match 11 of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) at the National Stadium, Karachi. Wahab Riaz-led Zalmi had set a 174-run target for Karachi Kings after they were put to bat first by the Kings. Despite the Kings batters early collapse, Babar Azam played a sensational inning and scored 90 runs off 63 balls with the help of 12 fours and one six. No other batter could score even 35 runs against a strong Peshawar Zalmi's bowling attack. Mohammad Umar picked up three wickets, Shoaib Malik, Hussain Malik and Usman Qadir took a scalp each.

Early in their innings, Zalmi looked set to post a huge total in the powerplay but once Umaid Asif removed the dangerous Hazratullah Zai in the sixth over, the run rate slowed down. Peshawar's batting faced another setback after Asif removed Kamran Akmal in the 10th over. Haider Ali and Shoaib Malik looked all set to capitalise on the start given by the openers but Aamir Yamin removed Ali to put a dent in Peshawar's batting. When Ali's wicket fell, Zalmi were 103/3 with seven overs left in the innings.

However, a 59-run partnership between Malik and Australian Ben Cutting helped Zalmi recover. It was Umaid Asif, once again, who broke the partnership by dismissing Cutting in the last over of the Zalmi innings. Peshawar ended their innings for 173/4 courtesy of Malik's 52 from 28.

India: Hijab wearing...

FROM PAGE 01

over 100 students donned saffron shawls — the colour is seen as a Hindu symbol — and protested against Muslim female students wearing hijabs at Bhandarkars' College on Wednesday.

"When the principal asked the students to remove their hijab and attend classes, an argument ensued with the students pointing out that there is no government order banning the hijab in Kundapur government colleges," it added.

The report quoted the college principal, Ramakrishna, as saying that he was following the directives of the college development committee president and lawmaker from the Bharatiya Janata Party, Halady Srinivas Shetty. The principal said Shetty had directed him not to allow any sort of additional attire other than the specified uniform.

Separately, Shetty told The Hindu that he had held a meeting with students' parents and asked them to make their children comply with the existing dress code — i.e. wearing uniform — till a decision was taken in this regard by the relevant government department.

He said some female students had been attending classes at the college while wearing hijabs for the past few days. He added that other students had objections over it and they had sought action. "As the situation was getting tense, I called a meeting of parents on Wednesday when a number of boys were seen in the college with shawls," the lawmaker said.

Kashmir Solidarity...

FROM PAGE 01

Ahmed said Pakistan remains deeply concerned about the worsening human rights and security situation in the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, which continues to be under military and police siege. He said extra-judicial killings of innocent Kashmiris continue with impunity. Hardly a day passes without any news of a fake encounter or a so-called cordon-and-search operation by the Indian occupation forces. Since first January, at least 24 Kashmiris have been martyred in this unabated reign of terror. The international community must act to stop the wanton oppression and persecution of the besieged Kashmiris under illegal occupation.

The Spokesperson said Pakistan salutes the resilience of the Kashmiri people who continue to stand firm in their just and peaceful struggle for their legitimate right to self-determination as pledged to them by the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

He said the international community must take cognizance of the plight of Kashmiris, hold India to account for its widespread brutalities and human rights violations in IIOJK.

US backs potential...

FROM PAGE 01

Arabia and the UAE — and has emphasised arms sales as one avenue for that support. However, President Joe Biden announced in February last year that the US was ending support for offensive operations by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen and all "relevant" arms sales. Advocates and legislators have since demanded the approval of a \$650m sale of air-to-air missiles to Saudi Arabia in November as undermining that pledge.

The most recently approved sales to Saudi Arabia include 31 communication and navigation terminals at a cost of \$23.7m to upgrade the kingdom's missile defence system, according to the Pentagon.

The State Department approved the UAE to buy \$65m worth of spare parts for its Horning All the Way Killer (HAWK), Phased Array Tracking Radar to Intercept on Target (PATRIOT), and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defence systems. "This sale supports the UAE's existing ability to deter and defend against hostile threats by maintaining the operational readiness of critical air defense systems," the Pentagon's Defense Security Cooperation Agency said in a public notice.

Baku urges int'l legal action against Armenia



BAKU: Azerbaijani Human Rights Commissioner Sabina Aliyeva has urged international action against Armenia in accordance with international law norms and principles, the ombudsman's office has reported.

The appeal was made by the commissioner in response to the death of an Azerbaijani civilian as a result of a cluster bomb explosion on February 1, 2022, in Yevlakh region located far from the zone of the 2020 war with Armenia. Armenia's refusal to provide complete and accurate maps of mined areas continues to pose a serious threat, resulting in fatalities.

"In this regard, I call on international organizations, ombudsmen, and national human rights institutions of foreign countries to express their attitude towards violations of human rights by Armenia," the ombudsman stated. On October 6, 2020, cluster-type missiles attacked the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan main export oil pipeline in Azerbaijan's densely populated Yevlakh region, which is located far from the combat zone. Since September 27, 2020, Armenian armed forces have shelled densely populated areas of Azerbaijan with heavy artillery installations and prohibited weapons, causing severe damage to social facilities, historical and cultural sites, as well as objects of strategic importance to the country, and many people have died and been injured, Aliyeva said. — APP

CAS open golf c'ship kick starts at Airmen Golf Club



DNA

KARACHI: Featuring around 400 golfers from all over the country, Chief of the Air Staff Open Golf Championship kick-starts at Airmen Golf Club and Recreational Park, Korangi Creek today. Air Vice Marshal Zubair Hassan Khan, President Airmen Golf Club and Recreational Park inaugurated the Championship.

In the first round of the tournament



Tallat Ijaz, Muhammad Shahzad and Shahbaz Masih scored 70 (2 under par). Trailing were Bilal Hussain, Khalid Khan, Muhammad Munir, Matloob Ahmed and Akbar Mehroz who finished the round at 71 (1 under par). Ahmed Baig, Minhaj Maqsood, Abid Rana and Muhammad Shabbir remained third on the card board with score 72 (par).

The 41st edition of the CAS Open Golf Championship is one of the biggest golf tournaments of the country, with



participation of over 100 professional golfers. Matches in the category of Professionals, Senior/Junior Professionals, Amateurs, Airmen Golf Club Members, Ladies, Veterans and Invites will be played during the championship. Rupees 10.5 Million prize money Championship will be played over 18 holes for four days at one of the most difficult golf courses of the country. Brand new MG ZS (1500cc) has also been put on offer for the player who scores Hole-in-one.

Sarah wins Subh-e-Nau National Tennis title

More than 100 players were participated in the ladies national ranking tennis championship organised by Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) with the coloboration of Subh-e-Nau

SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Veteran woman tennis player Sarah Mahboob out-classed Noor Malik in straight sets 2-0 to win the Subh-e-Nau Ladies National Ranking Tennis Tournament-2022 singles category title here at PTF-SDA Tennis Complex, Islamabad on Friday. More than 100 players were participated in the ladies national ranking tennis championship organised by Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) with the coloboration of Subh-e-Nau. In the ladies singles final Sarah Mahboob Khan get easy win against Noor Malik 6-1, 6-1 to win the Subh-e-Nau Ladies Na-



tional Ranking Tennis Tournaments-2022 singles title.

Pakistan Tennis Federation President Salim Saifullah Khan graced the occasion as chief guest and distributed the prizes to the participants while Arshad Malik Chairman WG Group of companies were the Guest of Honour.

The President PTF lauded the efforts of Shahida Kausar Farooq for organizing the tournament for the promotion of women's tennis in Pakistan and congratulated both the finalists on their performance. Shahida Kausar Farooq thanked the President PTF for extending all-out support for the smooth conduct of the event and announced that she will try to organize more tournaments for women and juniors.

Briefs

Spain to supply gas to Morocco

MADRID: Spain on Thursday said it would help Morocco ensure its energy security by allowing it to transport supplies through the Maghreb-Europe gas pipeline (GME) following a supply crisis with Algeria. "Morocco has asked for support to guarantee its energy security on the basis of trade relations and Spain has responded positively as it would do with any other friend or neighbour," Spain's ecological transition ministry said in a statement. "Morocco will be able to obtain liquefied natural gas (LNG) on the international markets, bring it to a regasification plant on the (Spanish) mainland and use the GME pipeline to transport it to its territory," it said, without giving a date nor outlining the volumes concerned. Morocco's energy ministry declined to reveal details of the deal.

Moroccan news website Le360 said it followed several weeks of talks between Rabat and Madrid. The announcement came three months after Algeria said it would not renew an expiring 25-year deal to use the pipeline through which it had transported gas to Spain via Morocco. Algeria, Africa's biggest gas exporter, had used the GME since 1996 to export some 10 billion cubic metres of gas per year to Spain and onwards to Portugal. In return, Morocco had received around a billion cubic metres of gas per year as grant fees, covering around 97 percent of its needs. Ending the contract directly affected Rabat's energy supplies at a time when global gas prices have peaked. - APP

Iraq played 'pivotal role' in elimination of Daesh

BAGHDAD: Iraq has played a "pivotal role" in operations to destroy Daesh/ISIS and their efforts eventually led to the elimination of the terror group's leader, the country's prime minister said on Friday. "Iraq's Security Forces have played a pivotal role in killing and capturing Daesh terrorists inside Iraq and gathering intelligence that finally led to the head of this terrorist organization," Mustafa al-Kadhimi said on Twitter. Daesh/ISIS leader Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi was killed in an operation by US forces in northern Syria this week. According to the Pentagon, al-Qurayshi blew himself up to avoid being captured, also killing his wife and two children. Al-Qurayshi, whose real name was Amir Muhammad Saeed Abdul Rahman, had taken over after Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was killed by the US in 2019. He hailed from Tal Afar in Iraq's northern Nineveh province. The operation to eliminate al-Qurayshi came after a spike in Daesh/ISIS activity in Syria and Iraq, where the terrorist group carried out multiple attacks in the past few months. - APP

Military response not in cards: Canada PM

OTTAWA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Thursday a military response to the ongoing Ottawa protest against COVID-19 measures is "not in the cards right now." Ottawa police Chief Peter Soly said this week that all options are on the table, including calling in the military, to end the ongoing demonstration that was being called an "occupation" by some on the city council. Thousands of protesters railing against vaccine mandates and other COVID-19 restrictions descended on the capital last weekend, deliberately blocking traffic around Parliament Hill. Police estimate about 250 remain. Trudeau said one must be "very, very cautious" about deploying troops on Canadian soil, adding there has been no such request to the federal government. He said any formal requests for assistance from the City of Ottawa or Ontario will be considered. - Agencies

China, Russia oppose NATO expansion amid tensions

Xi and Putin called on NATO to "exercise a fair and objective attitude towards the peaceful development of other states"

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: China on Friday put its weight behind Russia in opposing NATO's expansion eastward amid ongoing tensions with Ukraine. "The (two) sides oppose further enlargement of NATO and call on the North Atlantic Alliance to abandon its ideologized cold war approaches," said a joint statement released by the Kremlin after a meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Beijing. They met ahead of the Beijing Olympics opening ceremony. It urged NATO to "respect sovereignty, security and interests of other countries." There have been fears of a military invasion for weeks because of the deployment of Russian soldiers in the border area with Ukraine. Moscow denies planning such a step. Ukraine and Russia have been locked in conflict since hostilities broke out in the eastern Donbas region in 2014 after Moscow annexed the Crimean Peninsula. Russia has demanded security guarantees from the West, including that Ukraine would not join NATO. The US and NATO handed their written responses to the proposals, but Moscow said its main concerns were ignored. Xi and Putin called on NATO to "exercise a fair and objective attitude towards the peaceful development of other states."



"Russia and China stand against attempts by external forces to undermine security and stability in their common adjacent regions, intend to counter interference by outside forces in the internal affairs of sovereign countries under any pretext, oppose color revolutions, and will increase cooperation in the aforementioned areas," the readout said. They expressed "grave concern" on "serious international security challenges,"

and that "no state can or should ensure its own security" at the expense of others. On Washington's increasing engagement in Asia Pacific, the statement noted that both Beijing and Moscow "stand against the formation of closed bloc structures and opposing camps" in the region. We "remain highly vigilant about the negative impact of the United States' Indo-Pacific strategy on peace and stability in the

region," it said. Russia also reaffirmed its support for the "One-China principle," saying "Taiwan is an inalienable part of China, and opposes any forms of independence of Taiwan." Meanwhile, Putin announced Russia has signed a new contract with China to deliver an additional 10 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas. "Our oilmen have prepared good new solutions for the supply of hydrocarbons to the People's Republic of China. And the gas industry has also taken another step forward - I mean a new contract for the supply of gas to China from the Russian Far East at 10 billion cubic meters per year," he said. The two countries reached a new record trade turnover of \$140 billion, the Russian president said, adding that it is a step to reach \$200 billion. Xi said his meeting with Putin will give an additional impetus to the development of Russian-Chinese relations. "The world has entered a new period of upheaval and change" and that "humanity is facing many challenges and crises," he said. In these circumstances, he added, Russia and China "remain committed to the original goal - making unremitting efforts for the sustainable development of relations" and protection of their fundamental interests. "Everything is getting stronger (between Russia and China) - political and strategic mutual trust," he said.

'I have recovered,' says Mahathir in video message

FOREIGN DESK

JAKARTA: After many days of inconsistency in his health conditions, Malaysia's veteran leader Mahathir Mohamad on Friday said he has "recovered." "I have recovered, not fully but have recovered," said Mahathir in a video message released today. There had been many unconfirmed reports making rounds on social media regarding the health of the world's oldest former prime minister, who led Malaysia to unprecedented economic growth. However, last week his spokesperson Sufi Yusuff had told Anadolu Agency that his health was "improving." Mahathir, 96, was admitted to National Heart Institute in Kuala Lumpur. "For the past few days, I have been going back home from the hospital," Mahathir said in a voice sounding frail. The former prime minister said that doctors at the hospital are still conducting medical "procedures." Thanking people for their prayers for his healthy recovery, the video shows Mahathir surfing through a newspaper in his hands and his wife sitting beside him while he is taking sips from a cup. "Many (people) had sent flowers and (get well) cards," he added. "My hope is that soon I will recover fully." On Dec. 16, 2021, the former premier was admitted to the institute. In 2006, he had a heart attack, and the following year, he suffered another. Mahathir served as the country's fourth and seventh prime minister. He was the country's longest-serving prime minister from July 1981 to October 2003 and then again from May 2018 to March 2020, making up a total of 24 years.



ISLAMABAD: Azerbaijan ambassador to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov holds a meeting with Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Chairman of Defence Committee in the Senate of Pakistan. - DNA

Ursula warns Russia of tougher sanctions

FOREIGN DESK

BERLIN: EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Friday threatened Russia with tougher sanctions if the Ukraine conflict escalates. "We have prepared a robust and comprehensive package of financial and economic sanctions," von der Leyen told Handelsblatt, a business newspaper in Germany. This includes the "cutting off of access to foreign capital" and "export controls, especially technical goods," she added. The EU Commission chief stressed that the aim is to make the "Russian economy more fragile." The controversial Nord Stream 2 Baltic Sea pipeline is also part of the sanctions package, she said, adding that Europe cannot "take Nord Stream 2 off the table in view of the sanctions, that's very clear." Von der Leyen also expressly did not rule out economic penalties



against Russia's head of state Vladimir Putin. "Of course, people close to Putin and oligarchs could be hit hard," she said. The EU is also preparing a technology embargo. "It's about high-tech components that Russia cannot simply replace, for example in the field of artificial intelligence and armaments, in quantum computers, lasers and in space travel," she explained. In the West, there have been fears of an imminent military invasion for weeks because of the deployment of Russian soldiers in the border area with Ukraine. Moscow denies planning such a step. Ukraine and Russia have been locked in conflict since hostilities broke out in the eastern Donbas region in 2014 after Moscow illegally annexed the Crimean Peninsula.

Uzbekistan, Hungary to promote the privatization process

Mr. Sándor Csányi expressed interest in participating in the development of sports in Uzbekistan

TASHKENT: Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan Sardor Umurzakov met with the Chairman and Executive Officer of Hungarian OTP Bank Sándor Csányi, reports "Dunyo" IA correspondent. According to the MIFT, the parties discussed issues related to the bank's investment activities in Uzbekistan, taking into account the implementation of the previously signed agreement on the privatization of Ipoteka Bank. The implementation of this transaction will serve to attract foreign direct investment in the banking sector of the country and will become an additional impetus for the development and transformation of this sphere. During the dialogue, the practical aspects and terms of the agreement were considered in detail, the issues on the agenda were studied, mutually acceptable solutions were worked out that meet the interests of both sides. An agreement was reached on further actions to promote the process of privatization of Ipoteka Bank by a Hungarian investor. A program for further development of the bank based on international best practices and banking standards will also be developed. Mr. Sándor Csányi expressed interest in participating in the development of sports in Uzbekistan, including by investing in the creation of specialized sports academies. Following the meeting, further steps were agreed to promote cooperation in the areas considered. - Agencies

NATO chief appointed Norway CB governor

BRUSSELS: NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg has been named the new governor of Norway's central bank (Norges Bank). Stoltenberg was among 22 applicants for the post. Oystein Olseim, the current governor, said on Friday Stoltenberg cannot take office until around Dec. 1, adding: "But I know that Norges Bank will be in safe hands under the leadership of Deputy Governor Ida Wolden Bache from 1 March." Stoltenberg, 62, holds a postgraduate degree in economics from the University of Oslo. He served as Norway's finance minister from 1996 to 1997, followed by two stints as prime minister from 2000 to 2001 and 2005 to 2013. He took the top NATO post in October 2014 and his tenure runs until the end of September 2022. - APP

Romania interested in gas co-op with Azerbaijan

BAKU: Romanian Energy Minister Virgil-Daniel Popescu has said that his country is interested in long-term cooperation with Azerbaijan on natural gas. He made the remarks during the meeting with Azerbaijani counterpart Energy Minister Parviz Shahbazov on February 3 on the sidelines of the 8th Baku-hosted meeting of the Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the diversification of natural gas supplies and opportunities for bilateral cooperation in this direction. The Romanian minister added that the interconnectors implemented with his country's participation will contribute to the expansion of the Southern Gas Corridor. On the same day, Parviz Shahbazov held a meeting with Moldovan Deputy Prime Minister and Infrastructure and Regional Development Minister Andrei Spinu. Spinu briefed on the current situation with natural gas supplies to the country and highlighted the prospects of cooperation with Azerbaijan in this field. In turn, Shahbazov noted the Advisory Council's contribution to the supply of natural gas to Europe via the Southern Gas Corridor from a new source and welcomed Moldova's participation in this meeting for the first time. Speaking about the Southern Gas Corridor, the minister noted that there is potential for exports increase. "Realizing these opportunities and expanding the Southern Gas Corridor is a process that includes identifying consumers, signing contracts, investing, building interconnectors and providing the necessary support. We are ready to start a dialogue with the interested parties in this direction," he said. Shahbazov also held a meeting with Hungarian Foreign and Trade Minister Peter Szijjarto. - APP

Sino-Pak ties entering new stage

DNA

BEIJING: Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to China for attending the opening ceremony of the games fully demonstrates Pakistan's solidarity with China and reflects the special feelings of the Pakistani people for the Chinese people, which is highly appreciated by the Chinese side. During the visit, Chinese and Pakistani leaders will hold in-depth talks to explore the potential of pragmatic cooperation between the two countries in the new era, so as to inject new connotation into the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership. These views were expressed by Cheng Xizhong, visiting professor of southwest university of political science and law and former defense attach in south Asian countries in an article published by China Economic Net on Friday. He said, China and Pakistan had traditional friendly relationships, which was substantially consolidated by the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). China and Pakistan jointly build the CPEC, the flagship project of the "Belt and Road", which shows the close relationship and the increasing strategic integration between the two countries.

Pak embassy Minsk marks Kashmir Solidarity Day

The participants expressed their unwavering support for the oppressed Kashmiri people in their just struggle for freedom from Indian occupation. The video highlighted the Jammu Massacre, discovery of several thousand unmarked graves and use of pellet guns by the Indian forces against innocent Kashmiris

DNA

MINSK: As part Kashmir Solidarity Day commemoration falling on 5th February, the Embassy organized an event today in Minsk to show solidarity with the people in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu Kashmir (IIOJK) who are struggling for their right to self-determination enshrined in several UN Security Council Resolutions. The event was attended by members of expatriate community and representatives of Kashmiri diaspora. A photographic exhibition and video documentary on human rights situation in Kashmir were part of the event. The participants expressed their

unwavering support for the oppressed Kashmiri people in their just struggle for freedom from Indian occupation. The video highlighted the Jammu Massacre, discovery of several thousand unmarked graves and use of pellet guns by the Indian forces against innocent Kashmiris. On the occasion, Ambassador of Pakistan to Belarus Sajjad Haider Khan briefed the participants on the three important dimensions of the Kashmir Dispute including Human Rights, Legal and Peace & Security. He urged the international community to play its role in fulfilling its commitment to the Kashmiri people, made through UN resolutions assuring them of their right to self-determination.



Briefs

Macron heading to Russia, Ukraine

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron will visit Moscow and Kyiv to meet his counterparts early next week, his office said on Friday, in the highest profile effort by a Western leader to deescalate the Ukraine crisis. Macron will go to Russia on Monday to meet President Vladimir Putin and to Ukraine on Tuesday for talks with President Volodymyr Zelensky. The French president, who has called for a deescalation in the crisis, has over the last days repeatedly held telephone talks with Putin and Zelensky as well as talking to US President Joe Biden. His office had said late Thursday after Macron's latest talks with Putin and Zelensky that the discussions sought "to identify the elements that should lead to a deescalation".

In a possible nod to Russia's concerns about NATO expansion and US military presence in eastern Europe, it said exchanges had started on the "strategic balance" in Europe, which should make it possible to see "a reduction in the risks on the ground and guarantee security".

Western powers have been engaged in intense diplomatic efforts over the last weeks over the build-up of some 100,000 Russian troops close to the border with its pro-EU neighbour raised fears it was planning a new invasion of Ukraine.

Although Ukraine has sought to play down the risk of an invasion, tensions are running high after the US Pentagon said Thursday it had evidence of a plan by Moscow to film a fake Ukrainian attack on Russians to justify a real assault. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has also indicated he plans to visit Russia soon although the timing is not immediately clear.

The French president has over the last years maintained that Europe must keep channels open to talk with Russia. He has insisted that a "demanding dialogue" is preferable to open confrontation with Moscow in a fast-changing world dominated by the rise of China. Macron paid his only visit to Russia as president in May 2018 to attend the Saint Petersburg economic forum and meet Putin. - APP

Germany's Scholz to visit Russia

MOSCOW: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz will visit Russia for talks with President Vladimir Putin on February 15, the Kremlin said Friday, as tensions rage between Moscow and the West over Ukraine.

"A visit by Scholz to Moscow will take place on the 15th," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, adding that the two leaders will hold "substantial" bilateral talks. It will be Putin's first face-to-face talks with Scholz since he took over as German chancellor in December. The announcement comes amid a major European diplomatic effort to ease tensions after Russia amassed tens of thousands of troops on the Ukrainian border, raising fears of an invasion. Scholz said earlier this week he would travel to Moscow to discuss the crisis.

Russia denies it plans to invade but has demanded wide-ranging security guarantees from the West, including that Ukraine never be allowed to join NATO. The two leaders are also set to discuss the controversial Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia to Germany, among a host of other controversial bilateral and international issues.

Germany has traditionally been seen as more open to dealing with Russia than some other Western countries, but there are some sources of tensions. On Thursday, Russia said it was closing the Moscow bureau of German broadcaster Deutsche Welle in response to Berlin's ban on the German-language channel of Russian state TV network RT. - APP

At least 10 killed as bus hits landmine

MOGADISHU: At least 10 people were killed and two others wounded on Friday when the bus they were travelling in struck a landmine in Somalia, security officials and residents said.

The victims were heading to the southern port city of Kismayo when an explosion ripped through their vehicle as it hit what was believed to be a landmine, local security official Mohamed Nur Dahir told AFP by phone.

"This was a horrible incident, ten people - all of them innocent civilians - were killed and two others wounded in the explosion which destroyed the minibuses they were travelling in," he said.

"Terrorists plant mines along the road used by civilian transport, and this is not the first time they have done so," he added. Many of the victims were taken to Kismayo for treatment, city resident Abdulkadir Mohamed Weli told AFP that. - APP

Sri Lanka, Pakistan always been trusted partners: Envoy

Issues message on the occasion of 74th Independence Day of Sri Lanka

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Pakistan has said, Sri Lanka achieved its independence on the 4th of February 1948 after being a British crown colony for over a century. Since then, Sri Lanka has enjoyed a stable democracy and steady economic growth in spite two insurgencies experienced in the north and the south of the country. Sri Lanka was admitted to United Nations in 1955, seven years after independence and is a member of number of multilateral organisations. The High Commissioner expressed these views in his message issued on the occasion of the 74th Independence Day of Sri Lanka. He further said, the Independence Day of Sri Lanka is a great national event celebrated by Sri Lankans all over with parades and cultural pageants combined with the spirit of patriotism and national pride. Inde-



pendence Day holds much significance for the people of Sri Lanka as it reflects the history of great sacrifices made by Sri Lankans in the realisation of its freedom at various stages under the colonial rule and also to remember and pay

tribute to all who made the supreme sacrifice to ensure the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. "Today, Sri Lanka boasts of being a modern industrial economy, famous as a much sought out tourist destination, owing to its natural splendour, in the form of tropical forests, inland lakes, picturesque beaches and mesmerizing scenery. Sri Lanka is known for its famous orthodox tea that is grown mainly in the mountainous terrain and for the brand of cricket that is famous in the subcontinent". The high commissioner said, Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has emphasized that the top most priority of the government being economic development and as a nation has chosen a neutral foreign policy. Sri Lanka has stressed its principle of friendship towards all, enmity towards none in its diplomacy. Talking about bilateral relations he said, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have always been trusted-partners with historical linkages dating back to the period of Gandhara civilization. Since achieving independence both Pakistan and Sri Lanka have extended cooperation to each other in different sectors and share similar perceptions in various international and regional fora.

Nation holds its armed forces in high esteem: CJP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial has said since the armed forces of Pakistan play an important role to defend the country that's why they are looked upon with great respect and admiration.

Talking to a 49-member delegation of the Command and Staff College, Quetta, led by Lt Colonel Hashim Iqbal Bajwa, which called on him in Islamabad on Friday, the CJP briefed them about the salient features of the 1973 Constitution and the powers of the Supreme Court as laid down in it.

Spokesman for the Supreme Court said that besides Pakistan, officers of 20 other countries were also included in the delegation. On the other hand, CJP Bandial, who has taken oath to his office only two days ago, is faced with an increasing backlog of cases as their number has now risen to 53,547.

According to a report, 118 more cases were added to the backlog already pending with the SC dated between January 16, 2022 and January 31, 2022. The report reveals that presently 30,427 civil cases are sub judice. "Similarly, 28 suo motu notices and one reference are also pending," the report says. Furthermore, the apex court is yet to decide the fate of 133 petitions pertaining to basic human rights, while the number of criminal cases and jail petitions has exceeded 11,000. It has also been disclosed that no hearing was held during the last 15 days of January at the SC's Lahore, Quetta and Peshawar registries.

PM Khan has indebted every citizen: Marriyum

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb lashed out at Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan on Friday and said that he has put a huge debt on each and every Pakistani.

The PML-N leader said that since the day Imran Khan became prime minister of Pakistan, the country's debt has increased by 50 percent. Marriyum Aurangzeb, while referring to a comment made by Imran Khan before he came in power, said that everyone should keep an eye on the PM as he may try to commit suicide for taking a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The PML-N spokesperson further stated that income of the PM has increased by 90 percent in the past three years. Earlier, Marriyum Aurangzeb had said that the shortage of urea in Punjab was just because of PM Imran Khan's corruption. In a statement, the PML-N leader said that the farmers were facing problems despite spending hefty amounts. Delay in provision of fertilizer could lead to severe wheat crisis in the country, she added. Marriyum Aurangzeb further said that Imran mafia had made farmers 'beggars'.

PCR test rate cut down in Sindh

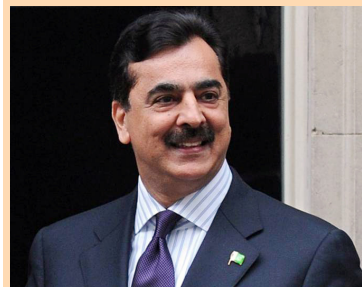
DNA

KARACHI: The Sindh Healthcare Commission (SHC) on Friday reduced the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test charges to Rs4,500 per test to increase the percentage of people tested for Covid-19 as there is surge in cases in the province.

As per notification, the test charges from home is fixed at Rs4,800. Meanwhile, the Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) from laboratories cost Rs1,200, said the Sindh Healthcare Commission.

According to the commission, prices were fixed after meeting with all stakeholders including laboratories and hospitals in Karachi. Chairman Sindh Commission Ahsan Qavi said that people should complain to the Healthcare Commission if they were overcharged for the Covid-19 testing.

Pakistanis stand with Kashmiris: Gillani



ISLAMABAD: Leader of Opposition Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said the people of Pakistan stand shoulder to shoulder with their Kashmiri brothers and sisters in their legitimate struggle for right to self-determination. During the key session in Senate, a motion was moved by Leader of House Shahzad Waseem and Leader of Opposition Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on the current situation in the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir on the eve of Kashmir Solidarity Day. Opening the debate in the House, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader strongly condemned Indian atrocities against oppressed Kashmiri people. He pointed out that India is resorting to tactics aimed at changing the demographic structure of the occupied territory in violation of international laws and conventions. He said the world community should come forward and resolve this outstanding dispute in accordance with the aspirations of Kashmiri people. - DNA

Chief Minister reviews KPK law and order situation

The CM has directed the relevant departments to make coordinated efforts under a well devised strategy to curb such incidents

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: An important meeting to review the overall law & order situation in the province was held here on Friday with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan in the chair. The meeting took stock of the overall law & order situation in the province including Newly Merged Districts. The chief minister while expressing his concerns on the increasing incidents of law & order in the province, has directed the relevant departments and entities to make coordinated and concerted efforts under a well devised strategy to curb such incidents. The forum also discussed and reviewed various factors behind the in-

creasing incidents of law & order in the province and took important decisions to improve the overall situation to a satisfactory level by taking action against criminals and miscreants elements. Chief Secretary Dr. Shehzad Bangash, Inspector General of Police Muazam Jah Ansaari, Principal Secretary to CM Amjad Ali Khan, Secretary Home Khushal Khan, Representatives of 11 Corps and other Civil and Military officials attended the meeting. The forum has decided to further strengthen the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and to extend it to the district level, and the relevant police officials were directed to submit workable proposals to this effect. The forum also agreed to constitute

a joint forum of all the stake holders in order to ensure integrated efforts against the incidents of law & order in the province by putting in place an effective mechanism of coordination and liaison among the concerned civil and military entities. It was also decided in the meeting to hold monthly meetings of concerned departments with chief minister in the chair to review law & order situation in the province on regular basis. Similarly, the forum has decided to immediately setup a special cell under CTD to effectively curb the incidents of extortions in the province, and the concerned authorities were directed to take steps for the awareness of general public regarding the aforesaid cell.

Pak records 48 Covid-19 deaths

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan recorded the highest number of COVID-19 deaths - 48 - in the last 24 hours, since October 7, 2021, taking the overall death toll to 29,420, the National Command and Operation's Centre (NCOC) data showed Friday morning. The graph indicates a consistent increase in hospitalisation, with 1,618 patients in critical care, but the positivity rate has remained below 10% for the fourth consecutive day. The number of new cases in the last 24 hours stands at 6,377 after 1,513,619 diagnostic tests were conducted, placing Pakistan's COVID-19 positivity ratio at 9.94%.

The new infections placed Pakistan's confirmed case count at 1,448,663, while the active case count clocked in at 101,858. Earlier this week, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Health Dr Faisal Sultan asked the public to stop being lazy and get a booster shot if they haven't already, as Pakistan continues its battle against the Omicron-driven fifth COVID-19 wave.

He had urged people to get their COVID-19 booster shots if six months had passed since they got their second vaccination dose. "Scientific data has shown that people need an additional dose of the vaccine despite being fully vaccinated for protection against COVID-19 if six months and over have passed," Dr Sultan had said, while addressing a press conference after attending a meeting at the NCOC in Islamabad.

He had said that earlier, the NCOC was only asking people to get the booster dose, but now it is recommending it again based on scientific evidence. - APP



BEIJING: Prime Minister Imran Khan along with federal ministers witnessing the opening ceremony of Beijing Winter Olympics. DNA

Hindu senator presides over Kashmir session

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Hindu Senator Krishna Kolhi on Friday presided over the Kashmir session of the upper house of the parliament. Addressing the members, Krishna Kolhi remarked that it was a slap on the face of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi that a Hindu lawmaker was presiding over the Pakistani Senate's session on Kashmir. Later, the senators strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in Noshki and Panjgur areas of Balochistan and offered Fateha for martyrs of the security forces. The House also offered Fateha for personnel of Nowshera police and father of Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi. Senator Mushtaq Ahmed led the Fateha and prayed for peace and security of the country. The senators also adopted a resolution to express solidarity with the people of Kashmir. Leader of the Opposition in Senate and former prime minister Yousaf Raza Gi-

lani said India was trying to change the population ratio in Kashmir. "If India wants to restore relations with Pakistan, then it should reverse its move of August 5, 2019, through which it repealed the illegally occupied Kashmir's autonomous status," Gilani said. He said the Kashmir issue should be resolved according to the wishes of Kashmiris. He said India had been oppressing Kashmiris for more than seven decades. The Indian state's violence had reached dangerous levels and it was engaged in genocide of Kashmiris, he maintained.

Gilani said his party leaders like former prime ministers Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto would become a voice of Kashmiris. He said peace was not possible in the South Asia till resolution of the Kashmir conflict. He said his party stood in solidarity with Kashmiris. He demanded from India to release all political prisoners in Kashmir, lift curfew, stop changing demographic character of Kashmir and restore Kashmir-related confidence building measures.