



# Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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**Pakistan to continue facilitate Afghan peace process: FM Qureshi**

**Pakistan, Italy agree to boost bilateral ties**

**NAB asks Buzdar to submit response by August 18**



## Briefs

**Pakistan condemns extra-judicial killings**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly condemned the extra-judicial killings of Kashmiris in fake encounters by Indian Occupation Forces in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K). In a statement in Islamabad, Foreign Office said these condemnable crimes against Kashmiri youth by the Indian occupation forces are being perpetrated with complete impunity, under the cover of draconian laws. It said the killings of innocent Kashmiris and destruction of their properties is a part of the "Hindutva" agenda of the RSS-BJP which is attempting to target defenseless Kashmiris with mindless violence and perpetuating collective punishment to break their will.

**NAB files petition on Khawaja brothers' bail**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau Wednesday filed a review petition in the Supreme Court on the decision of granting bail to PML-N leaders Khawaja Saad Rafique and Khawaja Salman Rafique in the Paragon Housing Society corruption case. The anti-corruption watchdog requested the apex court to overrule the verdict of Khawaja brothers' bail. A three-member bench hears the NAB cases according to the rules whereas Saad Rafique and Salman Rafique were granted bail by a two-member bench, the accountability bureau maintained. The application stated, "The Supreme Court's observation will affect the trial of the corruption case. The bail decision by the court violated the rules defined by the larger bench as the top court had directed to issue a short verdict. "The apex court's two-member bench wrote an 87-page decision. The court should remove paragraphs 18 to 48 and 56 to 70 from its verdict."

**Sindh govt slammed over failures**

DNA

KARACHI: The Supreme Court on Wednesday lashing out at the provincial and local government gave National Disaster Management Authority three months to clean out Karachi's drains and remove encroachments. Hearing the case pertaining to encroachments in Haji Lemo Goth area, a three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Gulzar Ahmed, declared the city commissioner's report unsatisfactory. Sindh government has failed to provide basic rights to the residents of Karachi, remarked the bench, warning that the consequences of this would be dire.

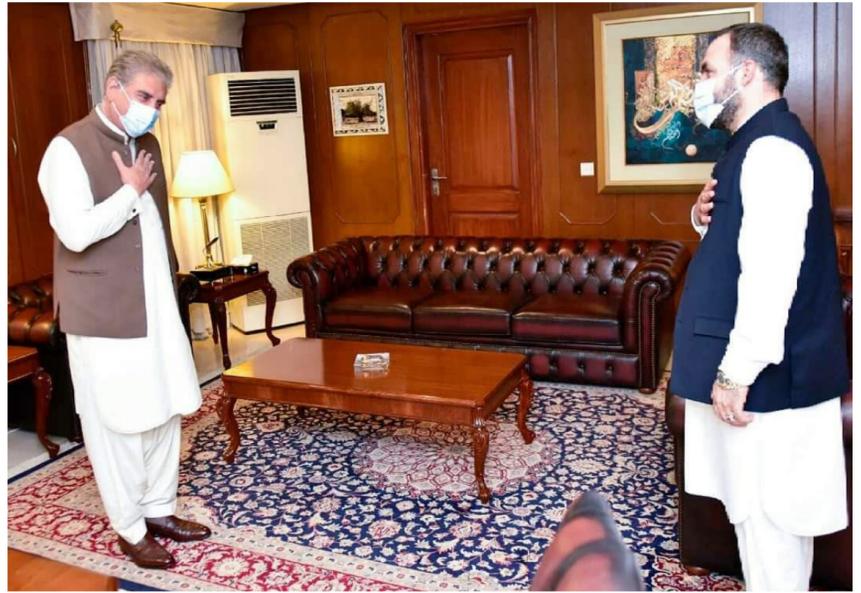
## Don't play with fire, China warns US

Some people in the US must not harbour illusions, those who play with fire will get burned," said Zhao Lijian

SAIFULLAH / DNA

BEIJING: Tensions between the US and China increased further after the visit of a high-level delegation to Taiwan, with Beijing warning Washington "not to play with fire" on Wednesday. Beijing has been infuriated by the highest-profile visit in decades to Taiwan, which it sees as part of its territory, as US-China relations plunge to a record low over a range of issues from trade to military and the coronavirus pandemic. Health chief Alex Azar finished a three-day visit to Taiwan, during which he criticised China's handling of the pandemic and visited the shrine of a former Taiwan president hated by the Communist Party leadership. Beijing slammed the visit Wednesday and said it "firmly opposes official exchanges between the US and Taiwan under any pretext". "On issues involving China's core interests, some people in the US must not harbour illusions, those who play with fire will get burned," said foreign ministry spokes-

man Zhao Lijian at a regular press briefing. "I would also like to remind the Taiwan authorities not to be subservient to others, to rely on the support of foreigners, and to be bent on pursuing independence, which is a dead end," Zhao said. Beijing insists that Taiwan - which has been self-ruled since 1949 - is part of "one China" and has vowed to react with force if it ever formally declares independence. On the last day of the trip, Azar visited a shrine to Taiwan's late president Lee Teng-hui Wednesday, praising his role in steering the island's transition to democracy. The US cabinet member wrote a message of condolence for Lee, who died last month aged 97. "President Lee's democratic legacy will forever propel the US-Taiwan relationship forward," Azar wrote. Lee was a towering figure in Taiwan's recent history. He defied China by pushing for the island to be recognised as a sovereign nation and earned the nickname "Mr Democracy" for the part he played in its transition from authoritarian rule.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi welcomes the Ambassador of Afghanistan Mr. Shukrullah Atif Mashal. - DNA

## Pakistan to continue facilitate Afghan peace process: FM

The outgoing Ambassador Mashal paid a farewell visit and thanked the Foreign Minister for the consistent support extended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during his tenure

A.M.BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Afghanistan Mr. Shukrullah Atif Mashal paid farewell call on Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi. Foreign Minister Qureshi reiterated importance of Pakistan's bilateral relations with Afghanistan. He said that Prime Minister Imran Khan has abiding interest in strengthening re-

### Pak-Afghan border reopens

CHAMAN: The Pak-Afghan border crossing at Chaman has reopened for trade, after it was closed in late July following a clash that erupted over border closure. The border was reopened after talks with the Pak-Afghan border government committee and other relevant parties. However, pedestrian traffic on the border continues to remain suspended.

lations with all neighbours, including Afghanistan. The Foreign Minister welcomed the Loya Jirga's recommendation on release of prisoners and expressed the hope that the Intra-Afghan Negotiations will commence at the earliest. He emphasized that - the

Afghan leadership should seize this historic opportunity to achieve a comprehensive, broad-based and inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan. Ambassador Mashal thanked the Foreign Minister for his personal attention to further enhance Pakistan-Afghanistan bilateral relations and for the consistent support extended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during his tenure.

## Pakistan keen to boost ties with Italy

Pakistan attaches highest priority to regional and world peace while India is involved in serious human rights violations in IoK: Shahzad Waseem

A.M. BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Italy in Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese called on Leader of the House (LoH) in Senate Dr. Shahzad Waseem at the latter's residence in Islamabad on Wednesday, wherein bilateral issues of mutual interest were discussed.

Talking to the ambassador, Leader of the House in Senate Dr. Shahzad Waseem said that Pakistan gives utmost importance to its bilateral relations with Italy and we are eager to enhance these friendly ties. He said that close collaboration at all levels depict the confidence of both the



countries in each other. He said that there is a huge potential to increase the trade and economic ties between two friendly countries. He reiterated that Government, Parliament and the people of Pakistan are deeply grieved on the human loss in Italy caused due to COVID-19. Coronavirus has

deteriorated the economies of the world and it is high time to adopt a collective approach to cope with the challenges posed by the pandemic. Dr. Shahzad Waseem said that economy of Pakistan has been put on right direction under the leadership of the Prime Minister Imran Khan.

## NA passes Anti-Terrorism bill

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Wednesday passed the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2020, days after the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Finance approved it. The Bill was one of the five moved by Law Minister Farogh Naseem along with Limited Liability Partnership (Amendment) Bill, The Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2020, The Control of Narcotic Substances (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and Islamabad Capital Territory Trust Bill, 2020. All the Bills were passed by the Lower House. Speaking on the floor of the House, Naseem had said it was a historic day that the FATF-related legislation was being carried out with consensus in the larger interest of the country. "Whitening the economy and checking terror financing is important to take the country forward on the path of development," Naseem said. Members of the Opposition parties had called National Assembly's Standing Committee on Finance approval of the Bill as "bulldozing" after it had taken under half-an-hour to pass it on Monday. Opposition members had said none of their proposals, including parliamentary oversight through the inclusion of parliamentarians from Opposition in high powered National Executive Committee for curbing its misuse for political victimisation, granting powers to NAB, making money laundering as a cognizable offence. - DNA

## Indian cyber attack bids foiled

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's Intelligence Agencies have identified a major cyber-attack by Indian Intelligence Agencies involving a range of cyber crimes including deceitful fabrication by hacking personal mobiles and technical gadgets of government officials and military personnel. Various targets of Hostile Intelligence Agencies are being investigated. Pakistan Army has further enhanced necessary measures to thwart such activities including action against violators of standing operating procedures (SOPs) on cyber security. Advisory is also being sent to all government departments / institutions for identifying lapses and enhance respective cyber security measures.

## Maryam Nawaz, 188 PML-N workers booked

PML-N supporters and police engaged in violent clashes on Tuesday outside the Bureau's office

DNA

LAHORE: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz, her husband Safdar Awan and 188 party workers have been booked by police after clashes ensued outside the office of the National Accountability Bureau's (NAB) Lahore during Maryam's appearance on Tuesday. PML-N supporters and police engaged in violent clashes on Tuesday outside the Bureau's office, where Maryam Nawaz had been summoned to respond in a case of alleged illegal transfer of government land. Whilst police and the Punjab

government claimed that it was an deliberate attempt on the PML-N leader's part to create anarchy, Maryam accused NAB and police of attacking the party's workers and pelting stones at her bulletproof car. According to the police, a case against the PML-N leaders has been registered in the Chohang police station after NAB officials filed a case. Nawaz, her husband Muhammad Safdar, Rana Sanauallah, Perverz Rashid, Zubair Mahmood, Javed Latif, Daniel Aziz and Pervez Malik have also been named in the first information report (FIR).

## Afghan envoy meets COAS

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Shukrullah Atif Mashal, Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan paid a farewell call on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ. The dignitary thanked COAS for support to Afghanistan and Afghan peace process during his tenure.

## Govt to import sugar in bid to stabilize prices

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Information, while informing about the Prime Minister's decision, said that sugar prices were increased after the Sugar Commission report was made public but the government will not be pressurized by the sugar mafia. Shibli Faraz was addressing a press conference on Wednesday, saying that the Prime Minister takes monthly briefings reviewing inflation from provincial officials. A similar review meeting on inflation and rising prices of daily items was held under his chairmanship today. Shibli Faraz said that sugar and wheat are items that everyone uses, we want to devise a mechanism that keeps prices the same in all provinces.

## Interest rate on loans slashed by half

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a major relief, Adviser to Prime Minister on Finance Abdul Hafeez Shaikh on Wednesday announced that the government has slashed interest rate by 50 per cent on loans to youth under 'Kamyab Jawan Program'. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Hafeez Shaikh said that the government has provided over one billion rupees to 2,900 youths under the scheme.

## Pakistan, Uzbek role vital for Afghan peace

The Online International Conference was attended by 35 participants. It was moderated by Lieutenant Colonel Khalid Taimur Akram (Retd), Executive Director, CGSS, Islamabad

SAIFULLAH / DNA

ISLAMABAD: On 12th August 2020, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad & Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies (ISRS) under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Tashkent jointly organized an Online International Conference on "Efforts of Pakistan & Uzbekistan towards the Settlement of the Conflict in Afghanistan: Prospects for Mutually Beneficial Cooperation". The Session was commenced with the opening remarks of Major General Syed Khalid Amir Jaffery HI(M) (Retd), President, CGSS. He stated that Afghan Conflict is one of the longest conflicts of modern history which has resulted in severe effects at the

regional and global levels. He further highlighted the damaging impacts of the Afghan Conflict on both the brother countries (Uzbekistan and Pakistan). Mr. Akramjon Ne'matov, First Deputy Director, ISRS, Tashkent, Uzbekistan mentioned that due to various National and International terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan, there has been a high rate of Collateral damage. Hence, it is the common duty of the neighboring countries (Pakistan and Uzbekistan) to facilitate in overcoming the difficult situation in Afghanistan. Mr. Akramjon also highlighted the significant role Loya Jirga can play in achieving long-term sustainability in Afghanistan. Lastly, he suggested that for the promotion of peace,



stability, and progress in Afghanistan and the region in general, a Joint Cooperation Mission can be formulated. Prof. Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar (S.I.), Vice-Chancellor, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan stated that the peace and stability in Afghanistan are in the com-

mon interest of Pakistan and Uzbekistan. Moreover, he added that through the platforms of SCO and ECO, Pakistan and Uzbekistan can play a pivotal role in bringing stability in Afghanistan. Lastly, Dr. Niaz Ahmad mentioned that the progress in the common areas of in-

terest such as energy, communication, tourism, etc can only be made if the situation in Afghanistan improves. Mr. Bakhtiyar Mustafayev, Head of Center, ISRS, Tashkent, Uzbekistan mentioned that joint efforts in the areas of Infrastructure, etc can play an important role in promoting stability in the region and Afghanistan in specific. Furthermore, he mentioned that to facilitate the peace process in Afghanistan, the Afghan-led initiative must be supported. H.E Zahid Nasrullah Khan, Ambassador of Pakistan to Afghanistan, Kabul stated that to solve the Afghan Conflict, an Inclusive Political Dialogue must be encouraged in which the three major stakeholders (US, Taliban, & Afghan Leadership) must be included. He

further stressed upon the support for the Afghan-led Process. Highlighting the significant role played by Pakistan in the Afghan Peace Process, Mr. Nasrullah mentioned that Pakistan has played an active role by participating in all international efforts and gathering support at the regional and international levels. Mr. Rustam Huramov, Head of the Branch, ISRS, Tashkent, Uzbekistan stated that Uzbekistan has launched several infrastructure projects in Afghanistan to improve the overall stability of Afghanistan. The Railway project launched by Uzbekistan will not only prove to be beneficial for the member states (Uzbekistan, Pakistan, & Afghanistan) but also for the entire region.

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## Briefs

### 'Journey of Hope' exhibition starts

RAWALPINDI: An online three-day exhibition of rare photographs of Tehreeke-e-Pakistan 'Journey of Hope' was inaugurated here on Wednesday at Rawalpindi Arts Council (RAC). Chairman Pakistan Green Task Force, Dr Jamal Nasir inaugurated the exhibition while Director Waqar Ahmad, Deputy Director Sajjad Hussain and Pir Azmatullah Sultan were present on the occasion.

The exhibition will continue on the Rawalpindi Arts Council's YouTube channel and Facebook until August 14. Local artists and art students participated in the exhibition while maintaining social distance.

Addressing the participants, Dr Jamal Nasir said that holding an exhibition of rare photos by RAC was highly commendable. He said, the young generation must be aware of the fact that the independence was a great blessing and its value could only be determined by a person who was deprived of it. He said that RAC always played a significant role and organized beautiful programmes to celebrate national days. The council by arranging the exhibition provided an opportunity to the local artists to express their love for the country through their art, he added. Dr Jamal Nasir said that the difficulties of the people of India illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir have also been highlighted. "During the migration, the trains were looted, women were molested and their families were killed," he said adding, Pakistan was created with immense sacrifices.

### Corona sample collection points set up

ABBOTABAD: Health department has established corona sample collection points at resorts in view of expected arrival of a large number of tourists on August 14. These points have been established in three places including Natiya Galli, Barriyan and Ayubia. In this regard Additional Assistant Commissioner Aminul Hassan paid visit to these places and inspected arrangements of the health department. Dr Shahid briefed the additional commissioner and said that collection centres had been set up at entry points of Galiyat for visitors to get checked for coronavirus. He appealed people to avoid going to crowded places and comply with SOPs to stop spread of the contagious disease. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Mayor Islamabad Shiekh Anser Aziz talking to sanitation staff. - DNA

## IGP Islamabad inaugurates facilitation centre at ICCI

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has established a Facilitation Centre of Islamabad Police in its premises to resolve the issues and provide police related services to its members in the premises of Chamber. Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan, Inspector General of Islamabad Police formally inaugurated the Facilitation Centre during a ceremony held at ICCI. Addressing the ceremony, Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan said that ICCI should propose a committee to resolve issues of business community and Islamabad Police would issue its notification. He said that a parent committee along with sector-wise committees in order to resolve issues of business community of all

sectors. He said that business community was the backbone of the economy and it was the responsibility of police to provide them peaceful environment for business activities. He said that under Safe City Project, 1880 security cameras were installed in Islamabad and 97% of them were in working condition. He said that after Aug 14, 2020, e-challans would be issued in Islamabad and after Lahore, the federal capital would be the second city of the country to issue e-challans. He said that with the good performance of Islamabad Police, crime rate has been reduced by 37% in Islamabad while accidents have reduced by 50% and he was feeling proud on his police. He said that civil society should fully cooperate with police to control crimes as its cooperation was key. He said that Prime Minister



has fully supported Islamabad Police in controlling land mafias in Islamabad. He lauded ICCI for setting up Islamabad Police Facilitation Centre and said it would provide all services the business community that were being provided by police related services from Chamber instead of visiting various police stations. He said that ICCI has already setup the Facilitation Desks of Pakistan Customs, ICTA while more such desks of other organizations would be established soon to facilitate the business community. He thanked Muhammad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan, IGP Islamabad for visiting ICCI

to inaugurate the Facilitation Centre and hoped that he would always cooperate with ICCI in resolving police related major issues of the business community. Speaking at the occasion, Mian Akram Farid Chairman Founder Group appreciate the good performance of Islamabad Police that produced many prominent officers who rendered great services to the nation. He said that Islamabad Police has created peaceful environment for business activities in the federal capital, which was laudable. He highlighted the parking problems and traffic issues in Blue Area and gave proposals for resolving them. He said that Islamabad Police should further improve the working of security cameras installed under Safe City Project and gave many suggestions for this purpose.

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ISLAMABAD: Afghan ambassador pays farewell call on Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood. - DNA

### Metro Bus restored after five months

RAWALPINDI: The Metro Bus Service (MBS) has been restored in twin cities on Wednesday after five months suspension. According to the administration of MBS, the bus service which was closed due to coronavirus, has been restored under Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Standing in the buses will be prohibited and the passengers will be required to wear face masks. Metro Bus Service will run from 6 am to 10 pm. The Bus Service was shutdown on March 23 to prevent spread of coronavirus. Following the lockdown and lifting of the sanctions in Punjab, the MBS administration had asked for more time to complete the preparations. Despite end of the lockdown and lifting of the restrictions, the health authorities have appealed to the citizens to follow SOPs issued by the government to control spread of COVID-19. They said that precaution must be taken until the complete elimination of the coronavirus. - APP

### National development rests on youth: Usman

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Muhammad Usman Dar Wednesday said his government fully believed in meaningful engagement of the youth to attain development, prosperity and real change for the country. "68 per cent population of the country comprises on youth which is a national asset and our major strength," Usman Dar said in a video message released by his office in connection with the 'International Youth Day 2020'. He said Prime Minister Imran Khan had taken remarkable initiatives for well-being of the youth after recognizing their capabilities. "It is the first time in history of the country that a comprehensive and detailed policy for the youth empowerment has been formulated in the shape of 'National Youth Development Framework,'" he re-

marked. The SAPM said the government has been taking practical steps for the youth under the framework, which identified targets for their social, political and economic development. Usman Dar said the government had rolled out the 'Hunarmand Pakistan' (Skill for All) programme with a cost of Rs 10 billion under its flagship project of the 'Kamyab Jawan Programme'. The project was meant to impart modern techniques and technologies to the youth in addition to the skills in conventional trades, he added. He said an amount of Rs 100 billion had been allocated under the 'Kamyab Jawan Programme' to provide financial support to the young people for starting their own businesses. The historical programme was being implemented across the country in transparent manner, he added. - APP

### PAF to launch national song on 14 August

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Air Force (PAF) has released the teaser of national song to be launched on the occasion of Independence Day "Mera Junoon" (My Passion) which would be aired on all TV channels on August 14.

In this regard, the PAF has released the teaser of this national song in which the spirit of patriotism has been highlighted and the pledge has been renewed that every member of the Pakistan Air Force along with the entire nation would play its full role in the development and prosperity of the country, said a PAF press release here on Wednesday. - APP

### ANF seizes 591.799 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI: Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) seized 591.799 kg narcotics worth US \$ 17.970 million in international market, arrested 12 culprits including a lady and impounded six vehicles, in conducting nine counter-narcotic strikes. According to an ANF spokesman, the seized drugs comprised of 398.4 kg Opium, 178.255 kg Hashish and 15.144 kg Heroin.

ANF Quetta intercepted a pickup at Lak Pass Toll Plaza, Quetta and recovered 10 kg Hashish during search of the vehicle. ANF Rawalpindi raided at Village Manga, Tehsil Murree, District Rawalpindi and arrested two accused persons namely Muhammad Faisal Abbasi and Muhammad Arslan Abbasi both r/o Rawalpindi and recovered 20.250 kg Hashish and 15.750 kg Hashish (total 36 kg Hashish) respectively from their personal possession. In another operation, ANF Rawalpindi conducted a raid at house of Muhammad Nouman Abbasi located at Village Manga, Teshil Murree, District Rawalpindi and recovered 84.375 kg Hashish, a SMG alongwith two magazines & 204 Rounds, a 30 bore pistol alongwith two magazines and 110 rounds from the house. Furthermore, four cars were also seized which were parked in the house. - APP

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### Theater Wally to screen "This Stained Dawn"

ISLAMABAD: Art group Theater Wally will be screening their international stage play "This Stained Dawn" on 18th August for the first time here at The Farm for the theater lovers in twin cities. Theatre Wally performed this play in Ithaca (New York) on 30th and 31st October 2015 and received a huge positive response from the audience. This play is now being screened at The Farm in Banigala which will be followed by a Q&A session with senior members of Theatre Wally, who were part of the Voices of Partition project and performed in the plays. The title of the play 'Dagh Dagh Ujala' is taken from a poem by famous Urdu poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz. The script was written by all the cast members with contributions from the producer and director of the play. - APP

### 'Child protection legislation needs to be improved'

Members of the committee called for strict punishment as per law and condemned those involved in heinous crime. They emphasized that investigation processes need to be improved

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid, Convener, Senate Special Committee on Child Protection has observed that loopholes in existing legislation with regard to Child protection need to be identified to improve and strengthen investigation process for speedy justice. She expressed these views while presiding over meeting of the special committee at the Parliament House on Tuesday. The Committee was briefed in detailed about the updated statuses of child abuse incidents which took place in Mansehra seminary and Nowshera. It was informed that the accused of Mansehra incident is in custody and his request for bail has been rejected by the court. It was

informed that the case has been fixed for hearing on 22nd September, 2020. The child is with their parents. Police department arranged for the treatment and psychological counselling of the child as well. Regarding Nowshera incident, the police department informed that the child was murdered by strangulation and was later on plunged into water tank. The officials informed that two accused namely Abdar and Rafiqullah Wahab have been arrested. The committee was informed that Lady doctor of DHQ Nowshera had referred the case to Peshawar for autopsy. The Committee took strong notice of referring the case KMC, Peshawar despite the fact the DHQ had the capacity to conduct autopsy and physical examination of the dead body of

the child. Members of the committee called for strict punishment as per law and condemned those involved in heinous crime. They emphasized that investigation processes need to be improved by not only imparting specialized trainings and capacity building of the police department but also the medical side. Convener of the Committee sympathised with the parents of the children brutally murdered in the two separate incidents. She said that such crimes can only be stopped by taking stern action against the culprits involved. She said that Parliament can legislate in this regard, however the lacunas have to be identified by the executing agencies. She said that Parliament can legislate and enact more concrete laws as such incidents are a

crime against humanity. The Committee also reviewed the steps taken by the FIA to curb child pornography. Members of the Committee were of the view that individuals and groups involved in such immoral activities have international links. It was informed that the FIA has got the capability of accessing profiles of those individuals and groups involved in uploading and downloading pornographic material. The committee called for enhancing human resource of the cybercrimes wing of FIA and capabilities through capacity building. The meeting was attended by Senators Samina Saeed, Muhammad Ali Khan Saif and Muhammad Javed Abbasi besides senior Police Officers of Mansehra and Nowshera.

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## Billboard peril

THE potential danger presented by giant billboards installed in all our major cities, and especially in Karachi, along major roads and highways has come up before. Orders to remove these structures because of the manner in which they block a view of the road for drivers and the danger they present in the event of a major storm or heavy wind has been brought up before. Despite this, little action has been taken to remove the billboards or reduce their number. This has been noted by Chief Justice Gulzar Ahmad while hearing a case at the SC's Karachi Registry. A complainant had lodged an FIR regarding billboards placed along Karachi's roads despite prior orders from the Supreme Court.

The CJ has taken firm notice of this and demanded to know what is being done to deal with the problem and why the culprits responsible for installing the billboards seen all across Karachi have not been produced before the court. The police of course have a difficult task in this respect given that municipalities generally hire advertising companies to install billboards, drawing a charge for this and allocating spaces where these billboards can go up. This obviously helps fund resource-starved municipalities. There is however no doubt that the billboards are unaesthetic, spoil the look of the city and most importantly present a hazard to citizens. Even before August 7, we have had cases of billboards collapsing. A solution may not be easy to find. There are now so many billboard advertising sites across cities that removing all of them may prove impossible. However, standards need to be set, both for the sake of people's safety and to ensure cities retain the look for which they are best known. Karachi and Lahore with their distinctive colonial-era buildings were seen as the best cities to live in once upon a time. But years of neglect have destroyed them and the safety of people who regularly commute through their streets or live in buildings in various places with many of the billboards placed atop unstable foundations which can be toppled over by natural disaster or simply as the result of an accident of some kind. This is not acceptable around the world. It should not be acceptable in our cities either. We hope city governments around the country make sure they plan cities safely without the threat of hoardings and billboards toppling over and injuring people.



## Diplomacy on Kashmir

PRIME Minister Imran Khan betrayed his ignorance about the BJP's politics when he wished Narendra Modi to be re-elected Indian PM, hoping that this would pave the way for peace talks between Pakistan and India. This is despite the revocation of Article 370 enjoying a prominent place in BJP's election manifesto.

Thanks to China, the Kashmir dispute came under discussion in three UNSC meetings in the last 12 months. By including Aksai Chin in India's map the BJP government made China an active player in Ladakh.

Mr Khan was enthusiastic about a summit of Muslim majority countries in Kuala Lumpur called last year by then Malaysian PM Mahathir Mohammad which could become a platform to project the Palestine and Kashmir issues. However, under pressure from "friends", Mr Khan excused himself from attendance at the eleventh hour. The sudden about-turn did not help the Kashmir cause. In the final analysis the battle for Kashmir is to be waged by the Kashmiri people themselves. Pakistan has fought wars with India over the issue without any meaningful outcome. Pakistan is however a party to the Kashmir dispute. Besides close historical and ethnic ties with the Kashmiri people, the rivers that constitute Pakistan's lifeline come from the Valley and Ladakh. Kashmir is thus Pakistan's jugular vein.

Kashmir does not however hit a nerve with all Muslim countries. Under the circumstances, whatever little any country can do for the cause should be welcomed. The PTI's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has acted like a bull in a china shop by making undiplomatic remarks about Saudi Arabia. The task of a diplomat is to turn an enemy into a neutral person, and a neutral person into a friend. What Mr Qureshi has done is the opposite. Pakistan had declined to help Saudi Arabia militarily when the latter launched its war against Yemen, and rightly so. If Saudi Arabia thinks that the convening of OIC's Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) on Kashmir does not suit its national interest, there is no need to fulminate against Riyadh. Meanwhile, if a number of other countries are willing to do more, and bringing them into a closer union with Pakistan would help the Kashmir cause, let us go ahead without adopting a hostile attitude against those who are unwilling to go beyond a certain point on the issue.

## China element and rare earths

Dr M Ali Hamza



REEs did not just jump into the economic race, there is a story. First rare-earth mineral discovered in 1787, and this mineral was extracted from a mine in Sweden; four of the rare-earth elements bear names derived from this single location. Before 1965 there was relatively little demand for rare earth elements. At that time, most of the world's supply was being produced from deposits in Brazil and South African countries

WHEN Chinese President Xi Jinping toured a rare-earth element processor a week after the Trump administration blacklisted Huawei in May 2019, the president Xi highlighted the importance of rare earths in global supply chains; a statement that has been extensively discussed, and interpreted as a threat to restrict Chinese exports to the United States. Since then, Chinese government organizations and state media have indicated that China is prepared to follow through on that threat as economic tensions between the world's two largest economies continue to escalate.

With the trade war having moved beyond tariffs and into issues such as currency, expected suspension of diplomatic ties, rare earth elements could be the next salvo in the conflict. What does mean rare earth elements, why are they so important, what is the historical story of these rare elements, who has the supremacy, and what next? Let's find out the answers.

A rare-earth element (REE) or rare-earth metal (REM), as defined by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, is one of a set of seventeen chemical elements in the periodic table, specifically scandium, yttrium, and the 15 other elements of the lanthanide group of metals. Rare earth elements are all metals, and also referred to as "rare earth oxides" because they are typically sold as oxide compounds. The name rare earths itself is a misnomer; mean relatively they are plentiful in Earth's crust. However, because of their geochemical properties, rare-earth elements are typically dispersed and not often found concentrated in rare-earth minerals and as a result economically exploitable possibilities with these deposits are less common.

Why are they so important? Laptops, cell phones, plasma screen and LED TV's, carbon lighting applications, such as studio lighting and cinema projection, refinement of crude oil, making control rods in nuclear reactors, these all need rare earth elements. X-ray and MRI scanning systems, other medical imaging equipment's, and skin cancer medication require rare earth elements. Environmental pollution is a serious concern, and all hybrid vehicles from cars to scooters are dependent of lithium batteries and these batter-

ies are not possible without rare earth element. Many of the fastest growing clean energy technologies, from batteries to solar panels to magnets, are made with materials that have unique chemical and physical characteristics.

These materials which include rare earth elements and are often called critical materials are essential to the clean energy economy. Other energy sources like Wind power turbines also demand rare earth elements. Rare earth elements also play an essential role in national defense system. The military uses night-vision goggles, precision-guided weapons, communications equipment, GPS equipment, batteries, and other defense electronics; these all are not possible without REEs. Rare earth elements are key ingredients for making the very hard alloys used in armored vehicles and projectiles that shatter upon impact. These elements are also essential in the production of permanent magnets that are stable in high temperatures, production of stealth technology, manufacturing of amplifiers in fiber optic data transmission technology etc. Yes there are substitutes that can be used for rare earth elements in some defense applications; however, those substitutes are usually not as effective and that diminishes military superiority. So, whoever has these rare elements in abundance, the military of that country will have an enormous advantage.

REEs did not just jump into the economic race, there is a story. First rare-earth mineral discovered in 1787, and this mineral was extracted from a mine in Sweden; four of the rare-earth elements bear names derived from this single location. Before 1965 there was relatively little demand for rare earth elements. At that time, most of the world's supply was being produced from deposits in Brazil and South African countries. The demand for rare earth elements saw its first explosion in the mid-1960s, as the first color television sets were entering the market. Europium was the essential material for producing the color images and The Mountain Pass Mine in USA began producing europium, and this made United States as the leading producer of that time. China began producing notable amounts of rare earth elements in the early

1980s and became the world's leading producer in the early 1990s.

Through the 1990s and early 2000s, China steadily strengthened its hold on the world's rare earth element market. They were selling rare earths at such low prices that the Mountain Pass Mine in USA and many others throughout the world were unable to compete and consequently stopped operation. At the same time, world demand was skyrocketing as rare earth metals were designed into a wide variety of defense, aviation, industrial, and consumer electronics products. China capitalized on its dominant position and began restricting exports and allowing rare earth elements prices to rise to historic levels. The Chinese dominance peaked in 2010 when they controlled about 95% of the world's rare earth production. As per World Mine Production and Reserve Report 2017, 80% of the total production of rare elements was in China, and 36% of the total rare element reserves are in China too. In addition to being the world's largest producer of rare earth materials, China is also the dominant consumer. They use rare earths mainly in manufacturing electronics products for domestic and export markets. Japan and the United States are the second and third largest consumers of rare earth materials respectively. It is possible that China's reluctance to sell rare earths is a defense of their value-added manufacturing sector. Getting the Chinese lobby of rare earth elements riled up is no joke. Currently, around 80% of the rare earth metals used by the United States are imported from China. Even if the US' production is one of the biggest in the world; estimated 15 thousand tons in 2018 just behind Australia, it's still insignificant compared to China's production that is approximately 120 thousand tons annually. This entire set of reasoning explicitly concludes that China is aware that it has in its possession a powerful weapon in the trade war against the US and She(the china): Xi(the president), is smartly benefiting from natural resources and moving on intelligently. To deal with intelligent friend or foe, one has to go a step further from the traditional ways of handling relations to the customized approach. That is what USA and her allies need to ponder upon.

## COVID-19 and return-to-classroom dilemma

Nidhal Guessoum



Professors, too, could be divided into those for whom the virus poses a high risk – those over the age of 55, say – and those for whom the risks are low. The high-risk group would be restricted to online lessons only. Whatever options are chosen, we should all be ready for an emergency or a sudden local outbreak

THANKS to online platforms and tools, most ministries of education and universities around the world were able to save the 2019-20 school year after the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) forced many people to shelter at home.

Now that the world is slowly, albeit not quite surely, returning to quasi-normal, many decision- and opinion-makers are asking how education can take place safely and effectively in the fall.

The equation to balance safety with effectiveness is difficult to solve satisfactorily. The first question we must ask is whether it is safe to reopen schools and colleges in September. The answer is it depends. There are a number of factors that need to be considered, including location (country and city); the size of the institution; the available space, which will determine how crowded it will be; student behavior; and what precautionary measures will be enforced, such as face masks, social distancing, regular testing and contact tracing.

Secondly, does online teaching work well enough to represent a reasonable alternative to the classroom? How did it go this past spring? What have we learned from that experience, bearing in mind that we were completely unprepared for it at that time.

Several surveys have been conducted among students to gauge their satisfaction with the online teaching they received. In one poll, which covered 12 universities in the US, only 63 percent of students said they would enroll in the fall if their institution continued with the online scheme, compared with 92 percent if lessons returned to normal.

Many of the respondents said they had suffered from screen and online fatigue/burnout, and that they missed the classroom atmosphere and close interaction with professors and fellow students. Most of them said they could not perform well in online tests, and many had frustrating technical difficulties. Professors had other issues. Perhaps the thorniest one involved testing, where they found it to be very difficult to confirm the identity of examinees, whether they were taking a formal test or writing and submitting an essay or project, while preserving stand-

ards of attainment.

Many professors also lamented the absence of body language, which is so important in teaching. Some courses, especially those normally conducted in labs or in the field, could only be conducted in a diminished form. What, then, shall we do in the fall? The Chronicle of Higher Education, which is widely read and highly regarded, posed that question to 23 professors, administrators and students, including a freshman about to start his studies. Their one-page answers covered a spectrum of views that stressed, for example, "the moral imperative," "the precautionary principle," the need for "a rational and ethical assessment of the benefits, costs and risks," and the importance of "keeping various constituents in mind."

Many universities and education ministries are exploring options and discussing the possibilities with various constituents, including students, parents and professors. In the US and other countries that have experienced renewed COVID-19 spikes recently, people are worried about the risks of sending young people into confined spaces for hours on end, even if social distancing rules are strictly implemented. Can we guarantee that all students will behave properly in dorms, cafeterias and other shared living spaces? Here are a few examples of the measures that are being considered to address people's fears. At Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, resident assistants will schedule shower times for students to avoid washrooms becoming crowded. The University of Georgia will provide every student with two washable cloth face masks and a thermometer. In addition, continuous cleaning schemes will have to be implemented.

For universities in the Middle East, there is an added complication: A sizable proportion of the student body comes from abroad, often encompassing dozens of countries. Will travel restrictions drastically disrupt college enrollments, and therefore budgets? How many faculty and staff might be dismissed as a result because they are not needed?

Many institutions are considering a "hybrid" model of teaching, whereby some learning activities, lab work

and exams for example, are conducted on campus and others, such as lectures and tutorials, take place online. Another option is to conduct classes with large numbers of students completely online, and others that have fewer students in person. The University of California, Los Angeles has announced that 80 percent of classes will be online, compared with only 20 percent at the University of Texas at Austin.

An alternative possible solution is to divide the semester into two phases: Online and then in-person, or vice-versa.

In late November, millions of people in the US traditionally travel, often great distances, to spend time with family at Thanksgiving. This year, this represents a big risk that the virus might be spread across the country. Many universities are therefore considering asking students to remain where they are after Thanksgiving and take their classes online.

Conversely, in places where the number of infections is still high in September, universities might start classes online and reopen for in-person lessons only when the risks are reduced.

Yet another proposed solution would divide students into two groups that would alternate between online and in-person lessons on specific days or weeks. This would help to keep on-campus numbers low at all times.

Professors, too, could be divided into those for whom the virus poses a high risk – those over the age of 55, say – and those for whom the risks are low. The high-risk group would be restricted to online lessons only. Whatever options are chosen, we should all be ready for an emergency or a sudden local outbreak. There is no obvious solution that can be adopted and implemented at every institution; there are simply too many factors at play and they vary greatly from one location to another.

Let us proceed with caution and vigilance, and be ready to react quickly and appropriately. Education is our most precious asset, more than money or property; we therefore need to do everything we can to protect it from the pandemic.

— Courtesy: Arab News

## Briefs

### India: Clashes erupt over anti-Islam FB post

DNA

BANGALURU: At least three people were killed in India's IT hub Bangalore after a "derogatory" Facebook post about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) sparked riots and resulted in clashes between police and thousands of protesters, it emerged on Wednesday.

According to Indian media, the violence, that erupted at 7pm on Tuesday, went on for at least five hours. The report added that 110 others had been arrested as of Wednesday morning.

The report stated that the violence erupted after a close relative of a local lawmaker, Congress MLA Akhanda Srinivasamurthy, made a "derogatory" post about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the social media site. The post has since been deleted. Reacting to the post, a mob gathered outside the lawmaker's house and set two cars on fire.

Police confirmed that Muzamil Pasha and six others from the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) were also detained for questioning, the publication said. Bangalore Police Commissioner Kamal Pant wrote on Twitter that the lawmaker's relative had been arrested for the post, along with about 100 others for rioting and arson, and the situation was now under control.

### Russia slams vaccine allegations

DNA

MOSCOW: Russian Health Minister Mikhail Murashko said allegations that Russia's Covid-19 vaccine was unsafe were groundless and driven by competition, the Interfax news agency reported. Moscow's decision to grant approval to a Covid-19 vaccine after less than two months of human testing raised concerns among some experts. Only about 10% of clinical trials are successful and some scientists fear Moscow may be putting national prestige over safety.

### Ehsaas Nash-o-Numa to be launched on Thursday

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Sania Nishtar on Wednesday announced that the first-ever 'Ehsaas Nash-o-Numa' program to address the issue of stunted growth faced by 40 percent of the children in Pakistan would formally launch on August 13. In a news briefing, she said Prime Minister Imran Khan would formally launch the 'Ehsaas Nash-o-Numa' program along with her by visiting the Ehsaas Nash-o-Numa Center in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Khyber tribal district. Dr. Nishtar said the issue of stunting among children in Pakistan had always been among the top priorities of the prime minister as in his initial address to the nation soon after assuming her responsibilities, he showed the CT scan of a child affected by stunting and highlighted the gross issue. - APP

### IHC unsatisfied with CAA, PIA comments

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday expressed dissatisfaction over comments submitted by Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and Pakistan International Airline (PIA) in a case pertaining to suspension of suspect pilots' licenses and file respondents last chance to give it. Chief Justice Athar Minallah, hearing the case, remarked that the licenses matter had damaged the reputation of Pakistan in international community. He said that the assistant attorney general could not explain that why a regular director general CAA could not be appointed during last two years. - APP



ISLAMABAD: A PPP delegation headed by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari condoling the demise of Pir Syed Shah Abdul Haq Gilani with custodians of Golra Sharif Pir Syed Moinul Haq Gilani and Pir Syed Ghulam Qutbul Haq Gilani. - DNA

## LIQUOR LICENCE CASE

# NAB asks Buzdar to submit response by August 18

The Punjab CM had arrived at the Bureau without any protocol, a stark comparison to PML-N vice-president Maryam Nawaz's appearance before NAB a day earlier

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar has been directed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to submit his response by August 18 in a case where he is accused of issuing a liquor license to a hotel illegally. Buzdar had appeared before the Bureau today and sat through for

nearly two hours. The Punjab chief minister had arrived at the Bureau without any protocol, a stark comparison to PML-N vice-president Maryam Nawaz's appearance before NAB a day earlier.

According to NAB sources, issuing liquor licenses falls under the domain of the DG Excise, however, the Punjab chief minister allegedly used his influence in issuing them. Last year in April, NAB had



launched an investigation into Buzdar's alleged corruption after two complaints were filed with the anti-graft body against him. Sources had said Buzdar was accused of getting a liquor-sale permit issued to a private hotel in Lahore. The chief minister was also accused of getting a helicopter for his official use insured for Rs70 million, instead of Rs30 million, according to sources.

Buzdar had directed to pay the insurance amount through a supplementary grant. Sources had added that the Bureau had initiated proceedings for verification of the corruption complaints, for which the anti-graft body's Lahore bureau issued the directives. The allegation had been rejected by then Punjab government spokesperson Shahbaz Gill.

## Pakistan, China get connected through cross-border optical cables

DNA

BEIJING: As many as 17 cross-border optical cables have been put into service in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, connecting China with Pakistan and some other neighboring countries.

According to Gwadar Pro, this was stated by Shohrat Zakir, chairman of the Xinjiang regional government at a news briefing while highlighting the region's recent achievements in promoting peace, tranquility, and prosperity. Shohrat Zakir, accompanied by other seniors officials Alken Tuniaz and Zhang Chunlin, said that



religious freedom and tranquility are upheld while making considerable progress in eliminating terrorism in its all forms and manifestation. In the economic sector, he said the Xinjiang region continued to pursue mutual

benefits and promote trade. Since 2014, they have established 2,451 railway services to link western neighboring countries with an average annual growth of 100%. In recent years, a total of 1,002 railway services were launched in Xinjiang

to connect 26 cities of 19 countries in Central Asia and Europe. Xinjiang's economic development has realized a historic leap with GDP increased from 791 million yuan in 1952 to 1.2 trillion yuan in 2018. Adjusted for inflation, this represents a 200-fold increase, with an average annual gain of 8.3%. Xinjiang's per-capita GDP rose to 49,000 yuan in 2018, from 166 yuan in 1952, and that's approximately a 37.7-fold increase in real terms, averaging 5.7% annual growth. Xinjiang boosted financial cooperation and innovation. In 2016, Pakistan's Habib Bank set up a branch in Urumqi, he added.

## Pakistan may find camel milk market in China

BEIJING: Pakistan may find market of its camel milk in China, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Wednesday. Camel milk has long been produced in Pakistan, while China started camel milk production only about two years ago. According to a research study conducted by a Chinese expert Prof. Cheng Xizhong. He suggested that Chinese and Pakistani enterprises may conduct on-the-spot studies and cooperate in camel milk production and sales. He viewed that camel milk from Pakistan will be very popular in the Chinese market. It was noted that camel milk in Pakistan is cheaper than cow milk, and Pakistani camel milk is genuine at a fair price. The study says: the camels in Pakistan eat grasses that grow naturally, there are no hormones and other additives in the feed, so the camel milk produced in Pakistan is organic. The amount of camel milk produced in Pakistan is much higher than that in China. The camels in Pakistan are single-humped ones, and the milk yield is higher than that of China's Bactrian camels.

The milk yield of a single-humped camel in Pakistan can reach 3 tons in one lactation period, while that of China's Bactrian camel is less than 1 ton. Camels were the most important means of transportation along the ancient Silk Road. Therefore, we may say that in ancient Chinese civilization, it was the camel who trod an economic and cultural road connecting Chinese and Western civilizations. With the increasing demand for camel milk, camels will play a new role in the Belt and Road cooperation. In 2018, the number of camels in China was 338,400, with an increase of 6.10% over the previous year. Camel breeding in China is mainly concentrated in Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang. - DNA

## Taliban rule out cease-fire without talks

DNA

KABUL: The Taliban have rejected calls for a truce before the long-awaited talks with the government get underway. They said that the possibility of a cease-fire could be debated only during the talks. "When our prisoners are released, we will be ready for the talks," Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, told media. "A cease-fire or reduction of violence can be among the items in the agenda of the talks," he said. This follows President Ashraf Ghani signing a

### At least 6 policemen killed in Taliban attack

KABUL: At least six policemen were killed and five others were wounded in a Taliban attack in eastern Nangarhar, the provincial governor said in a statement on Wednesday. The clashes took place in Pachiragarm district of the province after the Taliban attacked security checkpoints. The statement added that "three Taliban were also killed and two others were wounded in the attack." The Taliban were pushed back by the security forces, the statement said. However, the Taliban yet to comment on the attack. - DNA

decreed for the release of 400 hardcore Taliban prisoners on Monday - who Kabul said were responsible for some of the worst attacks in the country in recent years - thereby removing the last obstacle to the start of the negotiations set by the Taliban. However, Kabul has yet to announce the date of their release.

Ferraidoon Khawzoon, a spokesman for the government-appointed peace council, said that Doha, Qatar, would be the likely venue. "Deliberations are continuing, and no decision has been made on a firm date yet," he said. Ghani pledged to release the prisoners after the Loya Jirga, or traditional assembly, voiced support for their freedom.

After three days of deliberations the Jirga, which comprises 3,400 delegates, said that its decision was for the sake of "the cessation of bloodshed" and to remove "the obstacle to peace talks."

## PM forms committee for small enterprises

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has formed a committee for the promotion of small and medium enterprises headed by Minister Industries Hammad Azhar. The committee will prepare proposals for the promotion of small and medium industries in the country. Moreover, a plan will be drawn up to alleviate poverty, provide employment and improve the economic situation. The Federal Minister for Industries and Production and the four Provincial Chief Secretaries are members of the committee, while Chairman FBR, Chairman SECP, Deputy Governor SBP and Federal Secretaries of the Ministries of Commerce, Finance, Power, Petroleum and Law are also part of the committee. - DNA

## Pakistani French company launches cricket bat brand

CEO of Euroking Sports, Mr. Amjad Sandhu presenting a new brand of cricket bat launched by the name of "Ambassador" to Pakistan's Charge d'Affaires a.i, Mr. M. Amjad Qazi

DNA

PARIS: A Pakistani sports goods company Euro King Sports based in France has launched a new brand of cricket bat by the name of "Ambassador." CEO of the company Mr. Amjad Sandhu met Pakistan's Charge d'Affaires a.i, Mr. M. Amjad Qazi at the launching ceremony held at the Embassy today. Commercial Counsellor Mr. Moin Wani was also present on the occasion. Charge d'Affaires a.i. appreciated the company for launching

its own brand in a sport which is most loved by the Pakistani people. He said it would help popularize cricket in France as well as in mainland Europe. Pakistani businesses would also gain a foothold in the European sports goods market, he said. Mr. Sandhu informed that in addition to this professional cricket bat, his company has also introduced a tennis ball cricket bat. He said this is the first cricket brand in mainland Europe for which Pakistan's willow is being used. He also said that cricket is be-



coming increasingly popular in European countries like France, Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain, Holland and Belgium. In France alone there are around 35 cricket clubs registered with the Association Française de Cricket (French Cricket Association). In addition to local players, immigrants from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Bangladesh are also members of these club teams. Pakistan Embassy France sponsors the most prestigious annual cricket tournament held in France called Jinnah Trophy.

## Indian troops martyred one Kashmiri

ISLAMABAD: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism martyred one Kashmiri youth in Pulwama district. According to Kashmir Media Service, the troops martyred the youth during a cordon and search operation in Kamrazipora area of the district.

Earlier, one Indian soldier was killed and another injured in an attack in the same area. The operation was going on till last reports came in. - APP

## PIAF to hold flag-hoisting ceremony on 14th Aug

DNA

LAHORE: Like other parts of the country, the Pakistan Industrial & Traders Associations Front is all set to celebrate Pakistan's 73rd Independence Day on 14th of August, 2020 on Friday, also holding a flag-hoisting ceremony, pledging to uphold the values of determination and dedication for the objective of progress and high economic growth of Pakistan on this auspicious occasion.

PIAF chairman Mian Nauman Kabir said that the landmark commemorative Independence Day event will be attended by a large number of business community, trade bodies and industrial associations under the banner of PIAF- the ruling group of Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) in provincial capital and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) across the country.

Provincial Livestock Minister Hasnain Bahadar Dreshak and PIAF Chairman Mian Nauman Kabir will hoist the national flag along with FPCCI President Mian Anjum Nisar, LCCI President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, PIAF senior vice chairman Nasir Hameed, vice chairman Javed Siddiqi and the executive committee on this occasion.

## EU foreign ministers to meet Friday on Belarus

BRUSSELS: European Union foreign ministers will hold an extraordinary meeting on Friday to review the situation in Belarus, Lebanon and the eastern Mediterranean, foreign policy chief Josep Borrell announced.

"We will discuss urgent issues and address the situation in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Belarus presidential elections as well as developments in Lebanon," Borrell tweeted Wednesday. The European Union says both the situation in Belarus following the contested re-election for a sixth term of strongman Alexander Lukashenko and growing Greece-Turkey tensions over oil and gas exploration in the eastern Mediterranean are very serious cause for concern.

On Tuesday, the bloc condemned the Belarus election as "neither free nor fair" and Borrell threatened sanctions against "those responsible for the observed violence, unjustified arrests, and falsification of election results." - APP

## Pakistani scholar completes PhD from NZ

DNA

MULTAN: A Pakistani scholar Shazrah Salam has completed her PhD in English Literature from Massey University, New Zealand under the HEC scholarship program "Overseas Scholarships for MS/ MPhil leading to PhD." Her doctoral research project, explored "Pakistani Anglophone Fiction" a valuable addition to the rapidly expanding field of criticism on Pakistani literature. During her stay in New Zealand, Ms Salam has also successfully completed an MPhil in English Literature from the same University.